

## **The King's Son Goes Bear Hunting.**

*Adapted by Mistress Dervila ni Leonon*

*Based on Favorite Folktales from Around the World, page 155*

*Finnish*

*Time: About 3:32*

One day a peasant became very angry with his horse while plowing. He yelled  
“May a bear devour you!” It just so happened that a bear heard the peasant. The bear  
lumbered up to the peasant and said

“Here I am. Give me the horse”

*[indignant]* “What! I need this horse to do my plowing! I’m not about to give it to you!”

*[spread hand]* The bear showed its claws.

“You said you wanted a bear to devour your horse. Were you lying? I eat liars too.”

*[Terrified]* “But - I - Please, let me finish my day’s plowing!”

“Mmmmmm - very well. But I’ll wait right here at the edge of your field. So don’t try to run  
away.”

So the peasant went back to plowing, and became sadder and sadder as the sun went down. A  
fox happened by and said

*[female voice]* “You look miserable! What’s your trouble?”

The peasant told her, and she said

“What will you give me if I rescue your horse?”

“Four fat hens!”

“Done! I’ll tie a bell to my neck and run through the forest. When you hear me, tell the bear  
that the king’s son is out bear hunting.”

She did as she said, and the peasant ran to the bear.

“Do you hear that bell? That’s the king’s son out bear hunting! Run while you can!”

“You can’t fool me. I’m not-”

*[Gruff female voice, yelling]* “Is that a bear I see?”

*[Bear]* “Please don’t give me to the hunters! I promise not to eat you or your horse! Say I’m  
a stump!”

*[Peasant to fox, yelling]* “No, it’s just a stump!”

*[From here on, the fox “yells” and the bear “whispers”]*

*[Fox]* “If it’s a stump, why not throw it down?”

*[Bear]* “Throw me down!” So the peasant pushed him over.

*[Fox]* “Why don’t you put it on the sleigh?”

*[Bear]* “Put me on the sleigh!” And the peasant did.

*[Fox]* “Why don’t you fasten it? Otherwise it will roll off!”

*[Bear]* “Fasten me, but loosely.” But the peasant fastened the bear very firmly to the sleigh.

*[Fox]* “Why don’t you take an ax to it?”

*[Bear]* “No, no, please don’t hurt me”, and the bear begged and the bear pleaded but the  
peasant killed him with the ax. Then the fox ran up and said

“Now for my payment!”

“Wait right here.” said the peasant. And he came back with a full sack.

*[bend over slightly]* “Here they are. Just climb into the sack. I don’t want to let them out.”

The fox crawled in, but the sack was full of straw, and the peasant tied the sack shut and beat the fox.

*[Laughing]* “And so I keep both my horse and my hens!” The fox chewed her way out of the sack and said

“Next time, I’ll help the bear.”

*Full bibliography of source:*

*Yolen, Jane, editor. Favorite Folktales from Around the World. New York: Pantheon Books, 1986.  
ISBN: 0-394-75188-4*

*Copyright Amerie Helton 2013. For personal non-profit use only. This story may be published in SCA newsletters on the condition that they are published in their entirety with this copyright notice.*

*If you tell this version of the story, please give me credit. If you change it significantly, then it’s yours*