

## **The Peddler of Swaffhem**

*Adapted by Mistress Dervila ni Leonon*

*Based on Favorite Folktales from Around the World page 414.*

*English*

*Time: About 2:32*

The peddler woke up that morning and shook his wife awake.

*[Excited]* “Wife, wife, I have just had a dream!”

*[Groggy]* “So? Many people have dreams when they sleep.”

“But this is the third night in a row I have had this dream!”

*[Big sigh.]* “So what was this dream of yours?”

“I dreamt that if I went to London bridge I would find a great treasure!”

“Why did you wake me up for this?”

“To tell you that I am going to London bridge.”

“London? But it is so far away!”

“Which is why I’m leaving right away!” And the peddler was as good as his word. It took him three days to walk from his home in Swaffhem to London bridge, but when he got there, *[pause, show confusion]* he didn’t know what to do. The bridge was guarded, and he had no idea where to look for his treasure. After he had been there for three days, a guard walked up to him.

“I’ve seen you here for three days now, neither selling goods nor begging alms. What are you doing here?”

*[Feeling slightly foolish, hang head slightly, speaks hesitantly]* “Um - I dreamt that if I came to London bridge I would find a great treasure.”

*[Laughing]* “Foolish man! Why, I dreamt three nights in a row about treasure, too. I dreamt that it was under an oak tree in front of the house of a peddler in Swaffhem. But you don’t see me making that long journey! There is no treasure here, go home and don’t follow dreams anymore.”

*[Really? Cool! Beaming]* “Thank you, kind sir, for your excellent advice.” As soon as he got home he dug beneath the great oak in front of his house and found a chest full of treasure. He was a generous man, and the people of the town profited from the peddler’s treasure as much as the peddler himself. So they put up a statue of the peddler, with his sack on his back and his little dog following. And it has stood there from that day to this.

*Full bibliography of source:*

*Yolen, Jane, editor. Favorite Folktales from Around the World. New York: Pantheon Books, 1986.  
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