

The Wolf as Bailiff

Once upon a time a Donkey was browsing in a pasture, when he approached a bush behind which sat a Wolf. The wolf started to spring upon him, ready to tear him to pieces. Though the Donkey was reputed to be somewhat of a fool, he immediately began to consider what he should do. As the Wolf came bounding toward him, he flashed a dazzling smile and bowing low before him said, "Thank goodness, sir Wolf, that you have come. I have been searching and searching for you."

"And what would you need me for?"

"Well, it's like this. The community has sent me to you and sternly warned me, 'Go and get the Wolf, and don't you dare return to the village without him!'"

"And what does the community want with me?" asked the Wolf.

"Don't you know? Well, they are electing a bailiff in the community."

"But how does it concern me that they are holding an election?"

"That's not the problem," replied the Donkey.

"It's the fact that they can't agree on the candidate. Already all the citizens have quarreled amongst themselves and furthermore they say, 'Maybe only the Wolf from the forest should be the bailiff.'

After thinking over this idea, they agreed and sent me off so that I should immediately bring you to the village. That's it in a nutshell."

Hearing this, the Wolf was so delighted that he raised his tail in the air. He immediately climbed up onto the Donkey's back and rode off to the village. But when they arrived there, the Donkey started to bray in his loud ringing voice. The people rushed out from their houses and, seeing the Wolf riding on the Donkey's back, they sprang at him and with sticks, flails and clubs started to give him a sound thrashing. They kept on beating him until the Wolf barely escaped alive.

Bolting away, the poor creature kept looking back to see if the people were still chasing him. When he could no longer see the village he noticed a haystack. He jumped upon it and, stretching his limbs, lay down to rest. While relaxing he started to speak out loud to himself. "My father was not a bailiff, my grandfather wasn't a bailiff, so why should I, a stupid oaf, suddenly wish to be a bailiff? Hah, it's a great pity that there isn't a stout fellow around here to give me a sound drubbing with a cudgel to teach me a good lesson!"

It happened that there actually was a stout fellow sitting under the haystack, with a pitchfork in his hands. Hearing these words, he jumped up and struck the Wolf about ten blows on his back so hard that the Wolf gave up the ghost.