The Fox and the Horse

A farmer had a faithful horse that had grown old and could do no more work, so his master would give it nothing more to eat and said, "I certainly can't use you anymore, but I mean well by you; if you can still show yourself strong enough to bring me a lion here, I will keep you, but now get out of my stable," and drove it out into the wide field. The horse was sad and went toward the forest to seek a little shelter from the weather there. There the fox met him and said, "Why do you hang your head so and walk about so alone?" "Ah," answered the horse, "Stinginess and loyalty do not dwell together in one house: my master has forgotten what services I have rendered him over so many years, and because I can no longer plow properly, he will give me no more feed and has driven me away." "Without any comfort?" asked the fox. "The comfort was poor; he said that if I were still strong enough to bring him a lion, he would keep me, but he well knows that I cannot do that." The fox said, "Then I will help you; just lie down, stretch out, and do not stir, as if you were dead." The horse did as the fox asked; the fox, however, went to the lion, whose den was not far from there, and said, "Out there lies a dead horse; come out with me, you can have a fat meal there." The lion went along, and when they stood by the horse, the fox said
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"Here you don't have it to your liking, you know what? I will tie it to you by the tail, so you can drag it into your den and devour it in complete peace." The lion liked the advice; he stood still, and so that the fox could tie the horse firmly to him, he held completely motionless. But the fox tied the lion's legs together with the horse's tail and twisted and bound everything so well and strongly that it could not be torn apart by any force. When he had now finished his work, he patted the horse on the shoulder and said, "Pull, gray horse, pull." Then the horse sprang up at once and dragged the lion away with it. The lion began to roar so that the birds throughout the whole forest flew up in fright, but the horse let him roar, dragged and hauled him across the field to his master's door. When the master saw that, he thought better of it and said to the horse, "You shall stay with me and have it good," and gave it plenty to eat until it died.