Little Sister Fox and the Wolf — Variant 1

Once there lived an old man and an old woman. The old man says to the old woman: "You, woman, bake pies, and I'll go fishing." He caught fish and is bringing home a whole cartload. So he's riding along and sees: a little fox curled up in a ball lying on the road. The old man got down from the cart, approached the fox, but it didn't stir, just lay there as if dead. "What a gift for my wife," said the old man, took the fox and put it on the cart, and walked ahead himself. And the fox waited for the moment and began tossing out of the cart one fish after another, one fish after another. She threw out all the fish, and then left herself.

"Well, old woman," says the old man, "what a collar I brought you for your fur coat." — "Where?" — "There, on the cart — both fish and collar." The old woman came to the cart: neither collar nor fish, and began scolding her husband: "Ah, you old fool! You rascal! You thought to deceive me!" Then the old man realized that the fox wasn't dead; he grieved and grieved, but there was nothing to be done.

And the little fox gathered all the fish scattered along the road into a pile, sat down and ate. Coming toward her was a wolf: "Hello, godmother!" — "Hello, godson!" — "Give me some fish!" — "Catch it yourself, then eat." — "I don't know how." — "Look, I caught some myself; you, godson, go to the river, put your tail in the ice-hole — the fish will attach themselves to your tail, just make sure to sit longer, or you won't catch any."

The wolf went to the river, put his tail in the ice-hole; it was wintertime. He sat and sat, sat the whole night, his tail froze to it; he tried to rise: but it was no use. "Look how much fish has piled up, and I can't pull it out!" he thinks. He looks, and women are coming for water and shout upon seeing the grey one: "Wolf, wolf! Beat him! Beat him!" They ran up and began beating the wolf — one with a yoke, another with a bucket, whatever they had at hand. The wolf jumped and jumped, tore off his own tail and ran away without looking back. "Very well," he thinks, "I'll pay you back, godmother!"

And little sister fox, having eaten her fill of fish, wanted to try if she could steal anything else; she got into one hut where women were baking pancakes, and got her head into a tub of dough, got smeared and ran. And the wolf met her: "Is that how you teach? They beat me all over!" — "Eh, godson," says little sister fox, "you at least got blood drawn, but I got brains, they beat me worse than you; I can

hardly drag myself along." — "That's true," says the wolf, "where can you go, godmother; sit on me, I'll carry you." The fox sat on his back, and he carried her. So little sister fox is sitting, and quietly says: "The beaten carries the unbeaten, the beaten carries the unbeaten." — "What are you saying, godmother?" — "I, godson, am saying: the beaten carries the beaten." — "So, godmother, so!"

"Let's, godson, build ourselves huts." — "Let's, godmother!" — "I'll build myself a bast one, and you build yourself an ice one." They set to work, made themselves huts: for the fox a bast one, and for the wolf an ice one, and they lived in them. Spring came, and the wolf's hut melted. "Ah, godmother!" says the wolf. "You deceived me again, I must eat you for this." — "Let's go, godson, and compete once more, to see who gets to eat whom." So little sister fox led him into the forest to a deep pit and says: "Jump! If you jump over the pit — you get to eat me, and if you don't jump over — I get to eat you." The wolf jumped and fell into the pit. "Well," says the fox, "sit there then!" — and she herself left.

She goes, carrying a rolling pin in her paws and asks a man for a place to stay in his hut: "Let little sister fox spend the night." — "We're cramped even without you." — "I won't crowd you; I'll lie on the bench myself, my tail under the bench, the rolling pin under the stove." They let her in. She lay down on the bench herself, her tail under the bench, the rolling pin under the stove. Early in the morning the fox got up, burned her rolling pin, and then asks: "Where is my rolling pin? I wouldn't take even a goose for it!" The man — nothing to be done — gave her a goose for the rolling pin; the fox took the goose, goes and sings:

The little fox-sister walked along the path,

Carrying a rolling pin;

For the rolling pin — a goose!

Knock, knock, knock! — she knocks at the hut of another man. "Who's there?" — "I'm little sister fox, let me spend the night." — "We're cramped even without you." — "I won't crowd you; I'll lie on the bench myself, my tail under the bench, the goose under the stove." They let her in. She lay down on the bench herself, her tail under the bench, the goose under the stove. Early in the morning she jumped up, grabbed the goose, plucked it, ate it and says: "Where is my goose? I wouldn't take even a turkey for it!" The man — nothing to be done — gave her a turkey for the goose; the fox took the turkey, goes and sings:

The little fox-sister walked along the path,

Carrying a rolling pin;

For the rolling pin — a goose,

For the goose — a turkey!

Knock, knock, knock! — she knocks at the hut of a third man. "Who's there?" — "I'm little sister fox, let me spend the night." — "We're cramped even without you." — "I won't crowd you; I'll lie on the bench myself, my tail under the bench, the turkey under the stove." They let her in. So she lay on the bench, her tail under the bench, the turkey under the stove. Early in the morning the fox jumped up, grabbed the turkey, plucked it, ate it and says: "Where is my turkey? I wouldn't take even a bride for it!" The man — nothing to be done — gave her a bride for the turkey; the fox put her in a sack, goes and sings:

The little fox-sister walked along the path,

Carrying a rolling pin;

For the rolling pin — a goose,

For the goose — a turkey,

For the turkey — a bride!

Knock, knock, knock! — she knocks at the hut of a fourth man. "Who's there?" — "I'm little sister fox, let me spend the night." — "We're cramped even without you." — "I won't crowd you; I'll lie on the bench myself, my tail under the bench, and the sack under the stove." They let her in. She lay on the bench, her tail under the bench, and the sack under the stove. The man quietly let the bride out of the sack, and put a dog in there instead. So in the morning little sister fox got ready to travel, took the sack, goes and says: "Bride, sing a song!", and the dog growled. The fox got scared, flung the sack with the dog and ran.

So the fox runs and sees: on the gate sits a rooster. She says to him: "Rooster, rooster! Come down here, I'll confess you: you have seventy wives, you're always sinning." The rooster came down; she grabbed him and ate him.