

Story #344 (Collected orally and then in written form; not taped.)

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The Wolf and the Dog

During one very cold winter, all the animals in the forest suffered from hunger and could find nothing at all to eat. Gradually they became so frenzied from starvation that they killed each other.

One day a wolf decided to go to the nearby village and serve the villagers in order to get some food. He went therefore to speak with one of the village dogs. He saw with envy that his friend's coat was sleek and shiny, his body supple and agile, whereas his own bones stuck out and his lithe body had long ago lost its wonderful nimbleness.

"What do you do in order to have some food?" he asked.

"Oh, I guard my master's house," the other replied.

"I wonder if your master could give me some work to do if I promised not to do any mischief?"

"I suppose so, for he is short of dogs."

The wolf was on the verge of accepting the job when a cruel welt around the dog's neck caught his eye. "What is that?" he asked, immediately on his guard.

"That? Well, it is nothing! Only my master always chains me lest I should wander away and forget my work," the dog replied.

The wolf shook his head. "Thank you," he said, "but I'd rather roam freely in the woods, hungry, than to be fed with the chains squeezing my throat."