



## OLD BODRÍK AND THE WOLF

In a herdsman's hut outside a hamlet lived a shepherd with his dog Bodrík. Bodrík was a big, fluffy white dog and he had protected the sheep day and night for many long years. No wolf had ever dared to come anywhere near the herd.

But Bodrík was getting very old and losing his strength.

"You're no use to me anymore. Why should I keep you when you're nothing but a waste of space now!" said the shepherd ruthlessly and threw his loyal companion outside the fence to the rubbish dump.

He got himself a new young dog instead and expected him to serve him just as good as his predecessor.

Poor Bodrík sat sadly among the rubbish, hungry, thirsty and shivering with cold – the shepherd treated the poor dog with nothing but real cruelty now.

When the night came, the young dog nestled in his kennel and fell fast asleep. But old Bodrík was still very vigilant. Even a tiny rustle was enough to get his guard up. Suddenly, he caught a whiff of a wolf lurking around the sheep. He wanted to jump over the fence to drive the beast away, but he was too starved to even get up.

"Well, if there is no food for me, at least the wolf can have a bite or two," thought Bodrík and curled into a ball without a single bark.

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When the shepherd came to check on his sheep in the morning, he found that he was one animal short. The young dog was still hiding in his kennel.

“Oh, something like this would have never happened with my old Bodrík around,” lamented the shepherd.

So he went to get Bodrík back. He fed him and scratched him behind his ear the way he loved it so much. Bodrík was as happy as a clam, nearly jumping up with joy.

When the evening came, Bodrík was cautiously guarding the herd. He had a feeling the wolf would return tonight as well, since he had fared so well yesterday. Before long, the wolf tried to sneak inside, thinking he was free to do whatever he wanted.

But all of a sudden, Bodrík jumped in front of him: “What do you think you’re doing here, get lost!” he barked.

“Excuse me? I came here for a sheep,” snarled the impudent wolf.

“Well, this time you’re not getting one!” growled Bodrík back furiously.

“Don’t be like that and give me one, we can split it between us. You know the shepherd doesn’t feed you enough,” said the wolf, trying to sweet-talk the dog.

“I don’t fraternize with wolves,” refused Bodrík. “Yes, I was hungry and weak yesterday, so you got yourself a sheep, but today the shepherd fed me well and you’re not getting anything.”

“We shall fight then,” proposed the wolf.

“I don’t have time for fighting, I have to guard the sheep. But let’s meet in the morning by that linden tree over there and you can pit your strength against mine,” said Bodrík.

The chubby wolf just muttered something and returned to the forest.

“Bloody dog, you won’t get away with this. I’ll show you in the morning,” thought the wolf. Then he decided he should bring the bear and the fox with him, just to be on the safe side. Bodrík knew better than to underestimate the wolf and he didn’t go to the meeting point alone either. He brought his two best friends to help him, a piggy and an old tomcat. They weren’t young anymore, but Bodrík knew he could always count on them.

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They gave the bear and the fox a proper scare when they saw them coming.

“Can you see the one who’s bending down all the time, lads? I bet he’s picking up stones to throw at us,” worried the bear.

It was actually just good old Bodrík walking with a limp since his paw was hurting today.

Then the fox noticed the cat and anxiously stuttered: “And look at the other one swinging his sabre!”

She was of course talking about the tomcat who was swinging his long tail as he walked.

And when they heard the piggy grunting in the grass, the bear and the fox took to their heels and disappeared in the forest.

The greedy wolf was left standing there all by himself. He didn’t wait to get a thrashing and ran away with his tail between his legs. He dashed through the forest like lightning.

Old Bodrík loudly barked behind him to scare him off from ever coming back.

Then he returned with his loyal friends back to the hut and they never had any trouble from the forest thieves ever again.