



## **Brer Rabbit Earns a Dollar a Minute**

An African-American Folktale

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### **NARRATOR 1:**

One day long ago, Brer Fox decided to plant goober peas. So, he got busy and, quick as a wink, he'd cleared some land and planted peas.

### **NARRATOR 2:**

It didn't take long for the pea vines to grow. They grew long and healthy, and peas started popping out all over.

### **NARRATOR 3:**

Brer Rabbit and his family lived nearby.

### **NARRATOR 4:**

Rabbit had watched Fox planting peas, and he'd told his family all about the pea patch.

### **NARRATOR 5:**

So, when the peas got ripe, Brer Rabbit hightailed it to the pea patch with his whole family right behind him. They filled their paws with goober peas until there was hardly a pea left in the patch.

### **NARRATOR 1:**

When Brer Fox saw his pea patch, he was angry. He had worked hard to grow those peas -- and someone else had eaten them.

**BRER FOX:**

I'll bet that sneaky rabbit is to blame for this.

**NARRATOR 2:**

Brer Rabbit was good at covering his tracks, though, and that made him hard to catch.

**NARRATOR 3:**

Finally, Brer Fox came up with a plan. He found a hole in his fence that he thought a rabbit might sneak through -- and he set a trap.

**NARRATOR 4:**

Fox tied one end of a rope to the branch of a young tree that stood near the fence. He pulled the branch almost down to the ground. He took the other end of the rope and made a loop with a knot. Then, he fixed the loop so it was right around the hole in the fence.

**NARRATOR 5:**

If a thief (say, a rabbit) came through the hole, the loop of rope would tighten around him. Then the tree branch would snap up and the thief would be left hanging in mid-air.

**BRER FOX:**

Ha! Just wait 'til I catch that greedy rabbit! He'll be bouncing in the air like a yo-yo.

**NARRATOR 1:**

Sure enough, the next morning, who should be walking past the pea patch but Brer Rabbit.

**BRER RABBIT:**

Oh boy! Oh geez! It's time for peas... lots and lots of peas for meeeeee.

**NARRATOR 2:**

Singing to himself, Brer Rabbit began to slip through the hole in the fence. *BAM!* The rope closed around Rabbit's middle. *SNAP!* The tree branch popped up into the air. And there hung Rabbit -- swinging back and forth, for all the world to see.

**NARRATOR 3:**

Rabbit knew he was in a real fix. What was he going to say when Brer Fox showed up? Suddenly, he heard someone.

**NARRATOR 4:**

It was Brer Bear looking for honey. Rabbit had an idea ....

**RABBIT:**

Hey there, Bear ...

**NARRATOR 1:**

Bear looked around to see where the voice had come from. Finally, he spotted Brer Rabbit swinging in the breeze.

**BRER BEAR:**

Hello, Rabbit. How are you today?

**BRER RABBIT:**

Oh, just fair, I suppose. Just fair.

**NARRATOR 2:**

Bear scratched his head with his big paw.

**BRER BEAR:**

Whadd'ya doin' up there anyway?

**BRER RABBIT:** (Grinning)

Well...I guess I can tell you. I'm earning a dollar a minute from Brer Fox.

**BRER BEAR:**

A dollar a minute! What for?

**BRER RABBIT:**

I'm keeping crows away from his goober patch. He's paying me a dollar a minute to act like a scarecrow.

**NARRATOR 3:**

Brer Bear thought that sounded great. He thought about how *he* could use that kind of money to feed his family.

**NARRATOR 4:**

So when Brer Rabbit asked Bear if he wanted the job, Bear, of course, said yes.

**NARRATOR 5:**

First, Brer Rabbit told Bear to untie him.

**NARRATOR 1:**

Then Bear tied the rope around himself. Soon, Bear was swinging between earth and sky and growling to keep the birds away.

**NARRATOR 2:**

Brer Rabbit laughed like crazy as he trotted down the road to Brer Fox's house. When he got there, he told Fox, the goober thief had been caught ... and was swinging from the tree branch.

**NARRATOR 3:**

Fox grabbed his walking stick and ran down the road. When Fox saw Bear hanging there, he called him a goober thief!

**NARRATOR 4:**

Brer Fox carried on like a madman. He even threatened to hit Bear with his stick. Each time Bear opened his mouth to explain, Fox started yelling again.

**NARRATOR 5:**

Rabbit knew he had to skedaddle. He knew Bear would be even madder than Fox when he found out he'd been tricked.

**NARRATOR 1:**

So Rabbit ran down the road and hid in the mud near the pond. He was so far down in the mud that only his eyeballs stuck out. He looked like a big old bullfrog.

**NARRATOR 2:**

After a while, Bear came rumbling down the road -- and he was *mad*.

**BRER BEAR:**

Howdy, Bullfrog! Have you seen that sneaky Rabbit around?

**BRER RABBIT:**

Crroak! Crroak! Why yes. He just ran on down the road -- thataway.

**NARRATOR 3:**

Bear took off down the road growling.

**NARRATOR 4:**

When Bear was out of sight, Brer Rabbit hopped out of the mud, jumped into the pond to wash himself off, and headed home.

**BRER RABBIT:**

La-dee-da! La-dee-dee! I'll find new tricks to get more peas!

