



Brer Rabbit

A Georgian Folktale

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Protagonist: Brer Rabbit



Featured in: “Brer Rabbit and the Tar Baby”, “Brer Fox Goes Hunting”, and “Brer Rabbit Earns a Dollar-A-Minute”

- As the protagonist of our story, he often gets stuck in situations where he must use his cleverness to escape.
- He is a trickster
- He is a smart thinker and is easily able to get out of situations he is in
- He is fast and sly
- Has a short temper



Character: Brer Fox



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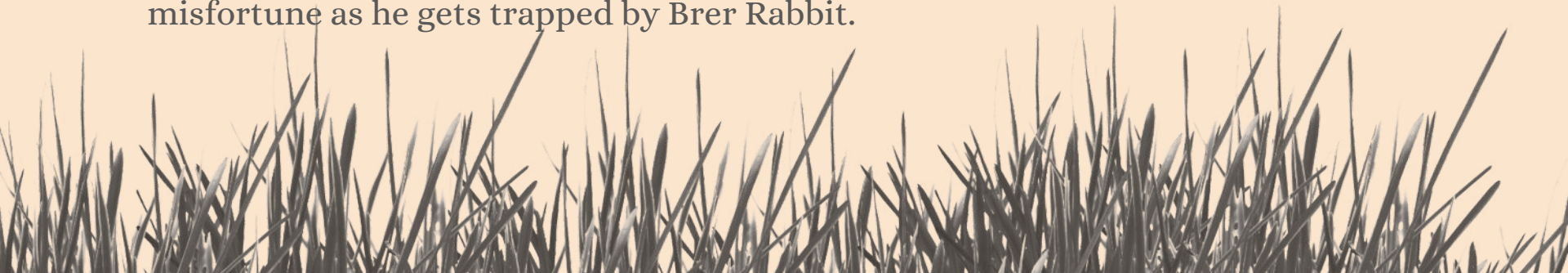
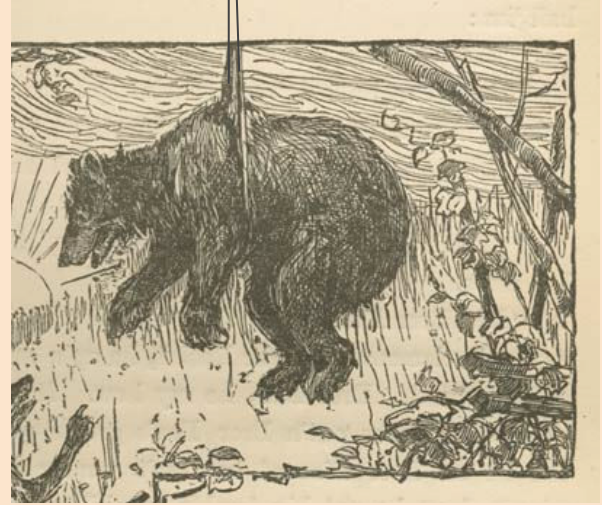
- Brer Fox is commonly shown as something like an antagonist in these stories. For example, in “Brer Rabbit and the Tar Baby”, he tries to trap Brer Rabbit.
- He is a nice guy
- Is sometimes trying to do the right thing
- Friendly with brer rabbit sometimes



Character: Brer Bear

Featured in: "Brer Rabbit Earns a Dollar-A-Minute"

- When Brer Rabbit gets trapped in Brer Fox's trap, Brer Bear is the one who gets tricked into taking his place.
- In the only story he is featured in, he gets tricked twice by Brer Rabbit, leading us to believe that he is not the brightest.
- Has a large family and cares about very much, to his misfortune as he gets trapped by Brer Rabbit.



Character: Tar Baby



Featured in: "Brer Rabbit and the Tar Baby",

- While she is not a real human baby, she's not even alive, she does play an important role in the story she's featured in as she is used by Brer Fox to catch Brer Rabbit.
- She is very quiet and does not speak at all, something that angers Brer Rabbit quickly.



Setting:

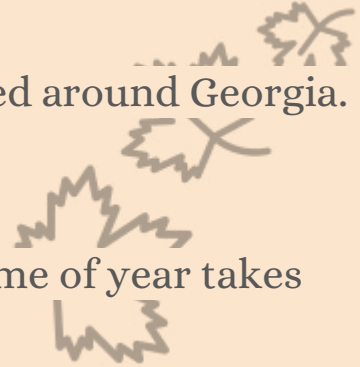


Location(s): Most of the stories take place in a forest or a farmland located around Georgia.

Approximate year date: 1880's ish

Time of year: In one of the stories titled, "Brer Fox Goes Hunting", the time of year takes place in Autumn.

Any more information: As the tall tales and folktales focus on the plot and story of Brer Rabbit, it can be hard to find descriptions of land located around due to the point of focus.



Summary of the story: Brer Rabbit and the Tar Baby

Brer Fox wanted to catch Brer Rabbit in a trap, so he made a baby out of tar. Brer Rabbit then encountered the tar baby and was so angered by it that he kicked it, getting stuck in the trap. Brer Fox then tries to think of a punishment. Brer Rabbit, being as clever as he is says that he would be fine with anything but the briar patch (the place where he was raised), and so he is thrown into the briar patch, where is safe and completely unharmed.

Climax: Brer Rabbit is stuck and Brer Fox tries to think of a punishment.

Falling Action: Brer Rabbit is thrown into the briar patch.

Denouement: Brer Rabbit is safe and completely unharmed.

Rising Action: Brer Rabbit encounters the tar baby is very angered that it will not speak to him.

Conflict: Brer Fox dislikes Brer Rabbit greatly.

Exposition: Brer Fox wants to trap Brer Rabbit using a tar baby.

Mood of the Story:

The author's mood is very comical and lighthearted.

“At long last, he heard someone whistling and chuckling to himself, and he knew that Brer Rabbit was coming up over the hill.”

“And Brer Rabbit skipped away as merry as a cricket while Brer Fox ground his teeth in rage and went home.”

“Brer Rabbit laughed and laughed at the sight of Brer Bear up in the sapling. He scampered down the road to Brer Fox's place and told him that his trap was sprung and the goober thief was hanging from the hickory tree.”

Author's Tone:



The author's tone is light hearted

“Well now, that rascal Brer Fox hated Brer Rabbit on account of he was always cutting capers and bossing everyone around.”

“But Brer Rabbit only laughed at him until finally Brer Fox laughed too. Then they both sat down and had some stew.”

“When Brer Bear was out of sight, Brer Rabbit jumped out of the mud. He washed himself off in the pond and then scampered home, chuckling to himself at how he'd escaped from Brer Fox and Brer Bear, and already thinking up a new way to get into Brer Fox's goober patch to get him some peas to eat.”

Find a theme:



A lesson learned by a character:

One of the lessons learned by Brer Bear in story three titled, “Brer Rabbit Earns a Dollar a Minute”, is that you should not think everything other people tell you is true.

How did they grow and change:

They were able to change at the end of the story by working on the trust being put into others as well as not making your determinations affect your decisions.

Why did the characters act the way they acted?

One of the reasons why Brer Bear acted the way he acted was because he wanted to gain money to support his family, while Brer Rabbit wanted to finesse his way out of the situation he was in.

What’s different at the end of the story:

At the end of the story there is character development for the protagonist as well. He learns however, that he can outsmart other animals in order to escape there being a negative outcome for his actions getting himself involved in more situations towards the end than the beginning.

What stays with you or the message you can take away from the story: Something that stays with the read is the idea that you should not be so trusting of everyone and that cleverness is a very important thing.

Question: Elements of a Tall tale



Which of these Tall tale elements did your stories include? Explain, use evidence from the text.

- ☐ a superhuman hero, usually a man, who is very strong (and/or very large):
- ☐ a narrator who is part of the story, or who witnessed the events
- ☒ a pleasant, folksy tone
- ☒ a folktale setting, such as a small town or village
- ☐ a problem that affects everyone
- ☐ unbelievable details told with [figurative language](#)
- ☐ the superhuman hero solves the problem with their strength
- ☐ the claim or belief that the story "really happened"

This tall tale included a folktale setting in a small community village surrounded by nature. In the tall tale “Brer Fox Goes Hunting” it states, “After spending a lazy day in his garden” as well as “Brer Rabbit went running down the road in the direction of the woods, listening for Brer Fox.”. The tone being developed in the story is also very folksy, as in the second story the narrator says, “Well, it was a crisp autumn day, don't ya know, and Brer Fox, he decided he wanted to go hunting. “



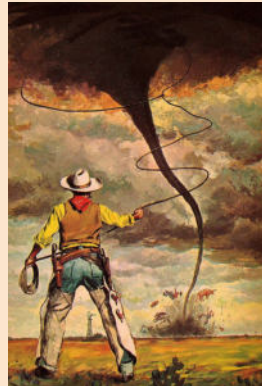
Thank you for listening!

Read this article as a group first:

[“What is a Tall Tale? Common Elements Explained” by Jennifer Gunner](#)

Story Options:

- [“Brer Rabbit”](#)
- [“Paul Bunyan”](#)
- [“Pecos Bill”](#)
- [“Tall Tales About Animals”](#)



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It is believed that the great depth and the extreme penetrating coldness
of the water in which these fish live, has caused them to grow their dense
coat of (usually) white fur.

Mounted by ROSS C. JOBE, Taxidermist of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario