

**The Groundhog's Tale**

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There once were four brothers named Gregory, Grant, Garret, and Gavin. The brothers were extremely close like no one had ever seen before. They grew up on their parentâ€™s farm learning to live off the land together. Their father taught them how to grow many crops and rotate the fields. The brothers took a liking to their fatherâ€™s business and soon they were coming up with farming techniques that made their family farm prosper. Their father told them this was because of their yearly pilgrimage to temple in the closest village to pray to the goddess of the seasons. The boys would ask the Horae to bless their farm by telling them when the seasons would shift. The Horae liked this family for their great farming ambitions and their loyalty to the goddesses. So the goddesses blessed the brothers and told each man when a different season would shift. Gregory was told when spring would become summer. Grant was given the knowledge of when summer would change to fall. Garret learned when fall became winter and the youngest brother Gavin was told when winter became spring.

For years the brotherâ€™s helped the farm thrive with the knowledge of the seasons and the blessings of the Horae. Many of farms near by struggled, but not the farm of the brothers. Soon other farmers began to watch for when the brotherâ€™s farm would plant or harvest and follow suit at their own farms.

As the brotherâ€™s farm became popular, so did their inventions. They invented special collection baskets for the harvest time and new ways to transport water to the roots of the crops. The best brother at inventing was the young Gavin. He spent more time in the work shop than he did in the fields. Any problem they had in the field, Gavin could fix with an invention.

The toughest problem was during the planting season. The brothers spent long days tilling the soil and turning it over and it was the only thing that kept their farm from running perfectly. Gavin spend sleepless nights in their workshop, sketching designs and making prototypes and testing them. After months of research. Gavin was successful. He had taken some wooden bars and a triangular curved piece of metal and attached a harness to one of the horses. The horse pulled the contraption through the dirt and the metal cut into the ground, tilling the soil. The wooden piece allowed Gavin to keep the contraption steady. He called his invention the plow.

The plow caught on quickly. It made the planting season much easier and the brothers praised Gavin for his excellent work. As other farmers stopped by to see if the brothers had started to plant they

noticed how efficient the plow was. The farmers could not believe the ease that the brothers turned over the soil with the invention and started to order plows from Gavin. As more and more farmers bought plows, more and more orders came in. Gavin had to stop working in the fields so that he could spend all day working on the orders.

Soon it became time for the brothers to make their journey to the temple to ask the Horae for another year of blessing. When Gregory, Grant, and Garret came to the workshop to get Gavin, the youngest brother waved them off claiming he did not need the blessing this year. His invention was so good that he didn't need to know when winter would become spring because the device would cut through frozen ground. The brothers argued with him, but he said he had too many orders and the three were forced to leave without him. When the brothers arrived at the temple, each one took their turn asking the goddesses for their blessing. The goddesses gave it willingly for they had come to love the brothers, but when no prayer came after Garret's. The goddesses became angry. They set out to find Gavin and when they did they saw how powerful he thought he had become. They took his silence as his way of saying that he no longer needed the goddesses. In their fury, the Horae struck down at Gavin.

Gavin shrunk down to the size of a small dog. Fur grew all over his body and a small snout formed on his face. Two teeth stuck out of his lip. His hands and feet became clawed. In their vengeance the Horae had turned the boy into a groundhog, for then he could become a plow himself and turn up the land, but the world would see him as a pest just as the goddess did.

Gavin, realizing what had happened, called out to the goddess, asking for forgiveness and begging to be returned to his human form. The goddess saw the greedy heart of the boy and refused, but one of them took pity on the boy. She granted him his blessing for the year to determine the change of winter into spring.

When the other brothers returned home they found no one in the workshop and believed their brother was dead. They thought the Horae had killed them for refusing to go to the temple. The boys wept for the loss of their brother and returned to the temple to ask the Horae to undo their curse, but the goddesses refused. The boys went home and did their best to care for the farm without their brother. As winter started winding down, the three brothers were thrown into despair as they were reminded of their brother. Suddenly, a groundhog appeared and stared at them. He turned from the brothers to his shadow and continued the pattern over and over again until Garret finally understood. He exclaimed that the groundhog was looking to his shadow to show that darkness that winter would bring as it

continued. Realizing that the animal at their feet was their brother, the boys praised the gods that he was not dead. Now every year the ground hog returns to warn all farmers when the seasons will change as his duty to the Horae.