

Traditional

THE THIEF AND THE SHAMAN

The Thief:

God, my God, I wander here
I've helped myself to the earth's crops
picked grass and berries
trees and stones I've used
I haven't touched the settlers' stuff
just what grows I've taken
Then someone came to me
and called me a thief

The Shaman:

You don't know the customs of the land
you don't even know about me
Look at what grows and watch out
Let the marks on the trees give you an answer
even the grass you have to see with other eyes

The Thief:

What sort are you
Are you a man
or do you think you are a god
Is it you who created the grass
got the trees to grow
Aren't you also just the dust of the earth
Like me you are also a creature
The grass isn't yours
The trees, the stones aren't ours either
Be master of your own things
What's good is good
I realize that you exist
you black wizard here on earth
You keep to your place
and enjoy that grass you grow

The Narrator:

The thief and the shaman fight
Finally they set off on a journey
over streams, over lakes
Trees and stones they cover
The old folks have yoiked to strangers
about the shaman's deeds
Times come, times pass
The shamans are the trouble-makers
They envy unbaptized realms
exhaust with their awful activity
He is still and silent a long time
says when he gets the chance
Be closer to yourself
He goes his own way and comes back
The shaman can't carry out anything
Is laughed at in his captivity
He holds his fingers straight, doesn't fold his hands

The Shaman:

Be the master now
Thief, you've become lord
of these berries and stones and grass
go away, far away from here
Where you come from, there you shall go
I still have power over you
I'm going, I'm taking, putting aside
I'm throwing you far away from here

The Thief:

Then you'll perish and vanish, you shaman

From Jakob Fellman. *Anteckningar under min vistelse i Lappmarken*. Andra delen,
"Lappska sånger och sagor". Helsingfors 1906.
English translation John Weinstock.