A boy called Peter lived with his parents in a village on the hillside. His parents, like most of the other people in the village, were sheep farmers. Everybody in the village took turns to look after the sheep, and when Peter was 10 years old, he was considered old enough to take his turn at shepherding.

But Peter was too easily bored, and he found it very tiresome being on the hillside with only sheep for company. So he’d find ways to amuse himself, running up rocks, climbing trees, chasing sheep, but nothing really kept him amused for very long. Then he hit upon a brilliant idea. He climbed to the top of the tallest tree, and started shouting towards the village: “Wolf! Wolf! Wooolf! Woohoolf!”

One of the villagers heard him, and got all the other men together, and armed with axes, hoes and forks, they ran out of the village to chase away the wolf and save their herd. Of course when they got there, they merely found Peter perched high up in his tree, laughing, and the sheep grazing peacefully. They were very annoyed with him. That night Peter got a spanking from his mother and was sent to bed without any supper.

For a while life went on again as normal, and people forgot about the incident. Peter managed to behave himself whenever it was his turn to mind the sheep. Until one day, he got really bored again. He picked up some sticks, and running through where the sheep were grazing, he started hitting the sticks together, and shouting: “Wolf! Wolf! Wooolf! Woohoolf! Woohooohoooolf!”
Sure enough, somebody in the village heard and before long the men all come running up the hill armed with their sticks and axes and hoes and shovels, ready to chase away the big bad wolf, and save their sheep and the poor shepherd boy. Imagine their consternation when they arrived in the field to see their herd grazing peacefully, and Peter sitting on a big rock, laughing uncontrollably.

That night Peter got a good telling off, an even better spanking from his mother, and was again sent to bed without any supper. For a few days people in the village went around moaning about Peter and his tricks, but before long things settled down again, and life resumed its normal uneventful course, and Peter had to do his turn at shepherding again every now and then. He decided he should behave himself, he really didn’t want to upset everybody all the time, and he especially didn’t want another one of his mother’s spankings!

Then, one afternoon when Peter was in the fields with the sheep, he noticed some of them were getting nervous, they started bleating and running hither and thither. Peter didn’t know what was the cause of this strange behaviour, sheep were running all over and making an ever louder racket. He got worried and decided to climb a tree so he could see what was going on. He balanced on a sturdy branch and looked around, what he saw almost made him fall out of the tree. There was a great big hairy wolf, chasing the sheep, biting at their legs, snapping at their tails. For a few seconds Peter was speechless. Then he started shouting: “Woolf! Woolof! Woohoooolooof!”

In the village an old man heard the shouting. “Oh no, not that Peter again”, he said, shaking his head. “What’s going on?” enquired another villager. “It’s that Peter again, he just can’t help himself”.

“That boy needs to be the centre of attention all the time”, said another. “Wait till his mother gets a hold of him”, added yet another. Nobody believed that this time there really was a wolf, and nobody got their hoe out, or their axe, or their shovel. All the sticks were left in the sheds and nobody rushed up the hillside. It wasn’t until very much later that afternoon, that
the boy sent to take over the shepherding from Peter found dead sheep’s bodies strewn all over the hillside, and Peter still up there in his tree, whimpering, that the villagers found out there really had been a wolf this time.

At last Peter learnt his lesson, that if you always tell lies, people will eventually stop believing you; and then when you’re telling the truth for a change, when you really need them to believe you, they won’t.

**Moral of the story:**

This short story teaches us a moral lesson that people refuse to believe a liar even when he is telling the truth. It is difficult to trust people who lie, so it’s important to always be truthful.