

My Blue-Speckled Hound

I put together this simple little song after finishing my first children's book, *The Red Fox and Johnny Valentine's Blue-Speckled Hound*. At the first Ann Arbor Book Day, I sang the song to a small audience with my arthritis and my ancient, left-handed five-string banjo, accompanied by the illustrator of the book, John Megahan, on his fiddle. The narrative in the last two repetitive verses are partly from the description by Billy E. Frye, Biology Professor, Dean, Vice President, and Provost of the University of Michigan, and subsequently Chancellor of Emory University, of his own fox-hunting experiences as a child, with his father and others in the southern Appalachian Mountains.

My blue-speckled hound'll chase the foxes all around,
Chase a fox the night along and keep on singin' me his song.

I could hear Speck a-bellerin' in the bottom cornfield;
He was follerin' that fox across the bottom cornfield.

The fox he was a-streakin' just as fast as he could fly;
Old Speck was right behind him, you could hear his cry.

The fox crossed the river on a sycamore log,
And crossin' right behind him was my blue speckled dog.

That fox he's a sneaky chicken thief, all right,
He sneaks around my chicken house every night.

He'd better be careful where he chooses to roam,
Or my blue-speckled hound will be a-trailin' him home.

I could hear the hounds a-closin' on the fox's tail,
Then he climbed Ol' Sutter's cliff and tricked 'em off his trail.

The fox has beat the hounds again and taken to his den,
So gather up your hounds, we'll catch him out some time again.

That old fox he's so clever that I love him like a friend,
When the moon is comin' full he'll give the hounds a run again.

Take me out one more time when the nights are clear,
To the mountains where the sounds'll carry far and near,

Where the crackles of the fire and the murmurs of the men,
And the music of the hounds can lift my soul up once again:

Yes, the crackles of the fire and the murmurs of the men,
And the music of the hounds out on the fox's trail again.

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C G7



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C



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