

# Are You Sleeping, Eanat?

Rightsholder: Iđut  
idut@idut.no  
www.idut.no

Original title: Oađát go, Eanat? © Iđut 2024

Sover du, Eanat? © Iđut 2024

Text: Linda Trast Lillevik

Illustrations: Gustav Kvaal

English Sample Translation by: Shari Gerber Nilsen © Iđut 2025

Financial support: NORLA Norwegian Literature Abroad



The sun's warm summer rays shine down on the settlement. Juoksa smiles to his little sister Illu. A long time ago, he was the one who was bathed in alder water. Blood-red water, coloured by the bark of the alder tree.

“The water will protect you, my sister,” Juoksa whispers.

There is still a long time before the hunt begins. At least ten full moons. He has butterflies in his stomach. He is looking forward to the celebration following the bear hunt. And to eating the delicious meat. But there are so many things he is wondering about.



“How can the bear pull the sun around in the sky?” Juoksa asks.

“Don’t think about it,” chirps the bird over Juoksa’s head.

Juoksa nods. But there is so much he wants to know. Where is the bear hibernating this time? And how can it pull the sun while it is resting?

“Don’t think so much, Juoksa. It’s just the way it is. And be careful! Remember that the dangerous animal can understand what you say, and can hear your thoughts. You must always use another name when you speak about the shaggy one. Then he won’t understand what is going to happen.”

The bird flies once around the alder tree, and then is gone.



Juoksa likes to climb up to a cave he knows about. The drawing on the wall there is so beautiful. It must be very old. "Always use another name," the bird said. The big animal can hear and understand.

Eanat. The other name can be Eanat!

The wall of the cave is cold against Juoksa's warm skin.

"Are you sleeping, Eanat? Until the beginning of spring awakens you?"



When the snow disappears from the top of Ørntind, Eanat will come out of his den.

But where does he rest? Only the birds and the mountains know.

And maybe the hunting god knows – the alder tree man. The one who brings good luck in the hunt. The one who gives them meat.

“Are you daydreaming, Juoksa?” the bird twitters. “If you want to find Eanat, you must look in every direction. You won’t find him at the tip of your ski.”

Juoksa laughs and looks around. Suddenly he stops laughing. Can it be ...? He almost loses his breath.



He can see a dark opening behind the alder tree. Not too big, and not too small.

What should he do now? The person who finds the den is supposed to make a circle around Eanat. And the one who makes the circle around the dangerous animal is supposed to drive a spear into the shaggy body. But he will never be able to do that. He is far too young to go hunting.

Juoksa does not notice the northern lights that are rippling and rolling across the sky. He does not notice the darkness that comes creeping.



Papa has told him about this. The ski tracks that become a circle. Eanat who is caught within the circle. What if Eanat awakens? Imagine if the animal throws himself onto him and tears him into little pieces!

The skis are gliding silently. Only his quick breaths can be heard.





His heart is beating so hard that his throat hurts. Now everything is ready. Now all they can do is wait.





“Who will drive the spear into Eanat?” Juoksa asks.

“You are too young,” says Papa, shaking his head.

“I know. But I was the one who made the ring around Eanat.”

Juoksa looks at Mama and Illu. He whispers, “When you are bigger, Illu, I’ll tell you everything. What the den looked like. And how frightened I was.”

Papa clears his throat. “There is still a while before the hunt begins. First there is the winter, when we go fishing for cod. That is how we can trade for the things we need.”

“I’ll help you, Papa.”

“Yes, you’re clever with the handline, I know that,” Papa laughs.

“And after the fishing trip, when winter is ending and spring is about to arrive, then it is time. Then Eanat will come out of his den. That will be in five full moons.”

“But who will drive the spear, Papa? Can you do it for me?”

“Yes, Juoksa. I can do it. And you will come with me.”

“For everything?”

Papa thinks about it. “Yes, nearly everything,” he nods.

