

A Prisoner in a Pear Tree

I have been attending Saturday Morning Hungarian classes in New Brunswick for a couple of years. Actually Andy Rosenberg turned me on to them and he is in my “Advanced HSL” (Hungarian as a Second Language) class. We have a great time together, reverting to adolescence, cracking up the class and driving the teacher crazy. It’s all in good fun and of course there are no grades (though there is homework). Here is the school’s website <http://magyariskolaj.wordpress.com/> Tunde Hagymasi is an instructor there.

Each year the school has a Christmas celebration and each class is privileged requested ... required ... forced ... to contribute a performance of some kind, a song, a skit, a poem, etc. It’s very cute when 5-year-olds do it, and very mortifying when 35 and 55 and 65-year-olds do it, and their Hungarian is much better too.

This year we decided to do “The 12 Days of Christmas”, in a Hungarian translation. We were to create a prop which we would hang on the tree after we said our line of the poem (which we recited, didn’t sing!) The first line of the poem was mine. Here it is, with a particular problematic word circled:

**Karácsony első napja van, köszönt és minden jót kíván
egy fogoly a körtefán.**

I know that word “fogoly”, it means “prisoner”. WTF?? “A Prisoner in a Pear Tree”? Well, it turns out, that the exact same word also means “partridge”, so it makes sense. I did not know that!

This learning inspired me to create the following prop, which got a nice laugh



