

The Cock And Hen A-Nutting

by Sir George Webbe Dasent
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Once on a time the cock and the hen went out into the hazel-wood to pick nuts; and so the hen got a nutshell in her throat, and lay on her back, flapping her wings.

Off went the cock to fetch water for her; so he came to the Spring and said:

'Dear good friend Spring give me a drop of water, that I may give it to Dame Partlet, my mate, who lies at death's door in the hazel- wood.'

But the Spring answered:

'You'll get no water from me until I get leaves from you.'

So the Cock ran to the Linden, and said:

'Dear good friend Linden, give me some of your leaves, the leaves I'll give to the Spring, and the Spring'll give me water to give to Dame Partlet my mate, who lies at death's door in the hazel-wood.'

'You'll get no leaves from me', said the Linden, 'until I get a red ribbon with a golden edge from you.'

So the Cock ran to the Virgin Mary.

'Dear good Virgin Mary, give me a red ribbon with a golden edge, and I'll give the red ribbon to the Linden, the Linden'll give me leaves, the leaves I'll give to the Spring, the Spring'll give me water, and the water I'll give to Dame Partlet my mate, who lies at death's door, in the hazel-wood.'

'You'll get no red ribbon from me', answered the Virgin Mary, 'until I get shoes from you.'

So the Cock ran to the Shoemaker and said

'Dear good friend Shoemaker, give me shoes, and I'll give the shoes to the Virgin Mary, the Virgin Mary'll give me a red ribbon, the red ribbon I'll give to the Linden, the Linden'll give me leaves, the leaves I'll give to the Spring, the Spring'll give me water, the water I'll give to Dame Partlet my mate, who lies at death's door in the hazel-wood.'

'You'll get no shoes from me', said the Shoemaker, 'until I get bristles from you.'

So the Cock ran to the Sow and said:

'Dear good friend Sow, give me bristles, the bristles I'll give to the Shoemaker, the Shoemaker'll give me shoes, the shoes I'll give to the Virgin Mary, the Virgin Mary'll give me a red ribbon, the red ribbon I'll give to the Linden, the Linden'll give me leaves, the leaves I'll give to the Spring, the Spring'll give me water, the water I'll give to Dame Partlet my mate, who lies at death's door in the hazel-wood.'

'You'll get no bristles from me', said the Sow, 'until I get corn from you.'

So the Cock ran to the Thresher and said:

'Dear good friend Thresher, give me corn, the corn I'll give to the Sow, the Sow'll give me bristles, the bristles I'll give to the Shoemaker, the Shoemaker'll give me shoes, the shoes I'll give to the Virgin Mary, the Virgin Mary'll give me a red ribbon, the red ribbon I'll give to the Linden, the Linden'll give me leaves, the leaves I'll give to the Spring, the Spring'll give me water, the water I'll give to Dame Partlet my mate, who lies at death's door in the hazel- wood.'

'You'll get no corn from me', said the Thresher, 'until I get a bannock from you.'

So the Cock ran to the Baker's wife and said:

'Dear good friend Mrs. Baker, give me a bannock, the bannock I'll give to the Thresher, the Thresher'll give me corn, the corn I'll give to the Sow, the Sow'll give me bristles, the bristles I'll give to the Shoemaker, the Shoemaker'll give me shoes, the shoes I'll give to the Virgin Mary, the Virgin Mary'll give me a red ribbon, the red ribbon I'll give to the Linden, the Linden'll give me leaves, the leaves I'll give

to the Spring, the Spring'll give me water, the water I'll give to Dame Partlet my mate, who lies at death's door in the hazel-wood.'

'You'll get no bannock from me', said the Baker's wife, until I get wood from you.'

So the Cock ran to the Woodcutter and said:

'Dear good friend Woodcutter, give me wood, the wood I'll give to the Baker's wife, the Baker's wife'll give me a bannock, the bannock I'll give to the Thresher, the Thresher'll give me corn, the corn I'll give to the Sow, the Sow'll give me bristles, the bristles I'll give to the Shoemaker, the Shoemaker'll give me shoes, the shoes I'll give to the Virgin Mary, the Virgin Mary'll give me a red ribbon, the red ribbon I'll give to the Linden, the Linden'll give me leaves, the leaves I'll give to the Spring, the Spring'll give me water, the water I'll give to Dame Partlet my mate, who lies at death's door in the hazel-wood.'

'You'll get no wood from me', answered the Woodcutter, 'until I get an axe from you.'

So the Cock ran to the Smith and said:

'Dear good friend Smith, give me an axe, the axe I'll give to the Woodcutter, the Woodcutter'll give me wood, the wood I'll give to the Baker's wife, the Baker's wife'll give me a bannock, the bannock I'll give to the Thresher, the Thresher'll give me corn, the corn I'll give to the Sow, the Sow'll give me bristles, the bristles I'll give to the Shoemaker, the Shoemaker'll give me shoes, the shoes I'll give to the Virgin Mary, the Virgin Mary'll give me a red ribbon, the red ribbon I'll give to the Linden, the Linden'll give me leaves, the leaves I'll give to the Spring, the Spring'll give me water, the water I'll give to Dame Partlet my mate, who lies at death's door in the hazel-wood.'

'You'll get no axe from me', answered the Smith, 'until I get charcoal of you.'

So the Cock ran to the Charcoal-burner and said

'Dear good friend Charcoal-burner, give me charcoal, the charcoal I'll give to the Smith, the Smith'll give me an axe, the axe I'll give to the Woodcutter, the Woodcutter'll give me wood, the wood I'll give to the

Baker's wife, the Baker's wife'll give me a bannock, the bannock I'll give to the Thresher, the Thresher'll give me corn, the corn I'll give to the Sow, the Sow'll give me bristles, the bristles I'll give to the Shoemaker, the Shoemaker'll give me shoes, the shoes I'll give to the Virgin Mary, the Virgin Mary'll give me a red ribbon, the red ribbon I'll give to the Linden, the Linden'll give me leaves, the leaves I'll give to the Spring, the Spring'll give me water, the water I'll give to Dame Partlet my mate, who lies at death's door in the hazel-wood.

So the Charcoal-burner took pity on the Cock, and gave him a bit of charcoal, and then the Smith got his coal, and the Woodcutter his axe, and the Baker's wife her wood, and the Thresher his bannock, and the Sow her corn, and the Shoemaker his bristles, and the Virgin Mary her shoes, and the Linden its red ribbon with a golden edge, and the Spring its leaves, and the Cock his drop of water, and he gave it to Dame Partlet, his mate, who lay there at death's door in the hazel-wood, and so she got all right again.