

## The Eagle and the Magpie

by Jean de La Fontaine

The eagle, through the air a queen,  
And one far different, I ween,  
In temper, language, thought, and mien,--  
The magpie,--once a prairie cross'd.  
The by-path where they met was drear,  
And Madge gave up herself for lost;  
But having dined on ample cheer,  
The eagle bade her, "Never fear;  
You're welcome to my company;  
For if the king of gods can be  
Full oft in need of recreation,--  
Who rules the world,--right well may I,  
Who serve him in that high relation:  
Amuse me, then, before you fly."  
Our cackler, pleased, at quickest rate  
Of this and that began to prate.  
No fool, or babbler for that matter,  
Could more incontinently chatter.  
At last she offer'd to make known--  
A better spy had never flown--  
All things, whatever she might see,  
In travelling from tree to tree.  
But, with her offer little pleased--  
Nay, gathering wrath at being teased,--  
For such a purpose, never rove,--  
Replied th' impatient bird of Jove.  
"Adieu, my cackling friend, adieu;  
My court is not the place for you:  
Heaven keep it free from such a bore!"  
Madge flapp'd her wings, and said no more.

*'Tis far less easy than it seems  
An entrance to the great to gain.  
The honour oft hath cost extremes  
Of mortal pain.  
The craft of spies, the tattling art,*

*And looks more gracious than the heart,  
Are odious there;  
But still, if one would meet success,  
Of different parishes the dress  
He, like the pie, must wear.*