

The Folk- and Fairy-Tales of Ludwig Bechstein: **Of Pullet and Cockerel**

Once upon a time there was a pullet and a cockerel who went up Nut Mountain together to search for nuts. The Cockerel said to the Pullet, “When you find a nut, make sure that you don’t eat it all yourself – give me half of it, or you’ll choke to death.” But the Pullet had found a nut and eaten it all herself, and the kernel had got stuck in her throat, making her choke, and she anxiously cried: “Cockerel, Cockerel, quickly fetch me a little water, or I’ll choke to death!” So the Cockerel ran post-haste to the Well and said, “Well, Well, give me water, so I may give the water to my Pullet, she’s lying up on Nut Mountain and going to suffocate.” And the Well said, “First go to the Bride and fetch me the wreath!” So the Cockerel ran to the Bride and said, “Bride, Bride, give me the wreath, so I may give the wreath to the Well, so the Well will give me water, so I may give the water to my Pullet, she’s lying up on Nut Mountain and going to choke.” But the Bride said, “First go to the Shoemaker and fetch me my shoes.” And when the Cockerel came to the Shoemaker, the latter said, “First go to the Sow and fetch me some fat.” And the Sow said, “First go to the Cow and fetch me milk.” And the Cow said, “First go to the Meadow and fetch me grass!” – Now when the Cockerel came to the Meadow and asked her for grass, she was generous and gave him a lot of flowers and grass; the Cockerel quickly gave these to the Cow and received milk for them, and for the milk the Pig yielded some of her fat, and the Shoemaker greased his leather with it and speedily made the Bride’s shoes, and the Bride cordially handed over the wreath for the shoes, and the Cockerel gave the same to the Well, and he at once bubbled out his clear water into the little vessel that Cockerel held underneath him. Running rapidly, Cockerel returned to Nut Mountain, but

when he came to Pullet, she had choked to death in the meantime. Then Cockerel gave a shrill cock-a-doodle-do from grief, which was heard by all the animals in the neighbourhood, and they ran up and wept for Pullet. And then six mice built a funeral cart, placed dead Pullet on it, hitched themselves to the front, and pulled the cart along. Now as they – Cockerel, dead Pullet, the Mice and the funeral cart – were passing along in this wise, the Fox came up behind and asked, “Where are you headed, Cockerel?” – “I’m going to bury my Pullet!” – “I’ll do that, you fool!” cried the fox, and he ate Pullet, because she had not been dead for long, so burying her in his stomach. And Cockerel cried in his grief, “Then I wish to die, to be with my Pullet.” – “So be it!” said the Fox, and he ate Cockerel so he could join his Pullet. Then the Mice wept for Cockerel, and so the Fox thought that they too wished to be dead, and he gobbled them down. But because the Mice were hitched to the cart, he gobbled the cart down with them, and the shaft thrust his heart out of place, so he fell flat on his back and gave up the ghost. Then a bird flew onto a lime-branch and sang, “Fox ate his heart out! Fox ate his heart out!”

