

The Poor Man and the Rich Man

Once upon a time there lived a poor man and a rich man who were neighbours. The rich man's dog often made mischief for the poor man. He used to run to the chicken coop and eat eggs, which the three hens used to lay. The poor man became very angry.

One day he lay in wait with a big cudgel and killed the miserable dog. The rich man trembled with rage. He ran up to the poor man and screamed, "Did you kill my dog?"

"I did, so that he shouldn't steal anymore!"

"Now you'll have to bark yourself, in my farmyard, and if you don't I'll sue you."

The poor man thought for awhile and then replied, "Don't sue me. I'll bark." He then went to the tavern and told the people about the punishment. The village pickpockets were pleased about the punishment. They whispered something amongst themselves and treated the poor man generously.

When it grew dark the poor man, who was slightly tipsy, sat himself on the threshold of the rich man's house and started to bark, "Bow-wow-wow! Bow-wow-wow!"

Meanwhile the pickpockets opened the door of the storehouse and carried off all the contents. The rich man, satisfied that the poor man was guarding his property, fell fast asleep. In the morning he glanced into the storehouse and held his head in desperation.

"Why didn't you tell me that thieves had gotten into the storehouse?" he said as he pounced on the poor man.

"And was your dog able to speak?" he asked.

The rich man chased away his neighbour and never bothered him again.