

The Cat and the Cock

Once upon a time a cat and a cock lived together as brothers. One day the cat had to go to the forest to cut some wood, so he said to the cock, “Brother Chanticleer, sit near the stove and help yourself to a tasty, crusty roll while I go to the forest to cut some wood. Be careful, though. If the fox comes along do not open the door!”

With these words of warning he went off. Presently, sure enough: who should come by but Foxy-Loxy, who said, “Brother Chanticleer, open the door! If you don’t obey me, I shall break the window. Then I’ll eat your borsch and you, too.”

The cock heard her and replied,

“To-tock, to-tock,

Do I hear a knock?

Whilst the cat’s away

Outside you must stay.”

But the fox paid no attention. She broke the window, ate the borsch and went off with the cock.

The little cock called out to the cat,

“O pussy my love, O pussy my dear

The fox is carrying me off I fear,

Beyond the darksome maple grove,

Beyond the mountains sharp and steep

Where noisy rivers rush and leap.”

Well, the cat heard him, rushed up, rescued the cock, took him home and cautioned him once more, "Take care, Brother Chanticleer. When the fox comes along do not answer her, for this time I shall go deeper into the woods." So off he went.

Soon after this, who should come by but Foxy-Loxy, who said, "Brother Chanticleer, open the door! If you don't obey me, I shall break the window. Then I'll eat your borsch and you, too."

The cock heard her and replied,

"To-tock, to-tock,

Do I hear a knock?

Whilst the cat's away

Outside you must stay."

But the fox paid no attention. She broke the window, ate the borsch and carried off the cock. The little cock called out to the cat,

"O pussy my love, O pussy my dear

The fox is carrying me off I fear,

Beyond the darksome maple grove,

Beyond the mountains sharp and steep

Where noisy rivers rush and leap."

He sang this song once, but the cat did not hear him. He sang it a second time, louder. The cat came running to his rescue, brought him home and said to him, "Now, I am going off very far today and no matter how loud you cry, I shall not be able to hear you. So keep quiet and do not answer the fox." So off he went.

Presently, along came Foxy-Loxy who said, “Brother Chanticleer, open the door! If you don’t obey me I shall break the window. Then I’ll eat your borsch and you, too.” The cock heard her and replied,

“To-tock, to-tock,

Do I hear a knock?

Whilst the cat’s away

Outside you must stay.”

But the fox paid no attention. She broke the window, ate the borsch and carried off the cock. The little cock called out to the cat,

“O pussy my love, O pussy my dear

The fox is carrying me off I fear,

Beyond the darksome maple grove,

Beyond the mountains sharp and steep

Where noisy rivers rush and leap.”

He sang out once, twice, thrice, but the cat couldn’t hear him. So the fox carried off the cock to her home.

In the evening the cat came home, but Brother Chanticleer wasn’t there. He began to worry, so he made himself a little bandura to play on and took a bag and a hammer. He went to the fox’s house and, sitting down, began to sing,

“Foxy-Loxy has a house that is new,

She has four daughters who are beauties, too.

And last of her children is Philip, her son.

O come to the fair, my dearest one!

See how the tambourines jingle and shake.

Listen to the blare the trumpets make!”

Now Foxy-Loxy herself was busy baking bread, so her oldest daughter said to her, “Let me go, mother, and see who is playing so beautifully and give me a loaf of bread.”

“Alright then,” said Foxy-Loxy. And she gave her a small loaf of bread.

The oldest daughter went out and the cat was ready for her. He dealt her a sharp rap on her nose and threw her into his bag. Then once more he started to sing. Well, after a while the second daughter wanted to go out and see who was playing so beautifully, so she said to her mother, “Let me go out, mother.” Foxy-Loxy replied, “Alright the.” And she gave her a small loaf of bread.

So the second daughter went out and the cat was ready for her. He dealt her a sharp rap on her nose and thrust her into his bag. Then the third and fourth daughters went out and they got the same sort of treatment from the cat. Philip, the son, waited for a while and when his sisters didn’t return he said, “Let me go, mother, and chase them home. I wonder why they are so slow.” So he went out. The cat did the same thing to him—gave him a sharp rap on his nose and thrust him into his bag.

Then the cat ran into the house and killed Foxy-Loxy. Then he looked around and saw the cock who had a broken leg, for Foxy-Loxy was preparing to put him in a pot and cook him. The cat mended the cock’s leg and brought him home.

So the two friends are still living together. They have lots of food to eat and are leading a very happy life.