

Text of *The Careless Chicken*

Title: The careless chicken.

Illustrator: Alfred Crowquill

Author, etc.: Krakemsides of Burstenoudelafen, Baron, 1804-1872.

Published: [London] : Grant & Griffith, [1853?]

THE MOTHER'S ADVICE.

A wise old Hen, the choicest breed
Of all the neighborhood;
Was celebrated for her care
In bringing up her brood.
She taught her little callow chicks,
To scratch and pick with grace;
She taught them how, and where to live,
And yet to keep their place.
With happy cluck, she spewed her joy,
As they chirped gaily round;
And listened with their tiny ears,
To her advice profound.
But one, a little gaudy Cock,
Was quite, unlike the rest,
For with a vain and trifling mind,
He thought that he knew best.
So turned an inattentive ear,
To all that she might say;
And left the little family
To idle and to play.

THE FOX GIVES BAD ADVICE TO THE WICKED LITTLE CHICKEN.

A Fox, who was a shocking thief,
Was prowling near the spot,
And saw the little charming brood,
That good old Hen had got.
He also saw, with roguish eye,
The careless idle one;
And knew from long experience,
That something might be done.
Full well he knew when children scorned
The wisdom of their friends,
That they became the fitting tools,
To answer wicked ends.
So much to Chick's astonishment,
He popped above the fence;
And thus addressed the wond'ring bird,
With seeming innocence;
"Good evening, my noble Sir,
I pine to be your friend;
And hope with me this evening,
At my own house you'll spend.
You need not tell your Mother, Sir,

You're wise enough, I think,
To know what things you'd best avoid;
And what to eat and drink.
For old folks now have grown so prim,
That " Here a horrid growl,
Made Reynard start off red post haste
And scared the little fowl.

THE GUARDIAN.

It was an honest, noble dog,
That heard the rascal's prate;
And could he but have collared him,
Would soon have sealed his fate.
But now the mischief had been done,
The Chicken sped away;
Resolved to take the rogues advice
And be a little gay.
Nor heed his mother's frumpish stuff,
So solemn and so staid;
As if she meant to keep his life,
For ever in the shade.

THE APPOINTMENT KEPT.

The falling twilight quickly came
And covered up the day;
And all the little feathered tribe,
Were silent on the spray.
The chickens nestled warm and snug,
Beneath their mother's wing;
All happy, calm, and fast asleep,
Except, one wicked thing.
For him the Fox lay watching near,
Close crouching to the ground;
With trembling ears outstretched, to catch
The very softest sound.

THE FOOLISH CHICKEN IS PROUD OF HIS DANGEROUS ACQUAINTANCE.

He came! the little wicked thing,
With palpitating heart;
The Fox jumped up, and made a bow,
Then hurried to depart.
It really was ridiculous,
To see that little bird,
With outstretched wings, and strutting gait
Which made him quite absurd.
He was so proud of his big friend,
Who talked such wondrous stuff;
He thought, to match his mightiness,
He could not strut enough!

**THE CHICKEN DOUBTS
WHEN HE SEES THE FOX'S HOME.**

On, on, they walked in senseless talk,
Until they reached a wood;
Where, Reynard said, his little park,
And pretty villa stood.
There all at once he stopped before,
A pile of hanging rock;
"This is my house," he slyly said,
"There is no need to knock;
The door you see, is open wide,
To welcome every friend;
As is my heart, and on this heart,
You firmly may depend."
Then without more ado, he crawled
Within his caverned den;
The Chicken would have fain gone back,
Had it been prudent then.
So with a sigh, and trembling feet,
He followed Mr. Fox
Within the damp and lonely den,
He called his country box.

LATE HOURS.

Ah! shocking was the night they spent,
The Fox roared many a stave;
And rattled off his ribald jokes,
That echoed through the cave.
He sang the praise of Highwaymen,
In many lengthened lays;
As if the villains for their crimes,
Had merited such praise
The Chicken who was quite unused
To company like that,
Was losing all his spirits fast,
And felt most sadly flat.
He had been used to go to bed,
And proper hours to keep ;
So over Mr. Fox's fun,
He dropped off fast asleep.

THE FOX FATTENS UP HIS VICTIM.

At early peep of day, the Fox
Took out his gay young friend,
And walked him in amidst some corn,
Which promised without end.
He told him this was all his own,
Indeed, he had couch more;
That he had planted all for him,
That he might feast galore.
And didn't little Chick pick up,
And chirrup taut his joy;
And felt that he could eat all day,

And yet should never cloy.
But suddenly a voice was heard
The Fox, with noiseless tread,
Sneaked like a thief from out the corn,
And to his cavern sped.
The Chicken thought this rather strange,
For he'd suspicious grown,
And doubted very much, that corn
Was quite that Fox's own.

THE DREADFUL DISCOVERY.

The Fox, though quite a jolly chap,
Had got his own odd ways;
For instance, he'd go out at nights,
"And stop at home o' days."
And then he had a private room,
Both dark, and damp, and low,
Wherein he hoped his little friend,
Would never try to go.
This very thing was just the way,
To make the Chicken doubt;
And he resolved to pop in there,
The first time he went out.
He did! my gracious, what a sight
His sickening heart grew cold;
For there were slaughtered ducks and hen:
Too many to he told.
He recognizes many friends
Amidst those heads and tails
He faints, he reels, he drops down flat,
His little courage fails!
The Fox that moment popping in,
Beheld him stretched out there;
And felt that he had made a mess,
And spoilt the whole affair.

THE FOX'S HYPOCRISY.

When dragged into the open air,
The Chicken soon came too;
The Fox was calmly watching him,
Much puzzled what to do.
For he'd resolved to fatten Chick
Into a comely size;
For really, row, he was so small,
He wasn't any prize.
So taking out his handkerchief,
He wiped his peering eyes;
And thus addressed the trembling Chick,
With many tears and sighs.

A LAME EXCUSE.

"No wonder, best beloved friend,
That you now feel so ill;

Since you have seen that horrid sight,
So much against my will.
They are the sad remains, my dear,
Left by that savage man,
From out whose ruthless grasp I strive
To save all that I can."
The little Chick, deceitful grown,
Said he was satisfied;
And praised him that he'd undertake
To bury all who'd died.
But in his little head he thought,
The warning was a dose;
So he resolved to keep awake,
And watch him pretty close.

THE FOX DISCOVERED.

The Chicken who now made his roost
In safety up on high;
Was startled from his first short nap,
By one loud struggling cry.
He quivered as he rubbed his eyes,
To dissipate the sleep ;
And crept towards the cavern's mouth,
Resolved to have a peep.
There was the rascal! brigand! thief!
Just crawling up the rock,
Gripping within his savage jaws,
His reverend pa, the Cock !!!
"Villain, he cried, let go your hold,
Or else I'll raise my voice;
And raise the neighborhood on you,
So, murderer! take your choice."
"Fool!" screamed the Fox! in doing so,
He opened wide his teeth;
Of course, he lost the noble Cock,
Who struggled underneath.

THE CHICKEN'S DANGER.

The Fox beheld with savage scowl,
The Cock fly through the wood ;
Then turned his eyes with fury full,
To where the Chicken stood.
"You meddling blunderer ! fool ! fool !
Since you will interfere,
And make me lose my dinner thus,
You're doomed for being here.
I did intend to pamper you,
Upon the best of food,
Until you had grown more worth while,
More like to do me good."
He made a spring, the Chicken screamed
He shut his eyes to die;
A growl was heard of dreadful note,
And one despairing cry.

That faithful dog has Reynard dawn,
With one strong mighty bound;
And pins him, with the gripe of death,
Upon the blood stained ground.
The trembling Chicken flew in fear,
Nor rested in his flight,
Until he saw the homestead dear,
Appear a welcome sight.

HIS REPENTANCE.

Next morn before his mother's face.
And all the chickens round,
He stood abashed and penitent,
With eyes cast to the ground.
He owned how wrong, and rash he'd been,
A wild and wicked thing;
His mother chided not that night
He slept beneath her wing!