

The Hawk and the Hen

Contributed by The Storyteller
Thursday, 26 June 2008

A hawk flying about in the sky one day decided that he would like to marry a hen whom he often saw on earth. He flew down and searched until he found her, and then asked her to become his wife. She at once gave her consent on the condition that he would wait until she could grow wings like his, so that she might also fly high. The hawk agreed to this and flew away, after giving her a ring as an engagement present and telling her to take good care of it.

The hen was very proud of the ring and placed it around her neck. The next day, however, she met the cock who looked at her astonishment and said:

"Where did you get that ring? Do you not know that you promised to be my wife? You must not wear the ring of anybody else. Throw it away."

And the hen threw away the beautiful ring.

Not long after this the hawk came down bringing beautiful feathers to dress the hen. When she saw him coming she was frightened and ran to hide behind the door, but the hawk called to her to come and see the beautiful dress he had brought her.

The hen came out, and the hawk at once saw that the ring was gone.

"Where is the ring I gave you?" he asked. "Why do you not wear it?"

The hen was frightened and ashamed to tell the truth so she answered:

"Oh, sir, yesterday when I was walking in the garden, I met a large snake and he frightened me so that I ran as fast as I could to the house. Then I missed the ring and I searched everywhere but could not find it."

The hawk looked sharply at the hen, and he knew that she was deceiving him. The he said to her:

"I did not believe that you could behave so badly. When you have found the ring I will come down again and make you my wife. But as punishment for breaking your promise, you must always scratch the ground to look for the ring. And every chicken of yours that I find, I shall snatch away."

Then he flew away, and ever since all the hens throughout the world have been scratching to find the hawk's ring.