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The pink and blue eggs

Abbie Phillips Walker

"I saw them with my own eyes," said old White Hen, standing on one foot with her neck outstretched and her bill wide open. "One was pink and the other was blue. They were just like any other egg as far as size, but the color....pink and blue eggs! Whoever could have laid them?" Old White Hen looked from one to the other of the group of hens and chickens as they stood around her.

"Well, I know that I didn't," said Speckled Hen.

"Don't look at me," said Brown Hen. "I lay large white eggs, and you know it, every one of you. They are the best eggs in the yard."

"Oh, I would not say that," said White Hen. "You seem to forget that the largest egg ever seen in this yard was laid by me, and it was a little on the brown color; white eggs are all well enough, but give me a brown tone for quality."

"You only laid such a large egg once," replied Brown Hen, "and everybody thought it was a freak egg."

"It is plain to understand how you feel about that egg," said White Hen, "but it does not help us to find out who laid the blue and pink eggs."

"Where did you see them?" asked Speckled Hen.

"On the table, by the window of the farm-house," said old White Hen. "I flew up on a barrel that stood under the window, and then I stretched my neck and looked in the window, and there on the table, in a little basket, I saw those strange-looking eggs."

"Perhaps the farmer had bought them for some one of us to sit on and hatch out," said Brown Hen.

"Well, I refuse to do it," said White Hen. "I think it would be an insult to put those gaudy things into our nests."

"I am sure I will not hatch them," said Speckled Hen. "I would look funny hiking around here with a blue chick and a pink chick beside me, and I a speckled hen. No! I will not mother fancy-colored chicks; the farmer can find another hen to do that."

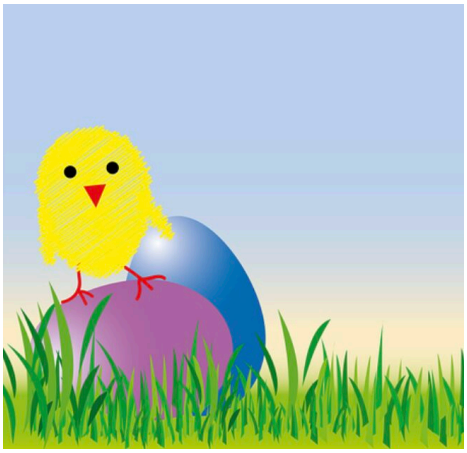
"You do not think for a minute that I would do such a thing, I hope," said Brown

Hen. "I only mentioned the fact that the farmer might have such an idea"

"Perhaps White Hen is color-blind," said Speckled Hen. "The eggs she saw may be white, after all."

"If you doubt my word or my sight go and look for yourselves," said White Hen, holding her head high. "You will find a blue and a pink egg, just as I told you."

Off ran Speckled Hen and Brown Hen, followed by many others, and all the chicks in the yard.



One after another they flew to the top of the barrel and looked in the window at the eggs White Hen had told them of. It was all too true; the eggs were blue and pink.

"Peep, peep, peep, peep, we want to see the blue and pink eggs, too," cried the chickens. "We never saw any and we want to look at them."

"Oh dear! Why did we talk about this with them around?" said Brown Hen. "They will not be quiet unless they see, and how in the world will I get them up to that window?"

"Did it ever occur to you not to give them everything they cry for?" said White Hen. "Say 'No' once in a while; it will save you a lot of trouble."

"I cannot bear to deny the little darlings anything," said Brown Hen, clucking her little brood and trying to quiet them.

"Well, you better begin now, for this is one of the things you will not be able to do." said White Hen, strutting over to the dog-house to tell the story of the blue and pink eggs to Towser.

"Wouldn't it be just too awful if the farmer puts those eggs in one of our nests?" asked White Hen, when she had finished her story.

"Oh--oh!" laughed Towser, "that is a good joke on you; don't know your own eggs when you see them."

"Don't tell me I laid those fancy-colored eggs," said White Hen, looking around to see if any of her companions were within hearing distance. "I know I never did."

"But you did," said Towser, laughing again. "I heard the farmer say to his daughter, 'If you want eggs to color for Easter take the ones that White Hen laid; they are not so large as the others, and I cannot sell them so well.'"

"Towser, if you will never mention what you have just told me I will tell you

where I saw a great big bone this morning," said White Hen. "I was saving it for myself. I like to pick at one once in a while, but you can have it if you promise to keep secret what you just told me."

Towser promised, and White Hen showed where it was hidden.

A few days after Brown Hen said: "I wonder when farmer is going to bring out those fancy eggs. If he leaves them in the house much longer no one will be able to hatch them."

"Oh! I forgot to tell you that those eggs were not real eggs, after all," said White Hen, "but only Easter eggs for the little girl to play with, so we had all our worry for nothing!"

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