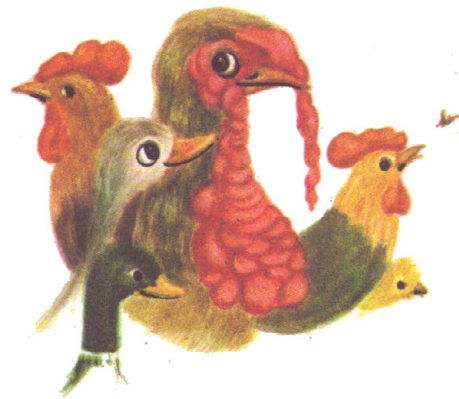




*in my
courtyard*

in my courtyard

Text by **EMIL GİRLEANU**



Published by
BROWN WATSON
London



Published in the United Kingdom by Brown Watson,
43/44 Great Windmill Street, London W.1.

MCMLXXX



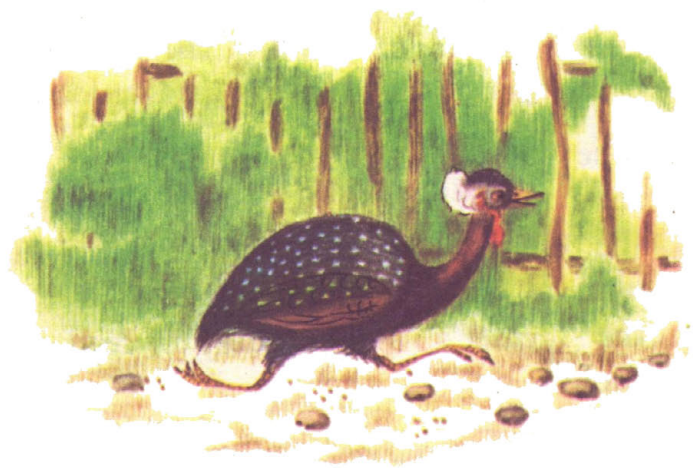
I have a beautiful farm in the country. It lies near the silver river and a thick hedge protects the courtyard, with tall poplars to keep off the strong winds of winter.

In the yard the hens and ducks are free to wander searching for food. All day long they scratch and poke amidst the dirt and dust, seeking any grains that might have been forgotten when they were given their daily corn. "Cock-a-doodle-doo!" That cry comes from the fine bird with the haughty air. He is the rooster, the king of the courtyard, the most important bird there. All day he struts about, his head high and his spurs bent, ready to fight. In front of him a group of hens, with feathers like weeping willows, cluck and chatter in the dirt.



Every day is much the same. The rooster and hens spend their time scratching and searching in the yard, all rushing to the fence with a great clacking noise when the farmer's wife comes to feed them.

The pretty guinea hen, with her tiny head feathers like a petticoat, is the housekeeper of the yard. She rushes about all day trying to tidy up and make sure everything is in its proper place. She has a difficult job and never stops working.



With gleaming white feathers, yellow webbed feet and beak, and downy grey wings, you cannot mistake the file of geese as they walk majestically in a long line across the yard. They follow close behind one another, always in step, almost as if one had swallowed a thread which joined them all together!

Some people say that ducks are always widows, for they think they are always grumbling and quacking to themselves. This little group is drinking at the water trough. Perhaps they are saying that the water is too cold — or too hot,



but they like to have a long drink, opening their little shovel-like beaks to quench their thirst.

The warm sun beats down on the farmyard. Lulled by the warmth are the sleepy broody hens, who hatch their eggs and then cluck and fuss after all the tiny, fluffy yellow chicks that run in the yard. The chicks grow fast and need a lot of care. Some of them will jump up on to their mother's back and watch the others at play, then spring off to join in the fun. Two of them have caught the same worm and both are pulling hard. They are having a tug of war! I wonder

which will win. Another little one looks surprised when the worm pops out from the ground. Mother watches them all the time, her little eyes darting here and there so as not to miss anything.

At first the tiny chicks have soft fluffy feathers, which soon grow hard as they grow bigger and stronger. When they are young, they like to hide under their mother's big wings, for they feel safe and warm there.

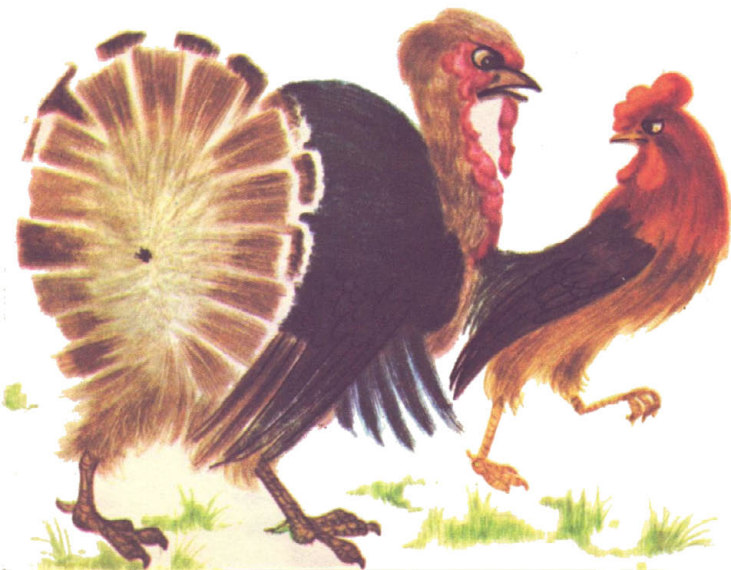
It is a very hot day. Two young roosters feel angry and it does not take much to start a quarrel.

"I'm braver than you," boasts one.



"No, I can beat you any day," retorts the other.

They both stand facing one another, heads lowered, spurs out, ready to attack. For a few minutes they glare at each other, tail feathers up and eyes gleaming.



One of the biggest birds in the yard is the turkey. "Gobble, gobble, gobble," he calls as he strides along. The rooster and hens gather round to tell him of the two young roosters who wanted to fight. "We want none of that here," he says.

All the hens and ducks gather round the turkey and the rooster. They are all looking up at the sky. What can they see? High above their heads flies an eagle, looking for prey. He can see the hens, chicks and ducks in the yard below and swoops lower to take a closer look. "Gobble, gobble, gobble," says the turkey, "don't you dare

come down into our yard.” “Cock-a-doodle-doo!” says the rooster. “Keep away from here.”

The eagle swoops really low, then, seeing the turkey and rooster are ready to fight, decides to seek easier prey.

The turkey watches the eagle fly far away, then he carries on his search for food in the farmyard. “Quite enough excitement for one day,” he grumbles and the rooster agrees.

All is peaceful now and the hens carry on with their clucking and pecking, scratching the dirt for food.





Translated by ANA CARTIANU
Illustrated by ILEANA CEAUȘU-PANDELE

Editor CARMEN PAȚAC
Layout FLORICA PREDA

Ion Creangă Publishing House
Bucharest
All rights reserved
Printed in Romania

Материалы на английском - качайте бесплатно:
<http://english-books.nnm.ru>



BL/1

ISBN 0-7097-4752-7