

where some grain had been spilled. The sleepy chickens were gathering in the open front of the shed, craning their necks with little murmurings of content, and one by one hopping up to their roosts among the rafters. From the sloping pasture above the farmyard came a clatter of bars let down, and a soft tunk-a-tonk of cowbells as the cows were turned out from milking.

Into this scene of secure peace broke the three foxes, rushing silently from behind the stable. Before the busy ducks could take alarm or the sleepy chickens fly up out of danger, the enemy was among them, darting hither and thither and snapping at slim, feathered necks. Instantly arose a wild outcry of squawking, quacking, and cackling; then shrill barking from the cur, who was in the pasture with the cows, and angry shouting from the farmer, who came running at top speed down the pasture lane. The marauders cared not a jot for the barking cur, but they had no mind to await the arrival of the outraged farmer. Having settled some grudges by snapping the necks of nearly a dozen ducks and fowls, each slung a plump victim across his back and trotted leisurely away across the brown furrows of the potato-field toward the woods. Just as they were about to disappear under