

What Happened To Henny Penny

BY LADY BELL

CHARACTERS.

HENNY PENNY.
COCKIE LOCKIE.
TURKY LURKY.
DUCKY DADDLES.
GOOSEY POOSEY.
MR. FOX.

H. P.--Oh dear me! Oh dear me! What was it, I wonder? What could it have been? I must scream for help. Help! Help!

Enter COCKIE LOCKIE.

C. L.--What's the matter? Henny Penny, what is happening?

H. P.--Oh dear me! I don't know what it was, that is the worst of it.

C. L.--You don't know what it was?

H. P.--How should I, when I never saw it? It fell on to my head.

C. L.--*What* fell on to your head? What a stupid hen you are!

H. P.--I was under a beanstack pecking about, and suddenly something fell from the top of the stack on to my head. I thought at first it was a bean or a piece of stick, but now I think of it, I am sure it was something much heavier--a piece of the sky, or something of that sort.

C. L.--A piece of the sky falling out! But, Henny, this is serious.

H. P.--Of course! That's what I feel. That's why I screamed at once for help.

C. L.--You see, if the sky is coming to bits, I think the Queen of England ought to know it.

H. P.--I think she ought. Let's go and tell her!

C. L.--Agreed! We'll start at once. I'll just crow first very loud that everybody may know something is happening.

H. P.--Very well, and I'll cluck.

(They crow and cluck.)

C. L.--Now, then, we can start.

(A voice outside is heard.)

VOICE.--Hullo there! Cockie Lockie! Henny Penny!

C. L.--There's that stupid Ducky Daddles.

Enter DUCKY DADDLES.

C. L.--Well, Ducky Daddles, what do you want?

D. D.--I just wanted to come and have a chat. I saw you and Henny Penny starting off for a pleasant walk together, and I thought I'd come too.

C. L.--Ah! but this is no common walk.

H. P.--Indeed it is not.

D. D.--Why, where are you going to?

C. L.--We're going to London to see the Queen.

D. D.--The Queen! What for?

H. P.--To tell her a most important piece of news.

C. L.--A great piece of the sky fell out close to Henny Penny's head, and nearly killed her.

D. D.--Dear me! That is important. The Queen ought to know it at once. I'll come with you.

C. L.--You! Do you think you can walk so far?

D. D.--Oh, dear, yes! Besides, I daresay, we shall find some place on the road where we can get slugs or snails, or something of that sort, in case I feel faint.

C. L.--Very well, then, are you ready? Now we'll start.

D. D.--Come on, then. I'll just quack first to let people know where I am.

(Quacks. They prepare to start off arm in arm. A voice outside is heard.)

VOICE.--Hullo! Cockie Lockie! Henny Penny! Ducky Daddles!

C. L.--Now, what is it? We shall never get off at this rate.

D. D.--It is that silly Goosey Poosey.

Enter GOOSEY POOSEY.

G. P.--There you are, Ducky Daddles! I've been looking for you everywhere!

C. L.--What do you want?

G. P.--I just wanted to see what you were doing, and have a chat. What a horrid day it is! the roads are so dry there is no walking in them.

D. D.--Well, I am sorry I've not time to stay with you. I'm just off to London to see the Queen.

G. P.--You, Ducky Daddles! Something very strange must have happened to make you go so far.

D. D.--Indeed it has, and what do you think?

C. L.--Guess what fell on to Henny Penny's head.

G. P.--An acorn, or perhaps even a chestnut.

D. D.--A chestnut! Oh, if that were all! No, my friend. It was a piece of the sky, a great, solid slab of blue sky, that fell *clump* on to the top of poor Henny Penny's head, and nearly killed her.

G. P.--Oh, how terrible! Have you sent for the police?

C. L.--No, we're going to London to tell the Queen. We think she ought to know.

G. P.--Indeed she ought, and at once. I'll come with you to see what she says.

C. L.--Very well! Only you must not keep waiting to splash about in all the puddles, then.

G. P.--Of course not, when I'm out walking on business.

C. L.--Very well, then, we'll start without losing any more time.

G. P.--I'll just hiss first in case there's an enemy in the road. (*Hisses.*) Now, then, I'm ready.

C. L.--Then let us start.

(COCKIE LOCKIE *arm in arm with* HENNY PENNY. GOOSEY POOSEY *arm in arm with* DUCKY DADDLES. *A voice outside is heard.*)

VOICE.--Cockie Lockie! Henny Penny! Goosey Poosey! Ducky Daddles!

C. L.--Dear me! We shall never get to London.

G. P.--It's that gobbling Turkey Lurky!

Enter TURKY LURKY.

T. L.--Ha! ha! my friends. This is very nice. Oho! Aha! Where are you all off to so merrily?

C. L.--Not merrily, indeed! Our business is most serious.

T. L.--You make my feathers stand on end. What *is* the matter?

G. P.--Haven't you heard? The most terrible thing has happened!

H. P.--One half of the sky fell on me as I was sitting under a haystack, and we don't know what is going to happen next.

T. L.--Oh dear! This *is* terrible! Suppose the other half were to come down?

C. L.--Exactly! That's what we're afraid of. We're going to the Queen of England to see what she can do.

T. L.--A very good thing to do! I'll come with you and explain it all to her. Oho!

C. L.--Are you sure you're not too fat to walk so far?

T. L.--Too fat! Aha! On the contrary, I shall make you look respectable. We shall be admitted to the Queen at once. I'll just gobble first to let her know we're coming.

(Gobbles. They prepare to start as before, TURKY in front. A voice outside is heard.)

VOICE.--Stop! Stop! Good people, one moment, if you please.

D. D.--Why it's Mr. Fox!

H. P.--Is it safe to let him come?

T. L.--Oh dear, yes! There are quite enough of us to be a match for him. Oho! Aha!

Enter MR. FOX.

MR. F.--Good afternoon, my friends. What a pleasant gathering you have here! You look as though you were going to enjoy yourselves.

C. L.--Alas! No! Nothing so festive. We are going to London on most serious business.

MR. F.--To London?

G. P.--Yes, indeed! The whole sky has got loose and is slipping about in the most dangerous manner.

D. D.--It would have killed Henny Penny if she hadn't got under a beanstack.

MR. F.--Oh how horrible! What shall we do?

C. L.--We're going to London to tell the Queen.

MR. F.--To London! Why, that is capital! I'm going there myself.

D. D.--Are you, indeed!

MR. F.--And what's more, I know a short cut to London, that will get you there in less than half the time.

C. L.--Oh, then, pray show it to us. Every minute is precious.

MR. F.--You can't possibly mistake the road. Directly you get out of here, you will see a dark path to the right, that looks rather like the entrance to a cavern. However, you may be sure it leads to London, and you'll find the Queen sitting at the other end of it.

T. L.--Ah! that's capital! Oho! Aha! Hurrah!

MR. F.--You all go on in front, and I'll bring up the rear, in case a lion comes up behind us.

C. L.--We'll go in single file this time.

(Exit, each making his own noise. FOX follows, slyly dancing.)

(After a minute all their voices heard together, then a pause. FOX re-enters covered with feathers. He crosses the stage silently, with a smile.)

MR. F.--Henny Penny was the nicest! The others were rather tough!

CURTAIN.