The Dog and the Sparrow

A shepherd dog had no good master, but one who let him suffer hunger. As he could no longer endure it with him, he went away quite sadly. On the road he met a sparrow, who spoke, "Brother Dog, why are you so sad?" The dog answered, "I am hungry, and have nothing to eat." Then the sparrow spoke, "Dear brother, come with me into the town, and I will make you full." So they went together into the town, and when they came before a butcher's shop, the sparrow spoke to the dog, "Stand still here, I will peck a piece of meat down for you," sat down on the shop, looked around to see if anyone noticed him, and pecked, pulled and tugged so long at a piece that lay on the edge, until it slipped down. Then the dog grabbed it, ran into a corner and ate it up. The sparrow spoke, "Now come with me to another shop, there I will fetch you down another piece, so that you become full." When the dog had eaten the second piece too, the sparrow asked, "Brother Dog, are you full now?" "Yes, I am full of meat," he answered, "but I have not yet got any bread." The sparrow spoke, "You shall have that too, just come along." Then he led him to a baker's shop and pecked at a few rolls until they rolled down, and when the dog wanted more, he led him to another and fetched him bread down again. When that was consumed, the sparrow spoke, "Brother Dog, are you full now?" "Yes," he answered, "now let us go out of the town a little."

[300] Then they both went out onto the highway. But it was warm weather, and when they had gone a little way, the dog spoke, "I am tired and would like to sleep." "Yes, just sleep," answered the sparrow, "I will meanwhile sit on a branch." The dog lay down on the road and fell fast asleep. While he lay there and slept, a carter came driving up, who had a wagon with three horses, and had loaded two barrels of wine. But the sparrow saw that he did not want to turn aside, but stayed in the wheel rut in which the dog lay, so he called out, "Carter, do not do it, or I will make you poor." But the carter grumbled to himself, "You will not make me poor," cracked his whip and drove the wagon over the dog, so that the wheels ran him to death. Then the sparrow called out, "You have driven my brother Dog to death, that shall cost you cart and horse." "Yes, cart and horse," said the carter, "what harm could you do me!" and drove on. Then the sparrow crept under the wagon cover and pecked at one bung hole so long, until he knocked the bung loose: then all the wine ran out, without the carter noticing it. And when he looked behind him once, he saw that the wagon was dripping, examined the barrels and found that one was empty. "Alas, poor man that I am!" he called out. "Not poor enough yet," spoke the sparrow, and flew onto the head of one horse and pecked its eyes out. When the carter saw that, he drew out his hatchet and wanted to hit

the sparrow, but the sparrow flew up high, and the carter hit his horse on the head, so that it fell down dead. "Alas, poor man that I am!" he called out. "Not poor enough yet," spoke the sparrow, and when the carter drove on with the two horses, the sparrow crept again under the cover and knocked the bung loose on the second barrel too, so that all the wine sloshed out. When the carter became aware of it, he called out again, "alas, poor
[301] man that I am!" but the sparrow answered, "not poor enough yet," sat down on the head of the second horse and pecked its eyes out. The carter ran up and swung out with his hatchet, but the sparrow flew up high: then the blow struck the horse so that it fell down. "Alas, poor man that I am!" "Not poor enough yet," spoke the sparrow, sat down on the head of the third horse too and pecked at its eyes. The carter struck out in his anger, without looking around, at the sparrow, but did not hit him, but instead struck his third horse dead too. "Alas, poor man that I am!" he called out. "Not poor enough yet," answered the sparrow, "now I will make you poor at home," and flew away.

The carter had to leave the wagon standing, and went home full of anger and vexation. "Alas," he spoke to his wife, "what misfortune I have had! the wine has run out, and the horses are all three dead." "Alas, husband," she answered, "what an evil bird has come into the house! it has gathered all the birds in the world together, and they have fallen upon our wheat up there and are eating it up." Then he climbed up, and a thousand and a thousand birds sat on the floor, and had eaten up the wheat, and the sparrow sat in the midst of them. Then the carter called out, "alas, poor man that I am!" "Not poor enough yet," answered the sparrow, "Carter, it will cost you your life too," and flew out.

Then the carter had lost all his goods, went down into the room, sat down behind the stove and indeed quite wicked and venomous. But the sparrow sat outside before the window and called out, "Carter, it will cost you your life." Then the carter seized the hatchet and threw it at the sparrow: but he only broke the window panes in two and did not hit the bird. The sparrow now hopped inside, sat down on the stove and called out, "Carter, it will cost you your life." This one, quite mad and blind with rage,
[302] smashes the stove in two, and so on, as the sparrow flies from one place to another, all his household goods, mirror, benches, table, and finally the walls of his house, and cannot hit him. But at last he caught him with his hand. Then his wife spoke, "Shall I strike him dead?" "No," he called out, "that would be too mild, he shall die much more murderously, I will swallow him," and takes him, and swallows him at once. But the sparrow begins to flutter about in his belly, flutters back up again, into the man's mouth: then he stuck his head out and calls, "Carter, it will cost you your life after all." The carter hands his wife the hatchet and speaks,

"Wife, strike the bird in my mouth dead." The wife strikes, but misses, and strikes the carter right on the head, so that he falls down dead. But the sparrow flies up and away.