THE LAZY COCKEREL.

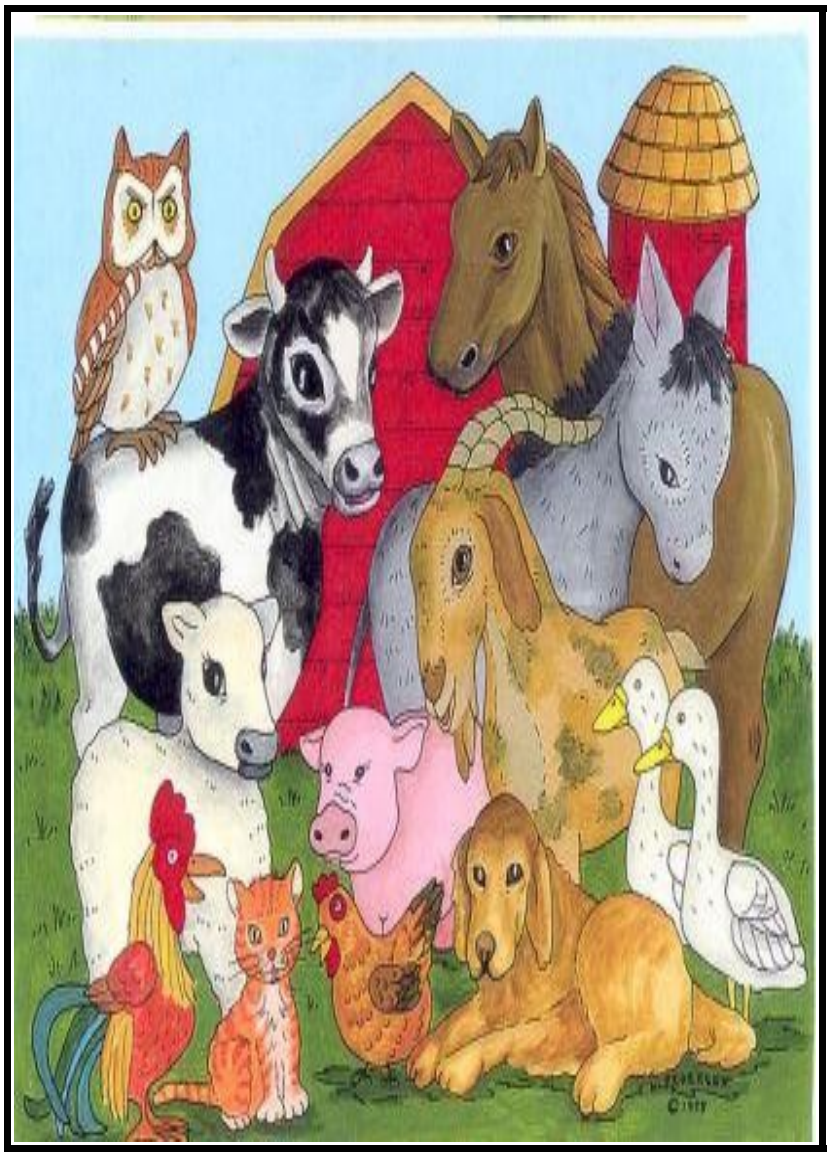
There was once a large cockerel called Charlie, whose many feathers of bright orange, red and gold were like the colours of the dawn sun. He lived on Ten Acre Farm with many cows and sheep, pigs, goats, a black and white sheep dog, a sleepy cat and a large plough horse called Trevor.

On the farm, it was Charlie's job to greet the dawn sun with his loud crowing to awaken the Farmer, his wife and Son and the rest of the other animals every morning.

But sadly, Charlie failed to do his job because of his laziness. He preferred to spend his time daydreaming, laying on his back on top of a large bale of hay, looking up at the pale blue sky above him.

He longed to be able to dive and soar just like other birds can do. He wanted to fly South with the Swallows before Winter came, to faraway places with strange sounding names.

'TEN ACRE FARM'



'Charlie and the other animals of Ten Acre Farm'.

How many can you see and what animals are they ?

Now everyone, knows that cockerels can't really fly. Oh, they can manage to leap a few feet up into the air when excited or frightened, but it's not real flying is it?

All of the other animals laughed at Charlie. He was very silly.

“You'll certainly find yourself in trouble if you don't mend your ways,” Roderick the pig grunted one day. “It's all your fault that the Farmer doesn't get up out of bed until very late. He doesn't have time to get his breakfast which puts him in a bad temper.”

The rest of the pigs squealed loudly in agreement.

“ And Farmer Bill, gets angry with me if we're late starting to plough the fields in time for sowing the cabbage seeds!” snorted Trevor the Plough horse.

Charlie sighed heavily and said that he was very sorry for all of the trouble he had caused , but he couldn't change the way he felt.

“ Hey! ….I'm neither bad nor lazy!” he protested.

“ I'm just not happy with being a plain, everyday sort of cockerel!



CHARLIE

“Oh, if only I could fly like other birds.....

I'd soar to the moon and stars!”

Why couldn't I have been born a bird who can fly higher and faster than I can?

Oh! It ain't fair! Do you know what I mean?”

“I say...It's all well and good you wishing for something different,” said C.J. the Collie dog, “ but it's no excuse for not doing your job like everyone else on this farm! Sometimes, I'd just like to lay in sun all day, but I can't as I have to herd the sheep for the Farmer.”

And with that remark the animals left him alone to sulk.



'TREVOR THE PLOUGH HORSE'



“Just do your job, Charlie!” said Trevor.

It was quite difficult to do because the wind kept blowing the corn away from his pecking beak. He was becoming angrier and more bad tempered. He gave a loud “Cock-a-doodle-do!” in frustration.

Suddenly, the farmhouse kitchen door opened and Rupert, the Farmer's son came running outside. He was carrying a large piece of bright blue cloth, which was stretched tightly across two long bamboo canes in the shape of a letter 'X'.

A long length of string containing six yellow ribbons danced behind. Rupert carried a large thick ball of string in his other hand which was attached to the top of one of the canes. It was a kite!

Charlie was amazed. He'd never seen a kite before and thought that the boy must have caught a very strange looking bird. He watched the boy with great interest. Suddenly, Rupert began to run into the wind and as he did so he threw the kite up into the air.



' Rupert ran into the wind!'

All at once, to Charlie's great surprise it twisted and caught upon the strong breeze. It flew high into the sky

Each time Rupert pulled on the ball of string, the kite swooped and dived just like a long tailed swallow. Charlie sat watching amazed.

“Oh, to be able to fly like that!” Charlie gasped.

Rupert flew the kite for most of the morning , when his Mother called him in for his breakfast. He let the ball of string go slack which brought the kite back to earth. The boy propped the bright blue kite against the wall of the house.

He then entered.



Charlie quickly gazed around the yard. No-one was watching him. He ran to the kite and was about to grab the string with his beak when a voice said behind him: “Daydreaming again are you?!”

It was Trevor the plough horse.

“ What mischief are you up to now?”he scolded.

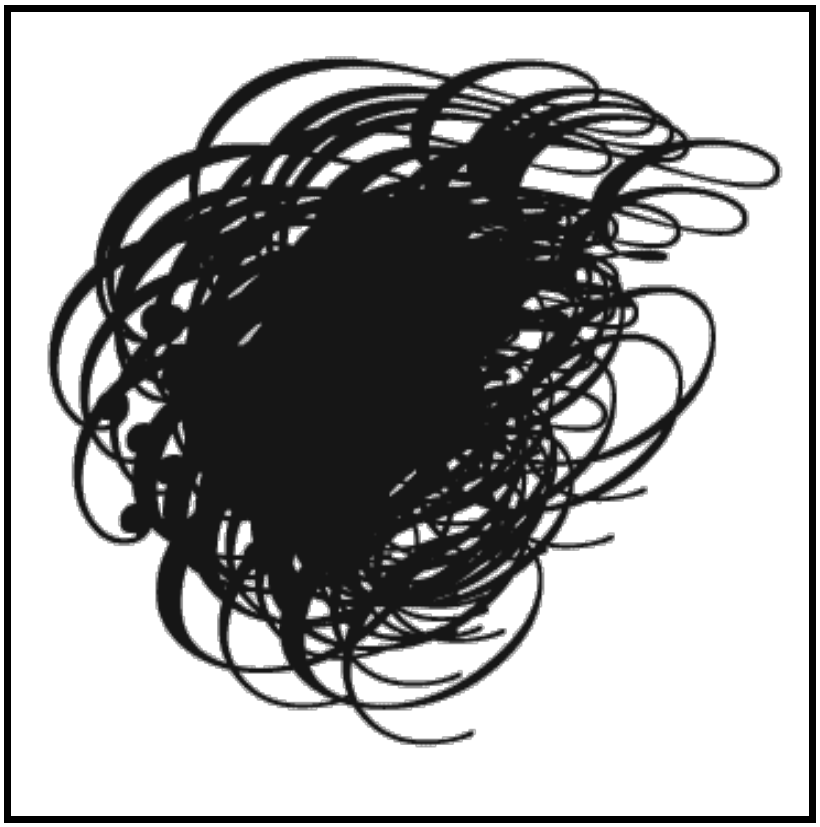
“ Silly ideas about flying again, have you?”

“No, not at all! As a matter of fact,” Charlie replied “I believe I've just found a way how I can fly!”

“Oh dear,” said Trevor, “ what is this foolish bird up to now?”

He quickly grabbed the long piece of string in his beak and began running as fast as he could. He dragged the kite behind him. It bounced and spun off the cobblestoned yard. Every few steps the Cockerel would leap as high as he could. He did look very funny!

He ran one way, then the other and then back again. Round and round the farmyard. He was becoming dizzy and out of breath!

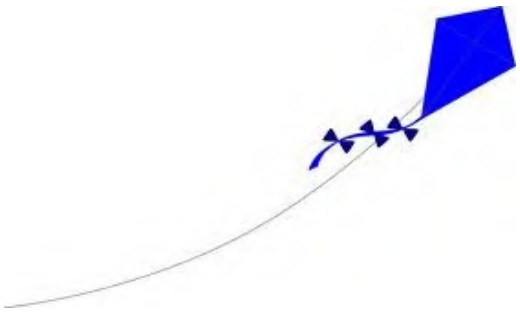


“Charlie became dizzier and dizzier and dizzier.....”

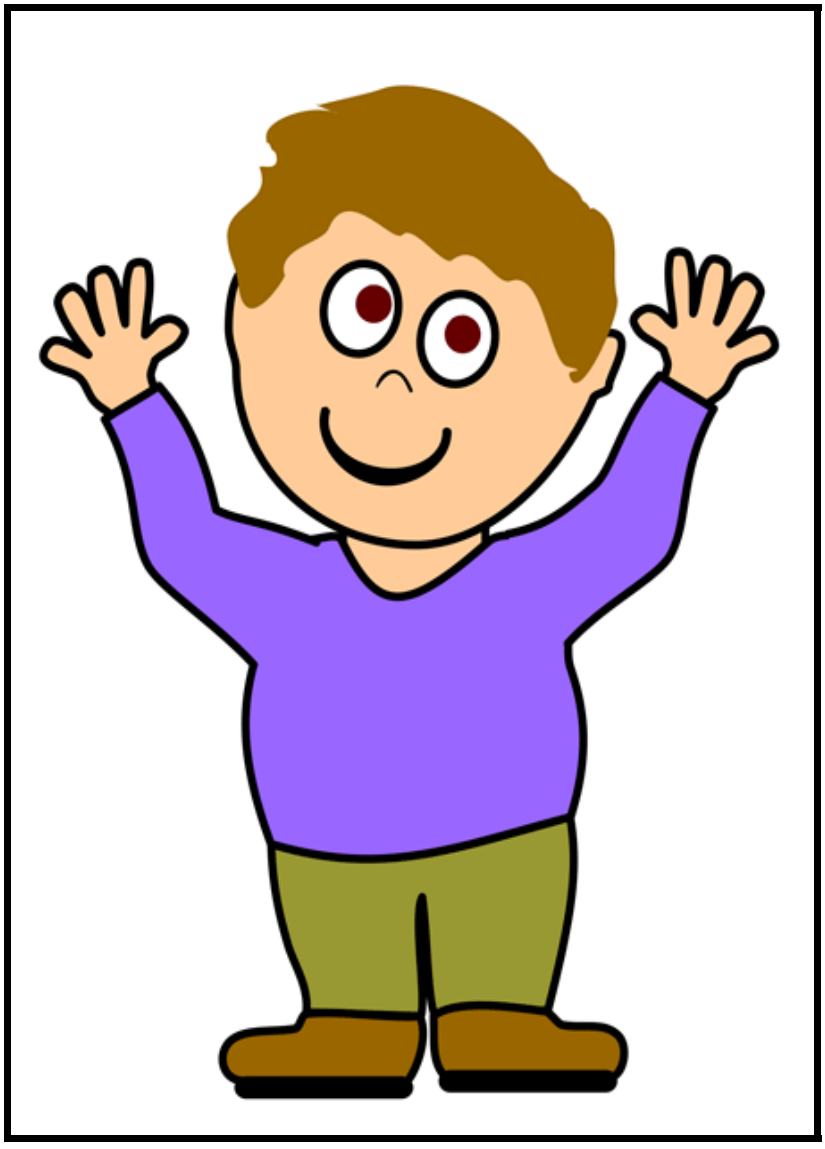
Suddenly, Charlie tripped over his own feet and crashed over and over, turning head over heels and throwing up great clouds of dust. He became entangled amongst the string and yellow ribbons. He lay flat on his back with his two feet sticking up in the air. His once bright feathers now looked very dusty and ruffled. The other animals laughed at the silly bird's antics.

Rupert came rushing out of the farmhouse when he heard Charlie crowing louder than he'd ever done before.

“Hey you! You come back with my kite!” he shouted angrily.



“Hey! You come back with my kite!” Rupert shouted.



All at once, a strong breath of wind caught the kite jerking it high into the air. Charlie was hanging upside down from the kite's tail. All he could see was the boy's angry red face with wide staring eyes

looking up at him in disbelief.

“You bring that back!” the boy shouted.

Then suddenly, with a loud 'whoosh', Charlie and the kite were gone.

It flew swiftly on the breeze climbing higher and higher, faster and faster until poor Charlie was just a dot in the pale blue sky getting further and further away from 'Ten Acre Farm' with its familiar animals and surroundings. He crossed over field after field spread out below him like a patchwork quilt; over trees and ditches, hedges and streams and winding country lanes.





A black bull snorted tossing its horns, bellowing loudly. A flock of starlings swerved to miss him just avoiding a mid-air collision. Some of the birds pecked at him as he swept by.

He passed over a bright green and white bus on the road below him, startling the driver so much that he crashed through a fence and knocked over a row of milk churns! Thankfully without injury.



Several children were riding bicycles and they stopped and stared up at him as he passed over their heads.

An old man poked a bonfire, its smoke choking Charlie making his eyes water as he passed through it.

Meanwhile, back at Ten Acre Farm Trevor the plough horse looked at all of the other animals. Their mouths were opened wide in shock.

“ Do you think we'll ever see him again?” he asked.

“Perhaps he'll get to Africa with the swallows!” Roderick squealed.

All of the other animals laughed.

“Perhaps he'll get to Africa?”





“Perhaps he'll get to Africa?”

Gradually, a small town began to appear in the distance getting nearer and nearer. Charlie now flew up above shops and houses, the Town Hall with its blue-slate roof and the Fire Station with its large



brass bell. Several firemen were cleaning the fire engine.

“DING -A-LING- A -LING -A LING!” rang the fire bell.



A Fireman

In the Town Hall Square a brass band played a lively marching tune. The narrow winding streets where filled with people doing their Saturday Shopping. They stared and pointed up at him with surprise as he sailed above their heads, his eyes wide and blinking and crowing loudly.

“COCK – A – DOODLE – DOO!” crowed Charlie.

Suddenly, the tall pointed steeple of a church appeared directly ahead. He was going to crash into it!

Poor Charlie closed his eyes tight shut and let out a loud squawk when he hit the steeple with a heavy thump which sent up a handful of bright feathers. The kite caught fast on the small silver cross on top of the steeple. Charlie hung helplessly upside down, the warning Trevor and Roderick had given him rang in his ears.

“You should just be yourself and accept what you are!”



Oh, if only he had taken more notice of what they had said he wouldn't be where he now was; stuck high up atop of this church steeple above the Town. He wished he was back home at Ten Acre Farm. He made himself a promise.

If he ever got down he would never again attempt to fly or try to be something other than what he really was: A Cockerel.

A cockerel who truly cannot fly.

But sadly, poor Charlie was stuck fast and remains there to this day.

He can be seen turning this way and that into whichever way the wind is blowing. His bright feathers ruffled in the breeze.

He is trying to get enough courage to jump off and fly home.

If you look carefully at a church steeple, you just might see him!

Poor Charlie! What a very silly bird!

