

PICKOO

The sun was about to come up.

Papa Peacock got up.

Mama Peahen got up.

Balancing his plumage Papa peeped down! He couldn't see one of his babies anywhere! 'Oh! Oh!' He felt terribly scared.

He called his wife, "Miaoooooo! Hey! Dear! Come here! Hurry! Hurry! Our baby's missing! Miaoooooooooooo!"

Mama quickly stepped out.

Her sharp eyes looked all around.

She, too, couldn't see her baby anywhere! She was puzzled!
How did it happen?

She too felt scared! "Darling, where's my baby? Where's Pickoo? I can't see him anywhere! Oooh! I am so worried! If he wanted to go out he should have told us, shouldn't he? Now where do we find him?"

Papa began his search for Pickoo. He moved his neck from left to right to look for his little boy. His crest too moved from left to right.

Hopping around and stretching his neck to be able to spot him, he started calling out his name loudly.

"Miaoooooo! Miaoooooo! Pickoo! Pickoo!"

Just then came Pickoo's small voice from behind the thick blades of grass, "Mama! Mama! Papa! I am here....."

Papa ran to him! He didn't forget to take some goodies for his baby.

Mama too came running to him! She patted him with her wings.

Scratched his neck and back with her beak. She forced the two insects that Papa had brought for him down his throat. Pickoo started grumbling but swallowed them anyway!

He scrubbed his beak clean on his Papa's feathers!

Mama hugged him and said lovingly, "Where did you go little one? And you didn't tell us before going out! We were soooooooo worried about you! Don't ever do that again. Ok?"

Brushing his tiny crest against his mother's chest, Pickoo said, "Mommy, I could not sleep last night!

When I opened my eyes in the middle of the night, you all were fast asleep!

But I was feeling restless all the time!"

Then I quietly got up and perched on that short little branch. I looked all around with my twinkling eyes.

I was the only one awake.

All other birds and all animals were fast asleep.

And I was the only one who was feeling restless.

Then I went to the riverside and sat on that tall rock.

Forge's Dad was wide awake.

Flies were wide awake.

Crickets were wide awake.

Mosquitoes were wide awake.

They harassed me so much that I got really mad at them!!

But I was the only one there feeling very very restless!

Hours must have passed by and then sometime later I must have fallen fast asleep in this soft green grass under that tree."

"Oh my sweet heart! If you were feeling so restless that you couldn't even sleep, then why didn't you wake me up?

I would have hummed your favourite lullaby. That would have helped you to sleep.

Your Dad would have opened his plumage and would have danced for you beautifully!

Look over there! There's your Dad coming here with some goodies for you!"

"I didn't want to hear your lullaby!

I didn't want to see Papa's dance!

It is only I who was feeling restless!"

Mama Pulled her baby closer to her and snuggling close to Pickoo, she asked, "Don't be so cross my little one! What's the matter Baby? What's bothering you? I don't understand!

Oh my sweet heart! I am so worried about you!
Tell me Pickoodi, tell me what's bothering you!"

Pickoo loved to hear his Mom calling him Pickoodi!! He felt happy and moved his crest just a bit vainly.

Just then Papa walked in with some more goodies.

Pickoo gently ran his beak through his Papa's lovely feathers and said "Yesterday something was pricking my tummy and my back throughout the night. I couldn't sleep because of it.

When I perched on a branch, it kept pricking.

When I sat on the rock it still kept on pricking.

When I hide in the grass....."

The moment Mama heard this, she screamed happily,
"Miaoooooooooooo! Miaoooooooooooo!! Oh my little Pickoo! Oh my baby!

You are not a baby anymore!!!

You are not Pickoodi anymore!!!

You are a PEACOCK now!

Everyone suffers a little before he gets those beautiful feathers.

Everyone gets that prickly feeling before getting those beautiful feathers!

Oh my darling Pickoodi, now you too will have the most wonderful plumage just like your father.

And you too will walk gracefully taking care of your beautiful feathers!

You will go strutting around like a king!

Next year you too will spread your beautiful feathers wide and dance gracefully along with your Dad.

My little baby, you have become a grown up Peacock now!!!”

Tears of happiness were rolling down her cheeks!

She gently closed her eyes.

Dad spread his feathers and danced around the little fellow.

And all of a sudden.....

Pickoo too began to dance just like his Dad!

When Mama tried to sneak a glance, she couldn't believe her own eyes!!!

**She was overjoyed to see..
two Peacocks dancing side by side!!!**