

## The Red Hen Ball

**Pg 3 This was the day of the Red Hen Ball. This was the time when all present must wear their fanciest outfits and squawk about and at each other.**

Pg 4 The chicken coop was a fury. The hens were pecking, poking, picking, and primping. Everyone wanted to be in front of the mirror that hung in the hen house. Each hen wanted the mirror at the same moment.

“Move over, I have to fix my hat,” said Charlotte.

“Hold your tail feathers,” squawked Bernice. “I’m almost finished with my makeup.”

“Don’t put on too much rouge. Your cheeks will get too red,” warned Hedwig.

“I am a red hen. That means I’m red already. Ha-ha-ha,” laughed Bernice.

Pg 6 The red hens did not notice the rustle of the nearby brush and the snap of brittle grasses. These sounds told of the arrival of an unwanted guest. Suddenly a shadow sprung from the bushes, streaked up the wooden plank and kicked open the door. In a flash he was inside the hen house.

Pg 8 “Hello my lovely ladies! What have we here?” jeered the wolf as he looked down his long furry nose. “I see a fine meal for me.” Then he strutted across the floor. He wickedly whirled and pointed around the room.

“Which one shall I take first?”

Pg 10 “Shall I take **YOU** in the fancy flowery hat? Or how about **YOU** in the dress covered with spots. Maybe I’ll take the one that is shivering in the corner. Or **YOU** with the scarf.” he roared. His voice echoed around the room

and scared the pinfeathers off of a few hens. “So many delightfully dressed delicious choices. *Maybe I’ll take you all!*”

Pg 12 “Mister Wolf,” whimpered Charlotte as she peeked out from under her wing, “We’re getting ready for the finest event of the year. Please don’t eat us.”

“Event? What might this event be?” asked the wolf as he wrinkled his eyebrows and stroked his whiskers.

pg 13 “It’s the Red Hen Ball. It’s held every year in the barn.” spoke Charlotte.

“Red Hen Ball? Tell me about this!” hissed the wolf.

“Well, there’s singing, and strutting and lots of noise,” Bernice began. “There’s music and dancing. I can’t wait.”

“Dancing?” asked the wolf, “What kind of dancing?”

“Yes, dancing,” added Charlotte, “We all get in a circle and we move together. We flap our wings over our heads, and we wiggle our tail feathers. Then we all laugh and spin about.”

“We call it the people dance,” snickered Bernice.

“The Red Hen Ball is fun. Want to come?” continued Charlotte.

Pg 14 “Don’t be silly,” snapped the wolf. “Why would a wolf want to go to the ball?”

“Why wouldn’t a wolf want to go to the ball?” spoke Charlotte quickly. “There will be plenty of chickens from all over the farm. The biggest hens and the best roosters will be there. You will have your choice of many a tasty meal.”

The wolf thought for a moment. Then he stood up straight and said, “Of course, the Red Hen Ball. Splendid idea! I’ll go!” Then he turned and started out the door.

“Wait!” shouted Hedwig. “You can’t go like that!”

“What do you mean?” growled the wolf.

“You can’t go to the ball looking like a wolf. Only red hens and roosters are allowed inside,” said Hedwig.

“We’ll dress you up. You’ll look a big hen,” added Bernice.

“You’ll make *ME* look like a hen,” puzzled the wolf. “How?”

pg 16 “First we need to do something with that tail,” spoke Bernice.

“Here! Put on this corset. We’ll tuck your tail inside.”

“Don’t hurt me,” pleaded the wolf. “I’m not so sure about this.”

“Relax, you’ll be fine,” said Bernice as she tightly tied the corset.

“I can barely breathe in this,” wheezed the wolf as his tongue hung from his mouth.

“I know *EXACTLY* how you feel,” chuckled Hedwig.

“*A frock for the flock*” teased Bernice. “Here put on this dress. Be careful. Don’t rip the hem.”

“This is ridiculous,” mumbled the wolf.

“Nonsense,” said Charlotte. “You’ll be the talk of the ball. You’ll be able to spot a fine meal indeed.”

“A fine meal indeed,” squirmed the wolf. “It’s hot in this outfit.”

Pg 18 “Now how about those ears? We’ll hide them with a headdress,” said Hedwig. “No, maybe a hat would be better.”

“Here, try this one,” said Bernice.

Bernice brought out a rather large hat. It had a big pink bow and a crumpled flower on the brim. She plopped it on the wolf’s head.

“I can’t see!” shrieked the wolf.

“Don’t worry,” said Charlotte. “We’ll tell you when to take it off.

“Now those big hairy feet,” said Hedwig. “Sandals are *IN* this season.”

“I think shoes are better. I have the perfect pair,” said Bernice. “Here try these on. They may be a little tight, but that’s the way I wear them.

As the wolf stuffed his feet into the shoes he wrinkled his nose and twisted his face. “Walk around a little,” spoke Hedwig, “you’ll get used to them.”

“I can’t feel my toes,” cried the wolf.

“That’s good,” said Bernice, “then you won’t feel the blisters.”

Pg 20 “Enough of this nonsense,” roared the wolf. “Take me to the ball.”

“But we’re not finished Mr. Wolf,” said Charlotte. “You need a scarf for your muzzle and some gloves for your paws. Your outfit has to be complete.”

“I have the perfect match,” said Hedwig. “Here you go Mr. Wolf. We’ll wrap this fluffy scarf around you. We’ll hide your snout.” Bernice and Charlotte grabbed the ends of the scarf and wrapped it around the wolf’s body. Then they draped it over his long snout. In the meantime Hedwig brought a pair of evening gloves and slipped them over the wolf’s front paws.

“Smile, Mr. Wolf,” said Bernice. “You’re almost ready.”

“Now I know how a mummy feels,” moaned the wolf.

“Mummy?” questioned Charlotte. “Imagine how your tummy feels after a fine feast of red hen.”

“ A fine meal indeed,” agreed the wolf.

P22 “Am I ready now?” pleaded the wolf.

“Not yet, you’ve got to strut,” answered Bernice.

“Strut?”

“Yes, strut. Watch and learn.”

The wolf watched as Bernice pranced her feet and wiggled her tailfeathers. The hen bobbed her head from side to side. She finished by flicking her wings and fluttering her eyes. “Now your turn,” she said as she glanced over her shoulder. “Here watch yourself in the mirror.”

Pg 24 The wolf stood in the middle of the hen house. He stared at his reflection in the mirror.

“You’ll be the talk of the ball,” echoed Bernice. “Now walk!”

The wolf started with a few unsteady steps.

“Now turn around and come back,” yelled Bernice.

“I can do this,” said the wolf.

“Don’t forget to strut. **SWING THOSE HIPS!** Let me see you twirl that scarf!” yelled Charlotte

“Go Wolfie! Go Wolfie! Go-Go! Go Wolfie Go!” cheered Bernice. Soon everyone joined in the chorus.

Pg 26 The wolf was strutting. His shoulders were slinking. His feet were prancing. His scarf was twirling. The hen house was chanting. There were sounds of hoots and whistles. There were even a few catcalls. But not a one wolf howl. Then all became quiet.

Pg 28 It seems that a friendly nail was sticking out of the wall. It was just in the right spot to catch a whirling scarf in mid- flight. The scarf got caught. The wolf pulled and pulled and the scarf wrapped tighter and tighter around his body. He roared in anger and fiercely lunged at a nearby chicken. When he fell to the floor the hens knew that the wolf was trapped. The hens cheered in excitement.

Pg 30 “Come on girls,” shrieked Bernice. “We’ve got a ball to go to.”

“He will not bother us anymore,” shouted Hedwig as she pointed to the wolf slumped against the wall.

“Last one there is a rotten egg,” chuckled Charlotte.

Pg 32 The hens went off to the ball. They laughed all evening and made noise past midnight. They all moved together and raised their wings up over their heads. They all giggled as they danced the people dance. After a few hours of embarrassment the wolf left the hen house and returned to the deep dark forest. He has not been heard from ever since.

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