

## **Zadraqa, the ruling bird: Translation**

They once said, may God keep us from the tattlers unless they are raiders or wealthy.

There were two birds which shared a nest. One laid eggs and the other, Zadraqa, the broody bird, willingly agreed to sit on the eggs to help them hatch them. After some time, the bird whose eggs they were came to ask Zadraqa to free up the nest so that it could take its turn sitting on the eggs. "Can I sit back on my eggs, for God's sake, Zadraqa?", she asked.

The bird replied reluctantly, "I won't leave the nest unless you get me a twig from a branch." So, the bird flew to a nearby tree to ask for a twig from its branch: "Can you allow for a twig to fall down, for God's sake, so that I can give it to Zadraqa to get my eggs back?" The branch replied, "I won't allow for a single twig to fall unless you bring a wolf to shake my tree. In shaking the tree, the twig shall fall off, and then, you may take it to Zadraqa to free your nest."

The bird flew to the wolf and asked if it could shake the tree to allow a twig to fall to take it to Zdraqa to free her nest so that it could sit on the eggs. "I won't shake the tree unless you ask the shepherd for a baby goat. When I get the baby goat, I shall shake the tree, the twig will fall and you may take it to Zadraqa to free your nest," replied the wolf.

She headed up to the shepherd and asked, "Can you please give me a baby goat that I can offer to the wolf to shake the tree so that a twig falls off; the twig that I need to give to Zadraqa to free my nest so that I can sit back on my eggs?" The shepherd replied, "I won't give you a baby goat unless you get me a puppy from its mother." The bird asked the mother dog, "I beg you to give me a puppy that I can offer

to the shepherd who will give me a baby goat to give to the wolf. The wolf, upon request, can shake the tree to cause the twig to fall off; the twig that I must give to Zadraqa to free my nest so that I can sit back on my eggs." The mother dog replied, "I won't give you a puppy unless you get me the placenta of a mare that has just gone into labor".

The bird went to the mare and asked, "Can I get your placenta so I can give it to a mother dog to give me a puppy. I would give the puppy to the shepherd who is supposed to give me a baby goat, which I will hand to the wolf to shake the tree so that a twig falls off; the twig that I need to offer to Zadraqa to free up my nest and get my eggs back?" The mare replied, "I won't give you the placenta unless you get me a bundle of medick from the harvesters."

The bird went and asked the harvesters, "Can you give me a bundle of medick, for God's sake? I must give it to the mare, who will offer his placenta which I can present to the mother dog; the mother dog will give me a puppy that I can take to the shepherd, who is supposed to give me a baby goat so that I can give it to the wolf; the wolf shall shake the tree to cause a twig to fall off; the twig that I must offer to Zadraqa to free my nest and get my eggs back?" The harvesters replied, "We won't give it to you unless you get us a jar of butter from the Arabic-speaking woman."

The bird flew to the Arabic-speaking woman who was busily weeding grass out of the fields and warned her about the cattle who had trespassed through the fences and were grazing in a nearby field. The Arab woman ran away to check. The bird went into the house and asked the rat to cut the strap of the butter jar. The rat cut off the strap. The bird took the butter jar to the harvesters who offered the bundle of medick. The bundle of medick was taken to the mare; the

mare gave the bird the placenta that was given to the mother dog. The bird got the puppy and presented it to the shepherd who, in turn, offered the baby goat that was given to the wolf. The wolf shook the tree and made the twig fall off. The bird grasped the twig and flew over to the nest, just to find out that Zadraqa had hatched the eggs. No eggs, no chicks. The bird fainted and succumbed to feelings of deep sorrow and anger.

Thus ends up my story, from the wicked may it be kept; in peace shall I find my path.