

The Mysterious Glittering Rooster
By Esther Eaton

The sun rises. I, Commander Cheekatrip, made sure of that by crowing superbly, and it's time for roll-call. I puff up my black and white hackle feathers and march down the line of my harem. Beautiful feathers like mine are only worn by Delaware chickens, and then only the handsomest of roosters, and then only... Where was I? That's right, back to roll call. "One, two, three, many!" They're all here and ready to get eating, including the white-leghorns with the giant red combs that look like worms all crawling together in a mass of delicious stuff that can... What was I saying? Ah, yes, back to the business of feeding.

With some reminders that I'm the boss, I make my way to the front of the line and strut down the ramp into my run. The harem follows, pushing and trying to get as close to me as possible. Oops, they missed and have reached the grassiest patch of ground, gobbling away. No matter. I head toward another part of the grounds, where the grass is taller than I am! Here, I search for worms. Worms, how wonderful they are! I could go on about worms all day, about that feeling I get when I pull one out of the ground, it snaps, and I gobble up the tidbits of remains and I ... have lost my train of thought.

Wait, what is that I see through the grass stems? Something glittery like that piece of shiny string I found once that tangled around my leg and the chicken wire and I tried to get it off and I... What is that thing!? It glitters again and I stalk closer. I come very close to the giant side of the barn. The barn wall is gray, but in that gray is a rectangle of grasses, that are glittering, blue sky, a mini sun, and-- another rooster! On MY property! Commander Cheekatrip's territory! And he dares to look exactly like me! Never has there been such an infringement, such an infraction, such a... What was I saying? Oh, yes, to the battle! I strut around, showing him that I am the head honcho, the boss, the chicken who's in charge! How dare he mimic my every move? I decide for

the quick and painful attack. Whoosh! My powerful wings begin to beat the air in majestic rhythm, pumping as I rise into the air. I stick out my spurs and open my beak in a glorious crow. I catch a glimpse of the evil glittering bird. Wait, glittering? I... Ahem. Attack! I zoom down and hit the creature. Ouch! It's rock hard! I flap away until I'm just out of sight, then I waddle forward a little. All I see is the grass. The rooster is gone! I've won!

It's evening now after a good day, and I've told the harem about my victory. It's tiring being brave and... Tiring, yes... sleepy... lots of worms... The sun sets.

First Prize Winner of the 2011 Friends of Baxter Memorial Library Writing Contest ~
Middle School Fiction Category