

Full Text



Why Cocks Have Combs on Their Heads

Our story today, “Why Cocks Have Combs on Their Heads,” comes from the book, *Filipino Popular Tales* by Dean S. Fansler. The story originated from Rosita Nieva, a Tagalog from Boac, Marinduque. She heard the story from her grandmother.

Once upon a time there was a magician named Pablo, who had a son called Juan. Pablo was very industrious, but Juan was lazy and disobedient. Juan cared for nothing but fine clothes and his own appearance; he would not help his father. One day Pablo went into his son’s room to find out what he was doing. There he was, standing before a mirror, and combing his hair. Pablo was so angry at his son, that he immediately snatched the comb from his hand. Then he angrily struck the boy’s head with the comb, and spoke these harsh words: “Since you always want to use the comb, let it be on your head forever! I prefer to have no son at all. I would rather see you changed into a bird than to remain such a disobedient, worthless boy.” The father struck his son’s head so hard, that the comb stuck deep into the skull. By Pablo’s magic power, Juan was immediately changed into a cock, and the comb on his head was changed into flesh. We can see it to-day on the heads of all the descendants of Juan.

Source: Dean S. Fansler, *Filipino Popular Tales*. Lancaster, PA. and New York: American Folklore Society and G. E. Stechert and Co., 1921. Available from Project Gutenberg.

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