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The goldcrest.

Told by Wang Ming-ji.

They say that a goldcrest met a fox. The goldcrest said to the fox, "Fox, would you like to eat really well?" The fox said, "Yes, I would". The goldcrest went and saw that the Yi were fighting, and an Yi woman was carrying out rice porridge for their lunch. The goldcrest flew over immediately and perched in front of the Yi woman. The goldcrest chirruped, "zyu-lyu-lyu, zyu-lyu-lyu. The Yi woman set down the wooden tub of rice porridge, in order to chase and kill the goldcrest. Meanwhile the fox took and ate the tub of rice porridge. Then the goldcrest got up and flew away. He came and said to the fox, "Have you eaten really well, fox?" The fox replied, "Yes, I have eaten very well indeed".

The goldcrest said, "Would you like some more to eat?" The fox said, "Yes, I would". Taking the fox with him the goldcrest went and saw that the Yi had brought some dogs and were rounding up the sheep. The goldcrest immediately flew over the Yi dogs, at which they got up to give chase to the goldcrest. They came and took the fox by surprise. They chased him and tore at him until he was all rags and tatters. The goldcrest got up and flew off. He came and said "Fox, did you eat well?" The fox replied, "Oh! This time I got caught and torn by the dogs, and my fur coat is all rags and tatters!"

The goldcrest said, "Fox, would you like to look at some little bells?" The fox said, "People talk about little bells, but I have never seen any. I should like to look at some". So the goldcrest took the fox to a hill where the grass was very deep. The goldcrest flew to an old Miao man over yonder, then he flew back and dropped on the top of the hill into the grass. The old Miao man lit a torch and went and set fire to the grass right around the hilltop. The goldcrest got up and flew away, but the flames came burning along, and though the fox ran and ran all around the hilltop above he could find no way out. The flames scorched the fox and made him all patchy. The goldcrest flew back to the fox and said, "Were the little bells pretty, fox?" The fox said, "Oh! Very pretty indeed! But my fur coat has got scorched until it is all patchy!"