

Narrator: Saliha Arel
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The Cutworm and the Mouse

Once upon a time there was a cutworm. One day the cutworm was roaming around and met a shepherd. The shepherd said,

Coral Lady with long hair,

Coral Lady tall and fair

Where are you going?

The cutworm answered, "I am trying to find a home for myself."

"Won't you come and live with me?" asked the shepherd.

And the cutworm said, "Well, what are you going to hit me with when you're angry with me?"

The shepherd said, "With this stick."

Coral Lady said, "Let's try if it hurts."

When the shepherd hit her with the stick, it hurt, and she said, "Oh no! I'm not going to marry you!" So the shepherd left her

She went on and on. Then she met a rooster, and the rooster said,

Coral Lady with long hair,

Coral Lady tall and fair,

Where are you going?

The cutworm answered, "I am trying to find a home for myself."

"Won't you come and live with me?" asked the rooster.

And the cutworm said, "Well, what are you going to beat me with when you're angry with me?"

"With my beak I'll beat you," said the rooster.

"Let's try if it hurts," said the cutworm.

The rooster pecked her on the back, and her back got full of holes. So she said, "No! Stop it! I'm not going to marry you."

So she started on her way again, and when she had gone a little distance farther, she met a mouse. The mouse asked,

Coral Lady with long hair,

Coral Lady tall and fair

Where are you going?

The cutworm answered, "I am trying to find a home for myself."

"Won't you come and live with me?" asked the mouse.

And the cutworm said, "Well, what are you going to beat me with when you are angry with me?"

"With my tail I'll beat you," said the mouse.

"Let's try if it hurts," said the cutworm.

The mouse hit her with his tail again and again, and it didn't hurt. So Coral Lady decided to marry the mouse, and they got married.

A few days later the mouse said

Coral Lady with long hair

Coral Lady tall and fair,

There's a wedding feast and I must go;

Do you mind if it is so?

Coral Lady said, "All right. Go along. And while you are there I'll gather up what's here to be washed and go to the brook to wash it.

So Coral Lady with long hair, Coral Lady tall and fair, put whatever there was to be washed in a bundle and tied it to her leg, and dragged it

along to the brook. By the side of the brook there was the footprint of a horse which had filled up with water. While she was doing her laundry in this little washbasin, nobody knew how it happened, but she fell into the water. While she was struggling to get out of the mud, she heard some horsemen passing by, and she called out

Oh, you horsemen, you horsemen, with footsteps sounding sweet,
May you arrive at the bridegroom's house, honey with cream to eat;
May you tell my Mr. Mouse
To hurry to his little house,
For Coral Lady with long hair,
Coral Lady tall and fair,
Has fallen into the mud and cannot get out of there.

True enough, they went to the bridegroom's house and there was a feast, with much to be eaten. Everybody was having fun and eating, and while they were feasting, one of the horsemen said, "Will you hear this? While we were coming, we heard a sound, and there was a cutworm deep in a puddle. This is what she was singing:

Oh, you horsemen, you horsemen, with footsteps sounding sweet
May you arrive at the bridegroom's house, honey with cream to eat
May you tell my Mr. Mouse
To hurry to his little house,
For Coral Lady with long hair,
Coral Lady tall and fair,
Has fallen into the mud and cannot get out of there.

As soon as Mr. Mouse heard this, he hopped up from his place and he dug into this plate and dug into that plate. Then he left the feast and ran to

the brook. Sure enough, Coral Lady with long hair, Coral Lady tall and fair, was lying on her back, struggling in the mud.

Mr. Mouse said, "Give me your hand and I'll pull you out."

And the other one answered, "And me being angry with you."

And Mr. Mouse repeated again, "Give me your hand. Let me be pulling you!"

And his wife said again, "And me being angry with you!"*

So Mr. Mouse became very angry, and he said, "And me stamping on you like this, and stamping on you like this! Let me be stamping on you!" He stamped and stamped and stamped on Coral Lady, until he had stamped her all down into the mud.

*This has become a retort among children, and a nonsense rhyme:

Verelime çekerek.
Bu sene kusarek.