

# The Tail of Turkey

“IT’S SNOWING!” TURKEY cried.

“Yep,” said Goat as he caught a snowflake on his tongue.

“That means it’s almost Thanksgiving!” Turkey flapped his wings into a blizzard of snow and feathers as he ran about the yard.

“Yep,” bleated Goat.

Turkey stopped and pointed his wing at the old farmhouse. “Last year,” he clucked, “it was Uncle Turkey on the dining room table. The year before that, it was Grandpa Turkey. Now I’m the only Turkey left on this farm—what am I going to do?” he cried.

Goat leaned forward until his nose nearly touched Turkey’s blue head. “You need a name,” Goat whispered.

Turkey stood tall and thrust his chest forward.

“My name,” he said, “is Turkey.”

“No,” Goat bleated. “You need a

real name, a name that the farmer or his wife gives you. Then they’ll love you and won’t want to eat you.”

Turkey took a minute to think



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about this. The farmer and his wife ate pigs, roosters, and turkeys. They didn't eat Mildred the cow or Frost the cat. As for Brownie the horse



and Toby the dog, surely they would never be eaten for dinner.

"How do I get a name?" Turkey asked.

The goat shrugged and walked back toward the barn. "I don't know," he said. "Farmer still calls me Goat."

The next morning, when Mrs. Farmer came out to the barnyard carrying her shiny red bucket, Turkey was waiting for her.

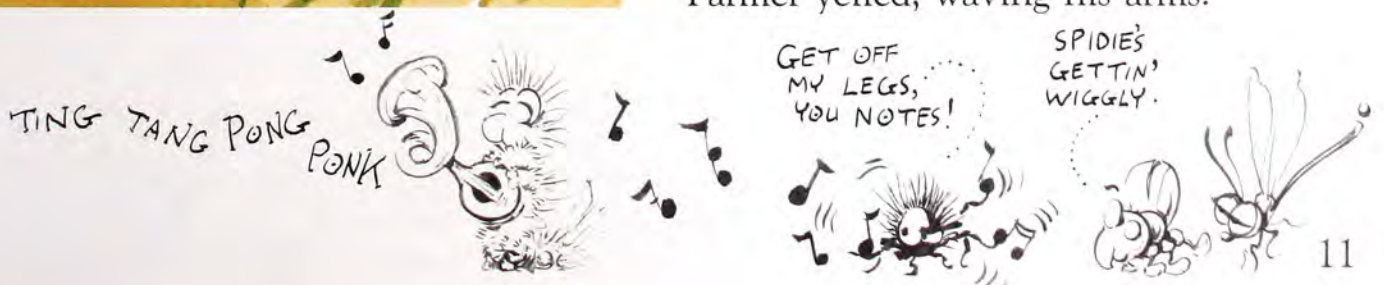
"Gobble, gobble, gobble," he said softly. Then, just like a cat, he rubbed his scaly head against Mrs. Farmer's leg. Mrs. Farmer jumped.

"Oh, Turkey!" she exclaimed. "You must be hungry." But Turkey didn't touch the large pile of food she'd given him.

"I'll have to try something else," he thought as he watched Mrs. Farmer hurry off toward the pigpen.

Late that afternoon, as Mr. Farmer crossed the yard, Turkey trotted beside him, just like a dog. "Gobble, gobble, gobble," he barked.

"Shoo, you pesky critter!" Mr. Farmer yelled, waving his arms.



“GOBBLE!” Turkey cried as he ran off toward the barn.

He tried again in the evening when Mrs. Farmer brought dinner. He strutted around the yard, cooing softly as he showed off his brownish black fan of feathers.

“Come on, Turkey, eat up” was all she said.

Goat chuckled as he chewed on some fresh straw.

“There must be a way to get a name,” Turkey said.

“Yep,” said Goat.

The next morning, Turkey pecked at the red bucket while Mrs. Farmer scattered the feed. *Ping, ping, ping* rang the bucket. Mrs. Farmer laughed. Turkey’s heart flipped inside his chest. Why, her laugh sounded as shrill and lively as a happy birdsong!

“You’re a very hungry turkey,” she said. Mrs. Farmer reached into the bucket and dropped another large pile of feed in front of him. “Eat up,” she said.

“Rosie,” Mr. Farmer called as he walked across the yard. Mrs. Farmer

stopped. “Don’t forget to call Betsy today,” he said.

“I’ll call her tonight, dear,” said Mrs. Farmer.

Wait a minute, Turkey thought. Rosie must be Mrs. Farmer’s real name. What a nice name. “Rosie, Rosie, Rosie,” he sang to himself.

Then Turkey sighed. Would Rosie and Mr. Farmer ever give him a real name?

All afternoon, Turkey paced the front yard while Frost the cat napped on Rosie’s rocking chair. When she finally yawned, stretched, and jumped down, Turkey boldly flapped up onto the front porch and nestled into the warm cushion.

“What a funny place to perch,” he clucked as the chair rocked back and forth, back and forth. Just then, Mr. Farmer came around the corner.

“Git, you turkey!” he yelled. He grabbed a broom and waved it around.

“Gobble! Gobble!” Turkey cried as he scurried off the porch.

LOOK HOW SAM  
STRUTTED,  
WALKED IN A  
STIFF, PROUD  
WAY.



SEE HOW HE  
PACED,  
WALKED WITH  
SLOW, STEADY  
STEPS?



HEAR HOW  
SHRILL,  
HAVING A SHARP,  
HIGH SOUND,  
IS HIS  
MUSIC.

SEE HOW  
SPIDER  
DANCES  
AND  
WIGGLES.





That evening, it began to snow again. Turkey sat in the barn and watched as the white flakes covered the ground, then the tips of the grass. Quietly, the snow piled up on the fence rails, too.

Tomorrow was the day before Thanksgiving.

"I guess I'll never have a real name," said Turkey. A little tear trickled down his cheek and dropped off the end of his wattle.

A strange cry rang through the yard. "Oh, oh, oh!" something sobbed. Turkey had never heard that kind of cry before. He peeked around the barn door and saw Rosie drop into her rocker.

How could she sound so sad? Turkey wondered, remembering her beautiful laugh. He slowly crossed the yard.

"It won't seem like Thanksgiving without Betsy and the kids," Rosie wailed. "Oh, how we'll miss them this year!"

Turkey didn't know who Betsy and the kids were, but something in his chest ached painfully. He gobbled softly as he climbed up onto the porch and stood beside Rosie's knee.

Rosie looked up.

"Oh, Turkey," she said.

Turkey cocked his neck and, with a quick yank, he pulled out his



Wow!  
SHAKE YOUR  
WATTLE,  
SPIDER!



WHAT A  
DANGING  
FOOL!



... DOES SPIDER  
HAVE A WATTLE,  
A FLAP OF  
SKIN HANGING  
FROM THE NECK,  
LIKE ON A  
TURKEY?

THE MUSIC  
MOVES ME!  
I CAN'T  
CONTROL  
MY LEGS!

longest, most beautiful tail feather. He laid it on her lap.

“You dear thing,” Rosie said. “Are you giving it to me?” she asked, running the feather between her fingers.

“Gobble, gobble, gobble,” crooned Turkey.

Rosie laughed. “Your feathers are as brown and shiny as chestnuts.

What do you think, shall I call you Chestnut?” she asked, smiling.

“Gobble, gobble, gobble!” said Chestnut as she stroked his feathers.

“Well,” bleated Goat with satisfaction when he heard the news. “Chestnut will be the most thankful turkey this Thanksgiving.” ❄️

