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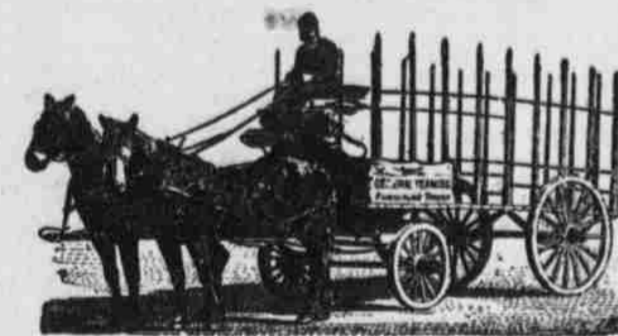
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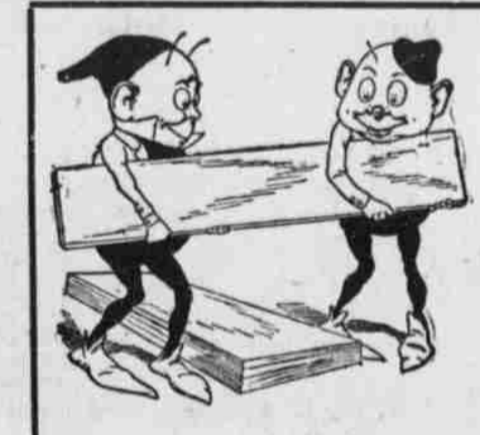
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A Dinner That Walked Away
A THANKSGIVING STORY BY FRANK H. SWEET

THE way it began Hannah was cross that day. For one thing, she had a big Thanksgiving looking to do in an old fashioned house where pies and cakes were made by the quantity.

Then, while she was out of the kitchen a minute, Margery in a frolic with puss had upset the churn with its load of cream all over the snow white floor. That made plenty of extra work, but the crowning disaster was to find when she went to the pantry for the beans she intended to bake that a bottle of brandy that she had kept last summer to bathe her ankle, which she had sprained in falling down the cellar stairs, had been upset!

It stood far out of the way on the top shelf, but unfortunately the dish of beans was directly under it, and the brandy had dripped over them, soaking them so thoroughly that it was not possible to use them.

But the worst was yet to come. On finding the beans ruined she simply emptied them into the pail which stood at the kitchen door and, washing her hands, set to work to knead her big pan of puffy bread dough.

Now, the kitchen door opened into a woodshed, and the ash pail, with the beans on top, was supposed to be safe enough, but unfortunately on this special afternoon the outside door was ajar.

The beans had not been there long before the turkeys came around to be fed, as usual, and one of them, of a prying disposition, noticed the open door and, probably remembering the good things that came out of the door, quietly hopped on to the step and walked in.

Nothing to be seen but piles of wood for the season, now getting severe, and—yes—a pail with something in it. "Ah, that looks good! I'll try it," thought the curious turkey (no doubt), she did try it, and, not being sensitive in either taste or smell, she never stopped trying it until she had swallowed all the top ones, soaked in brandy, and then turned to go.

The effect was sad. Her head whirled around, it is supposed. At any rate, her legs refused to hold her up, and she fell to the ground insensible.

Half an hour later Hannah went out for more wood to replenish her fire and in the gathering darkness stumbled over the turkey, still lying there.

A glance at the fowl to see that she was not outwardly hurt and another at the pail told the shameful story.

"Here's a fine bit of work!" exclaimed Hannah, turning the turkey over. "The idiot has been eating herself entirely well! Those beans, like to know who's left open the jar! Well, well, I want a turkey for Thanksgiving, and if this one died by accident, and its meat will be as good as though I'd written her neck."

She started and a shivering to herself, she fixed her eyes on the turkey. "Why, for that, she was something to eat, she was always economical. I don't know what questions would come to my mind if it came to its end, provided it was fat and was roasted well.

In a few minutes she had the feathers off, except those on the wings and tail, and she laid the picked turkey on a bench to cool, shutting the door to keep out the cat while she finished some other work.

Meantime tea time arrived. The family came home and were all at the table when the door burst open and Hannah rushed in, evidently frightened out of her wits.

"Oh, Mr. Winslow," she cried, "there's something in the woodshed, all in white, and it ran after me when I went for some wood, and I daren't go out there, if you please!"

Mr. Winslow, supposing some animal had got in, left the table and, arming himself with the poker as he passed through the kitchen, threw open the door.

Silence and darkness only.

Yet in a moment came an audible rustling on the wood pile and an indistinct glimpse of something white.

"Bring the light, Hannah!" called Mr. Winslow, and, taking a candle from her trembling hand, he led the way to the strange object.

"It's a white—why, no, it isn't!" he interrupted himself as he drew nearer to the fluttering, frightened thing. "It's—I declare, it's a picked turkey! Where on earth?"

"A picked turkey!" screamed Han-



nah, "Sure, and can it be the one I picked myself this evening has come to life?"

"How did you kill it?" asked Mr. Winslow.

"I didn't kill it at all. The botherin' critter killed itself atin' beans that got soaked in my brandy, and I had to stop my work and dress it before it cooled."

"Well, it evidently was not dead," said Mr. Winslow. "But now it's dressed you better cut off its head."

"Oh, no, papa!" cried Margery, who stood on the steps. "Don't kill the poor thing! I'll take care of it somehow."

"But it'll freeze, dear," said papa, going back into the kitchen.

"No, I'll fix it up. I'll make it something to wear. Please let me," pleaded Margery earnestly.

"Well, I don't care, child," said her father, laughing. "Do as you like and dress it up. I want a fat gobbler and not a five pound hen turkey for Thanksgiving."

After some trouble the shivering, naked turkey was caught and carried into the warm kitchen. It was carefully wrapped in an old skirt for the night and tied into a basket.

The astonished creature rebelled and fought against the indignity of wearing a flannel skirt, but cold conquered.



was really a pretty good fit—considering.

As ornament Margery sewed some of the fringe of the shawl around the neck like a ruff, at the edges where the wings ought to be and around the legs. So when dressed the unfortunate, or, rather, naughty, turkey looked like a new plaid variety of the scarlet flamingo, with side pockets and fringed drawers.

The appearance of Kristine stalking around in her new suit was very funny. How the boys did laugh! And even papa had to wipe away the laughing tears.

In this dress the next morning, after she had been fed daintily, Margery introduced her to her old friends of the poultry yard by opening the kitchen door and letting her walk out where the turkeys were taking their breakfast.

Margery thought they would be glad to see her; but, alas, this distinguished stranger in gay attire was not recognized. They stared and scolded at her, and the old gobbler ruffled up his feathers and dragged his wings on the ground and came up to her, saying angrily:

"Gobble, gobble, gobble!"

Kristine seemed to be disheartened at this coolness on the part of her family and slunk into a corner, as though ashamed of her fine dress. Then the family crowded around her to punish her impertinence in coming among them and actually began to peck at her.

Margery, who was watching from the window, could hardly believe her eyes at first; but, yes, they were actually pecking at the poor outcast, who finally fled screaming across the yard. Margery flew to the door, and Kristine hurried in just in time to escape the whole family, who were close upon her.

"You poor, dear Kristine!" she murmured over her when she had her safety in her arms. "Did they peck you? The naughty things! You shan't go with them any more! You shall stay with me in the house."

So it came to be at last. Hannah grumbled a little; but, after all, she couldn't say much, for it was by her own fault that the poor thing lost its own winter coat. Before long the family grew quite attached to Margery's pet, whose name they shortened to Kris.

On her part Kris was a very bright bird. She would come when called by name, and she never failed to be on hand at mealtimes, when she would walk around the table and receive delicate bits from every one.

While her little mistress was studying or sewing Kris would stand and look at her, turning her knowing head first one side and then the other and sometimes saying in a reflective way:

"Quit!"

As soon as looks and work were put away she was ready for play. In fact, she enjoyed her strange life very much and grew fat under it. So that pretty soon the boys began to tease Margery by suggesting that her pet was ready to take her place on the table.

The only time she seemed to be uncomfortable was when the turkey was scrubbed.

No sooner did Hannah appear on the scene with scrubbing brush and soap down on her knees to polish the floor than Kris would hop by a sort of ladder which one of the boys had made for her up to a corner of the high mantel over the fireplace, and there she would sit, all humped up and miserable, till the work was done or till her little mistress came and took her into the sitting room.

The place where Kris was intended to spend the time of her banishment from the yard was a large chamber over the woodshed, which was kept warm by the kitchen chimney, and there's where her bed, or roost, was prepared for her and where she was shut up every night. But she was so lonely and unhappy and tried so hard to get out and Margery was so fond of her for a playmate that she generally got down before breakfast and did not go back until bedtime, which is at dusk in the turkey family, you know.

Well, the winter passed away, and spring came. Kris grew a new sort of feathers under her plaid dress, and when the weather became warm mamma said she must leave off her dress and go out of doors with the rest. So the first really warm day Margery took off the red dress and drove her out.

Kris had not forgotten her cool reception in the winter, so she at first was careful not to go too near the turkeys, though they did not object to her now in her feather dress. After a few days she stayed most of the time with

them, only coming when called and generally making a visit to the table for her usual treats.

She had not been out very long when one morning Margery went out to see her and she was gone. No one had seen her since breakfast. Margery felt very bad and after looking all about came to the sad conclusion that she had strayed away and got lost, for the whole flock wandered far off to feed. But the next morning at breakfast time Kris walked in, as usual, and began to beg for food. Margery hugged her and fed her, and she ate as though she was starved.

When she had finished her meal she went out again, and about noon her little mistress sought her again, and again she was missing.

This now became the regular thing with Kris. Every morning she was on hand for her breakfast, and in spite of watching she would slip away and hide so that no one could find her again.

Poor Margery was almost heartbroken at this tendency to vagrancy in her pet, but Hannah only smiled and said:

"Wait a bit and you'll see something nice."

But, though Hannah had her suspicions, she was not prepared for what really occurred one day.

After this strange conduct had been going on for a few weeks there came a day when Hannah had another scare. She declared that tramps or thieves were up in the woodshed chamber. She heard them, and she dared not go up.

While she stood in the woodshed telling Margery in a whisper about it the child heard a step that she knew.

Kris hopped down on to the top step of the stairs which led to the room overhead. After a moment she hopped to the next, and after her came, one by one, twelve baby turkeys.

Margery screamed with delight and ran to catch Kris and pet the whole family, while Hannah rushed upstairs in dismay and saw a sight that shocked her more than the fear of tramps.

In that room trunks and things, not in use were stored, and a month or more ago Hannah had carried up there a large square "squinw basket" with a cover, a basket such as the Omaha Indians of New York state make for various household uses of their white sisters.

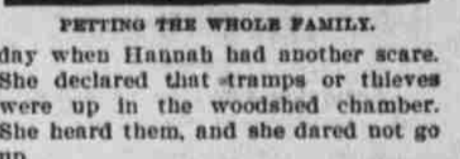
This basket was nearly full of the winter supply of woolen stockings, all neatly mended and laid away till fall. In this basket, on these soft stockings, had Madam Kristine made her nest and hatched out her interesting family.

She must have found the door ajar and managed to pry off the cover, which lay on one side, and here she had hidden all these weeks.

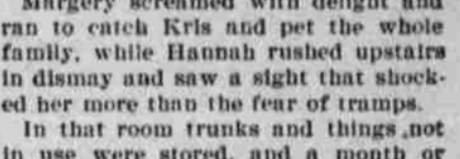
The room was put in order and the door closed, and Kristine was provided with a place in the yard. Every day she wandered off with her babies, but she never started until she had visited the breakfast table with her whole brood to get her regular morning meal.

At first it was funny to see them run around and peck at crumbs, but as they grew it began to be troublesome to have a flock of turkeys so much at home. So mamma made Kristine and her family at the door.

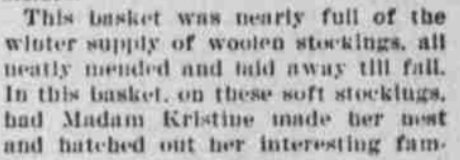
Her life was like that of a wild turkey. She knew her place, and when called and when she was sent to Margery's room she would hop away last year's turkey feathers with dinners that Margery had let money for her part.



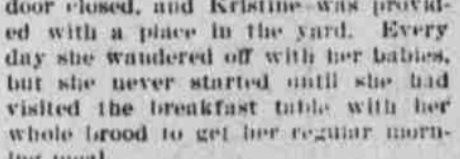
PECKING THE WHOLE FAMILY.



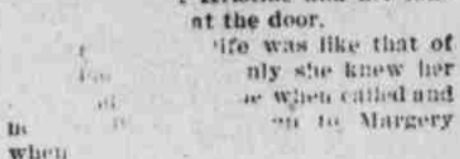
CRYING THE WHOLE FAMILY.



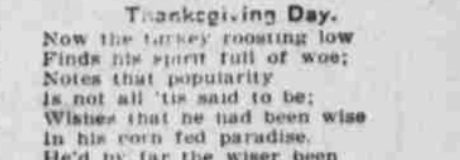
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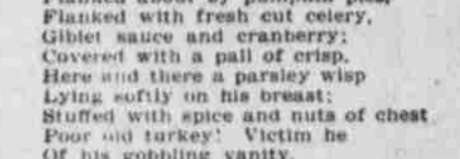
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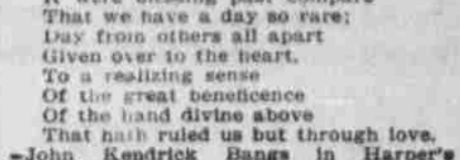
CRYING THE WHOLE FAMILY.



CRYING THE WHOLE FAMILY.



CRYING THE WHOLE FAMILY.



CRYING THE WHOLE FAMILY.

Thanksgiving Day.
Now the turkey roosting low
Finds his sport full of woe;
Notes that popularity
Is not all 'tis said to be;
Whistles that he had been wise
In his corn fed paradise.
He'd by far the wisest been
Had he rested 'mongst the lean;
Had he dieted a bit,
Keeping all his muscles fit,
'Stead of like a prideful fat,
Gorging until plump and fat.

See! in state at last he lies,
Flanked about by pumpkin pies,
Flanked with fresh cut celery,
Giblet sauce and cranberry,
Covered with a pall of crisp,
Here and there a parsley whisp
Lying softly on his breast;
Stuffed with spice and nuts of chest,
Poor old turkey! Victim he
Of his gobbling vanity.

Glad some day for young and old,
Whether winds be soft or cold;
Day that gives a nation pause
For its grateful "Deo Laus";
Day that brings us face to face
With the fount of love and grace—
It were blessing past compare
That we have a day so rare;
Day from others all apart
Given over to the heart,
To a realizing sense
Of the great beneficence
Of the hand divine above
That hath ruled us but through love.
—John Kendrick Bangs in Harper's Weekly.