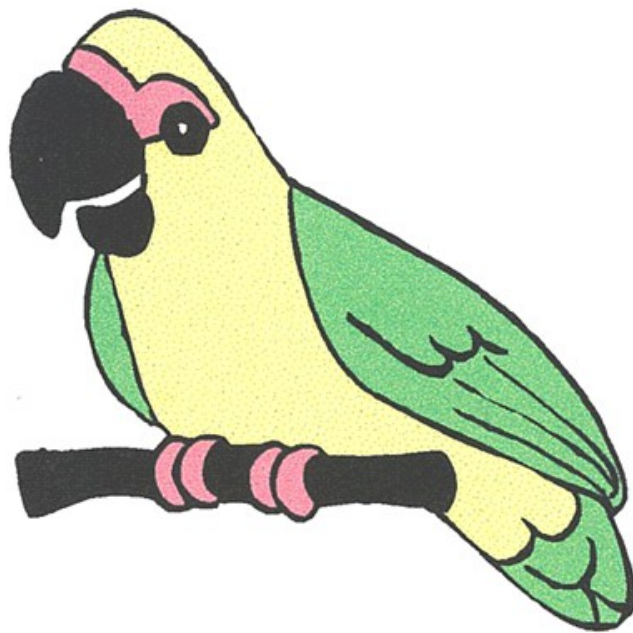


Animal Stories



By June Stepansky

*Five animal story-poems
to entertain and delight*

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To Alex—The child in my life

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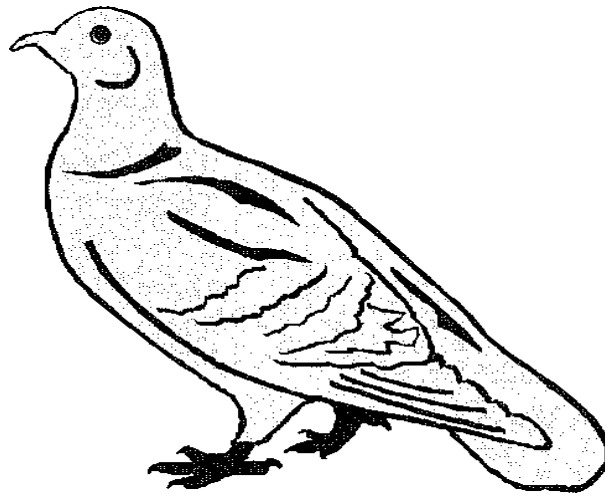
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HERCULES THE POOPED-OUT PIGEON



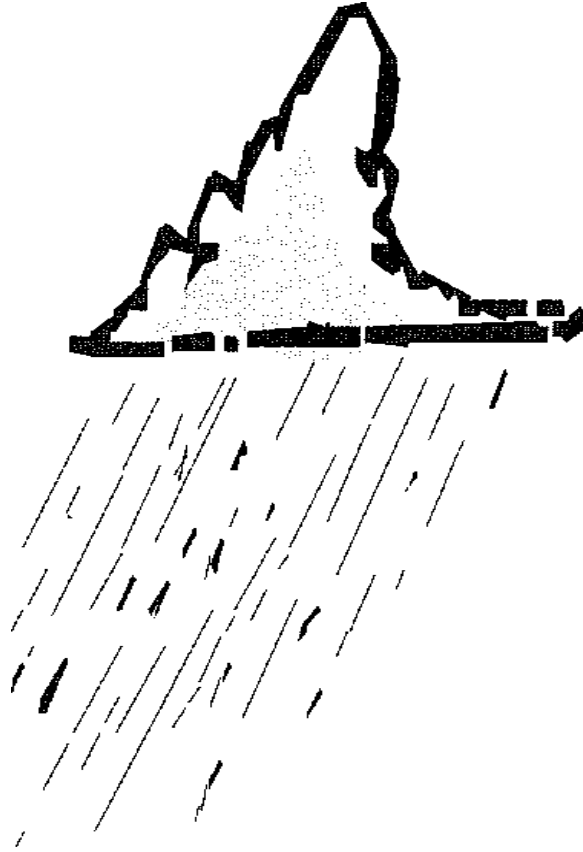
Hercules was a pigeon.

A very special kind.

He could fly a long, long way
and never seemed to mind.

He flew from Mr. Roger's house
to Mr. Murphy's place,
and then he flew right back again,
all in one day's space.

A homing pigeon he was called.
He liked best being home, and only went to
Murphy's place when he felt he should roam.



Now one sad day,
when he flew out, it started in to rain.
although he flew with all his might,
he couldn't get home again.
He beat his wings against the rain,
But then they slowly drooped.

He tried his best to make them go.

He knew that he was “pooped.”



A little girl was watching him.

Her name was Sara Jane.

She saw him fall into her yard

Her duty was quite plain.

She took that tiny frail bird.

She kept him warm and dry.

She gave him water he could drink,
and told him not to cry.

She cared for him for seven days.

'Till he became quite strong.

She watched him fearfully:

she knew he wouldn't be there long.

“Please, Mother, may I keep this bird?”, her voice was sad and low,

“ He loves me now, and I love him I just can’t let him go.”



Her mom spoke softly, gently too

She knew just what to say,

His home is somewhere else from here.

He must soon fly away

Our yard has been a resting place,

just like a small hotel,

but he will soon be leaving here

as soon as he is well.”

Yes, what she said was very true.

It happened that next day.

The pigeon circled overhead,

and then he flew away

Now Hercules is home again,

and all in one day's space

He flies from Mr. Roger's house

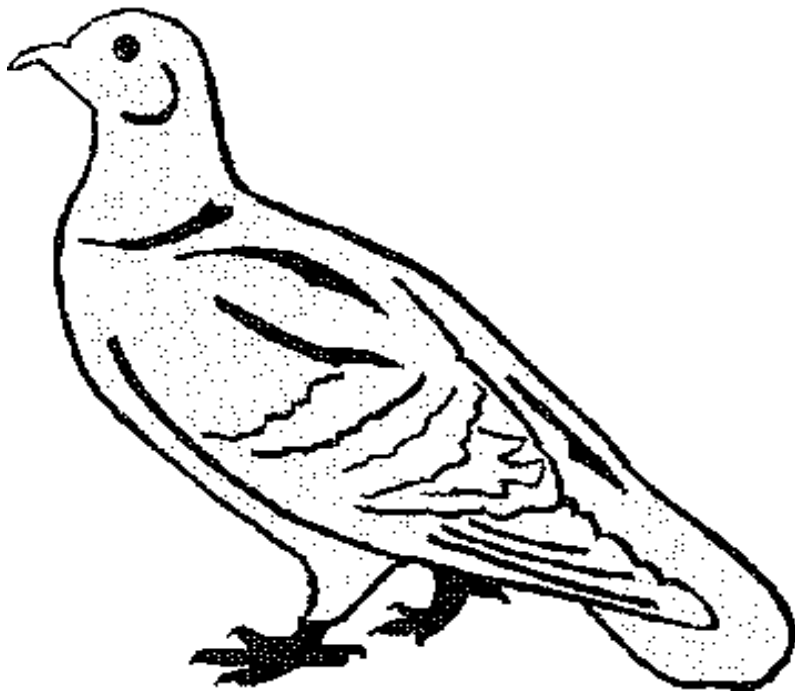
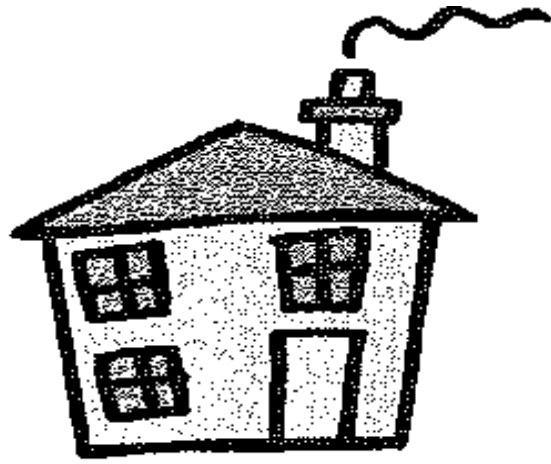
to Mr. Murphy's place.

It takes a little longer now,

though not because he's slow.

He always stops at Sara Jane's

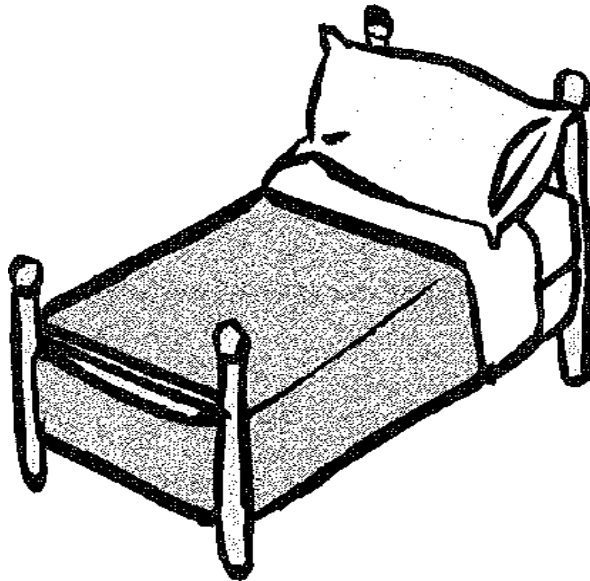
to tell his friend hello.



A GHOST STORY

Lee and Norm were two small boys,
as brave as brave could be.
They fought all bullies on the block.

They climbed the tallest tree.



One evening in the dark of night,
'bout two or half- past three,
they were awakened from their sleep
by sounds like hee, hee, hee.
It was a wild-like kind of laugh
that seemed to mean them harm.

Lee tiptoed softly from his bed

showing no alarm.

“Norm, take a stick I’ll take this broom,

and if a ghost it be, we’ll find it out,

and then we’ll stop that awful hee, hee, hee!

And even if it’s not a ghost, but just a burglar man

we’ll wake up dad, call the police, and stop him, if we can.”

So armed with courage, weapons too,

they tiptoed through each room

In every closet, behind each door,

they poked that searching broom.

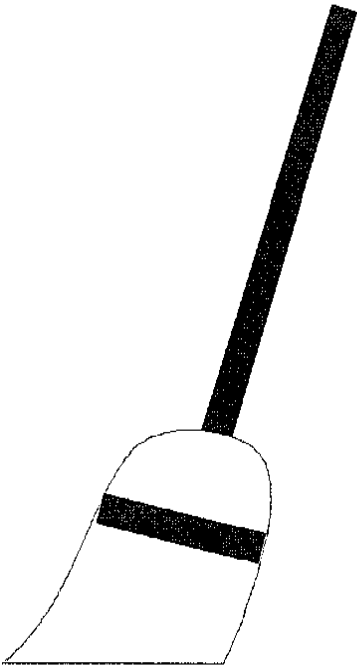
Lee whispered to his brother,

“Norm, let us search no more.

There’s nothing in these rooms to find.”

Then from the backyard door

there came a sound



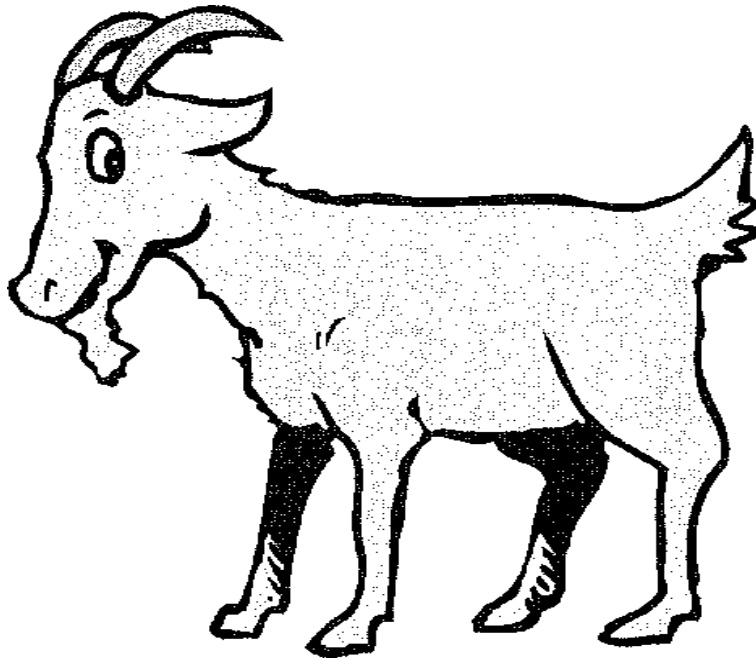
A terrible sound. They ran right up to see.

It was that same old awful sound.

The sound was hee, hee, hee!

With all the courage that they had,
they opened wide the door, and there it stood.
That noisy thing would scare them nevermore.

The thing stood there and looked at them.



Goat

It stood next to a tree.

It looked right in their eyes, and then,

it bleated hee, hee, hee.

The cutest, cuddliest little goat

you'd ever want to see.

The boys just rolled right on the ground.

They laughed until they cried.

They wiped the laughter from their eyes,

and then they went inside.

Those two tired boys climbed into bed.

A clock chimed loud and clear.

The ghost was really just a goat.

There was no more to fear.



DOLLY, MOLLY AND FRED

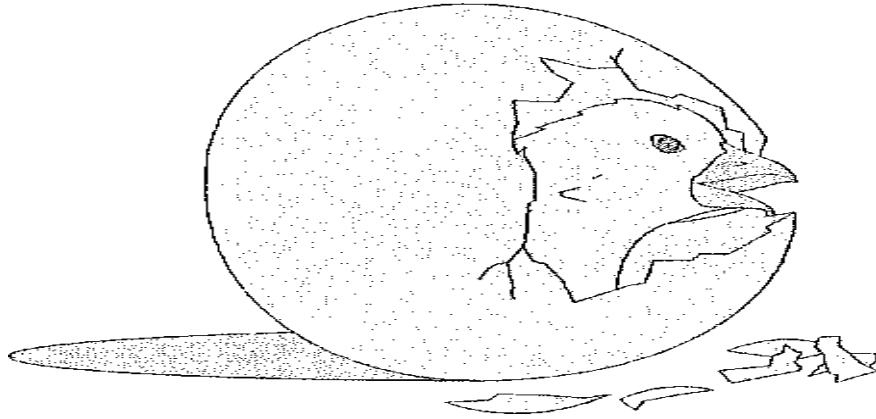


Dolly was a parrot,
as pretty as could be,
all orange, green and yellow
a lovely sight to see.

One day, when she was in her cage
she stood upon one leg,

and then before she realized

she laid a little egg.



She sat upon that little egg

as if they were attached,

and in a while to her surprise

it opened up and hatched.

A tiny, scrawny, baby bird

poked out his wobbly head.

Then Molly, who was Dolly's friend

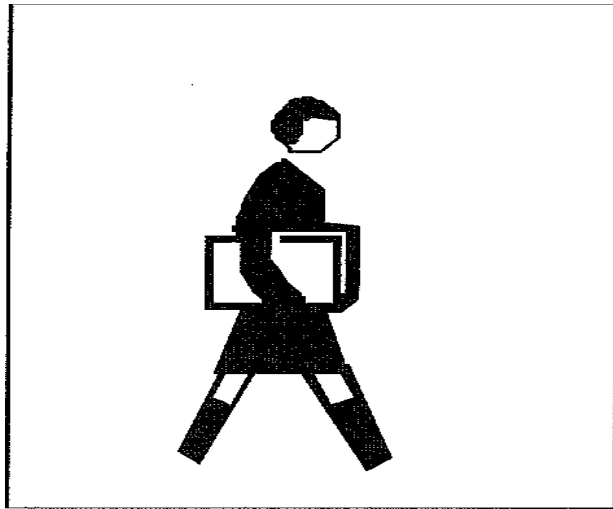
named the baby Fred.

But Dolly could not feed her son.

She lay ill in her bed.

“I’ll care for him”, young Molly said,

“ I’ll keep him warm and fed.”



She took the frail baby bird.

She kept him warm and dry.

She fed him every hour or two,

just so he wouldn’t cry.

She took him everywhere she went,

to school, to work, to play.

She loved to have him with her.

He was never in her way.

They grew so close.

Soon it was clear

how much they loved each other.

He went with her wherever she went.

He thought she was his mother.



And in a very little while, nine weeks

from that first day, he grew to be a

handsome bird grown up in every way.

He's still a parrot. That's quite plain,

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