

## Ophelius and Hamlette

by Francesca Jandasek

I am a little turk-ey  
I'm nice and cute and cluck-ey  
but I'll dress up  
like a teacup  
so nobody will eat - me.

On an ugly, muddy little farm in le Provence in the south of France, lived a little turkey with a clucking multitude of other turkeys. But this particular turkey, named Ophelius, was special because he had half of a brain in his head, making him infinitely more intelligent than any of the other turkeys. He felt quite lonely because no one functioned on his level of thinking at all, and he had formulated an entire theory about how his fellow turkey-mates had their brains located in their tails which they kept sitting on, and thus their thought process was impeded. Feeling superior to them all, Ophelius would sit in his corner of the fence and observe them and try to analyze them psychologically. There were passive turkeys, aggressive turkeys, obsessive turkeys. A paranoid schizo turkey named Scotty, believed that a group of alien cats were trying to beam him up. Franco, who had dictatorship tendencies, was trying to organize bird coop-de-etats. Lasviciousa, a nympho turkey, thought she was really a 'bird of paradise' and wanted to be eaten more than anything else in the world. Dick, who had Tourettes syndrome, kept yelling turkey obscenities like "flucking piece of turkey shit bird brain" , and "you clunt!!".

Ophelius didn't like the other turkeys too much because he thought they were incredibly stupid. He didn't want to be slaughtered and eaten either because it was such a waste of time, and as he sat in his corner of the fence, he decided that since he had a pretty ample sized bird brain, he would escape and try to survive in the wide scary world. For many weeks, he oh-so-inconspicuously plucked tail feathers here and there from the most stupid unsuspecting turkeys. (They didn't even notice when Ophelius had taken all of their tail feathers. However, they were very confused about their sudden loss of balance in the forward direction. It never occurred to them that their tail feathers were missing; rather they attributed their lack of balance to a strange inner ear infection or something). So, after many weeks of collecting tail feathers, he wove them together into a sort of ladder and tossed it over the fence. The ladder broke as he was climbing, but Ophelius, being the resourceful and only halfway intelligent turkey that he was, realized suddenly that the fence was not high at all, and so he hopped over it and ran away.

Ophelius ran and ran and clucked and ran. Eventually he became really cold and hungry and miserable. Slowing down, he began to feel very sorry for himself. His tummy kept rumbling and he kept thinking about how much he hated having goose bumps because he was a turkey, not a goose. So absorbed in his own thoughts, Ophelius ran beak first into the wall of a nice warm smelly building - a pig sty. His brain jolted back into reality, was able to help him find the entrance to the building, and inside he found - surprise! - a pig!

"Oink.", said the pig.

"Cluck." said the turkey.

"Oink snort." said the pig.

"Meow." said the turkey.

"Wait a minute. snort. You aren't supposed to say meow. You're a turkey." said the pig.

"Yup." said the turkey. "Fooled you. Anyway, I was just kidding. cluck. What's your name?"

"My name is Hamlette. It means little pig. Snort." she said.

"oh. My name is Ophelius." said the Ophelius.

Hamlette gave Ophelius some food for his rumbly tummy and then they both curled up and went to sleep. They became very close friends, and Ophelius decided to move in with Hamlette. Then, because a turkey in a pig sty is slightly suspicious, and because Ophelius found it very uncomfortable when the large pig sat on him to hide him from the farmer when he came to feed the pigs, Ophelius decided to disguise himself. He had an animal change (as opposed to a sex change) and became Ophelius the pig.

Ophelius and Hamlette fell deeply in love. Every second to them was bliss. Every night they would curl up together; every morning they would grunt lightly into each other's ear to wake each other up. They ate table scraps and pig slop together, they drank water from the same trough, they gazed lovingly into each others squinty piggy eyes, and tickled each others curly tails. One of their favorite pastimes was to take luxurious mud baths and give each other mud massages. Wanting this bliss to last forever, they decided to get married on the New Year. They planned a large festive wedding celebration and began preparing by saving exceptionally tasty bits of food under the trough for the wedding dinner. Ophelius sent invitations to some of his fellow turkey-mates because he did miss them a little, and Hamlette made a wedding veil out of a piece of newspaper that she found blowing in the wind.

One day, Ophelius found a nice lithe stalk of grass and he dug it up and planted it in between the wooden boards of the pig sty floor. He decorated his stalk of grass with a piece of fluff and some hay, and he showed it to Hamlette.

"Look Hammy! cluck. " said Ophelius, beaming. (He still clucked sometimes because he'd forget he was a pig.). " I found a Christmas tree! Santa Claus can put our presents under it tomorrow!"

Hamlette so excited her curly tail quivered. "oink. snort. Maybe we should find some stockings too and maybe Santa Claus will leave us some chocolate!."

Ophelius thought this was a great idea. However, before they could go search for stockings, Claude, the little French farmer who invited his extremely oversized extended family for Christmas, made bacon and a delicious Christmas dinner out of Ophelius and Hamlette. His family really enjoyed the dinner but they kept commenting that "Zis testes like tehrkeeee."

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I'm nice and cute and cluck-ey  
by means most fowl,  
I reformed - How?  
I became a pig -gy.