

PART CHICKEN, TURKEY, DUCK AND GOOSE

Story by Ben Ross Berenberg  
Illustrations by Louis Nuyens  
adapted from the original pictures by Dellwyn Cunningham  
©2012 The HANDLE Institute

[www.handle.org](http://www.handle.org)

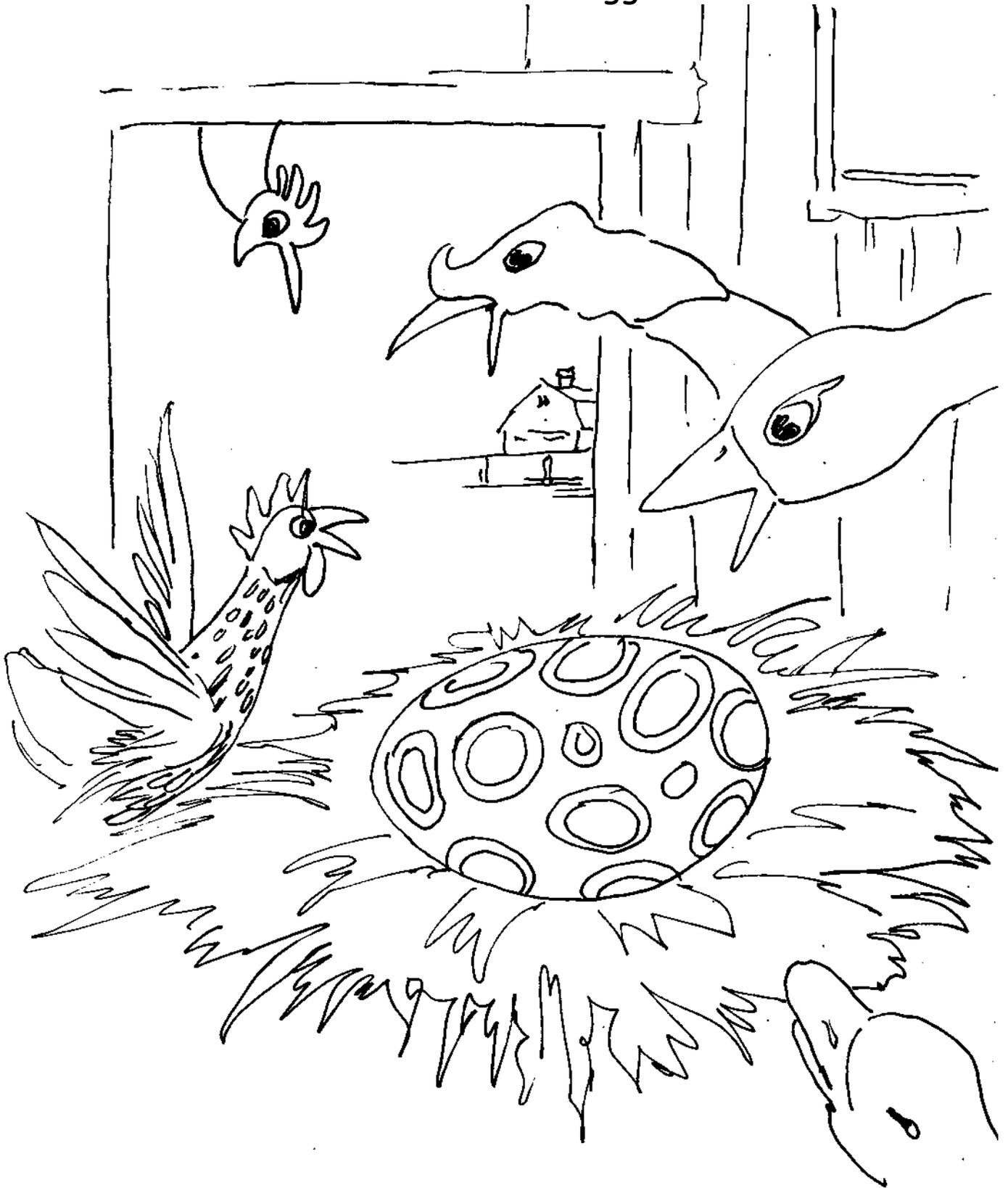
Helping Extraordinary People Do Ordinary Things!

The barnyard buzzed with excitement.



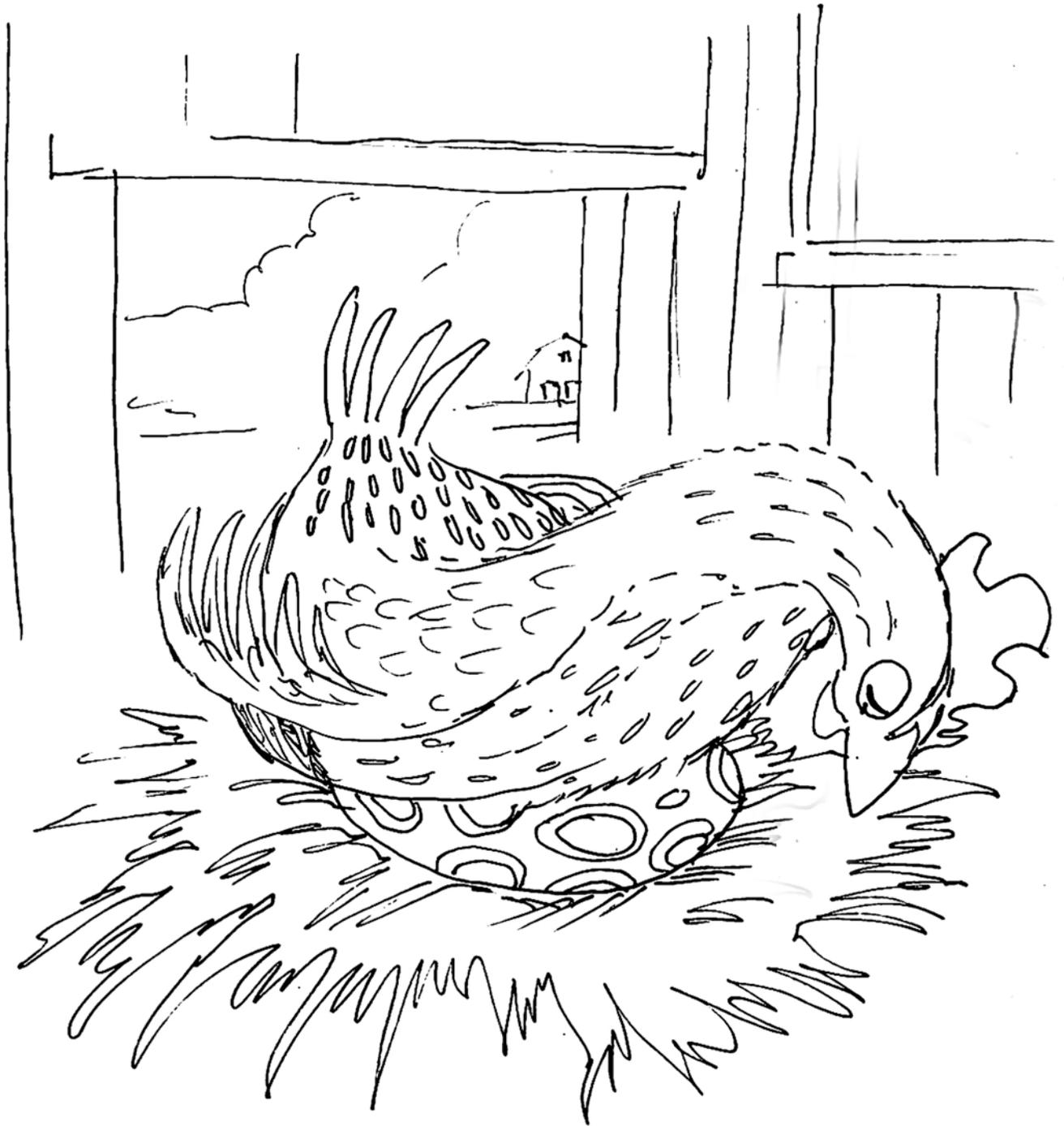
There was a new egg in the henhouse.

But WHAT an egg!

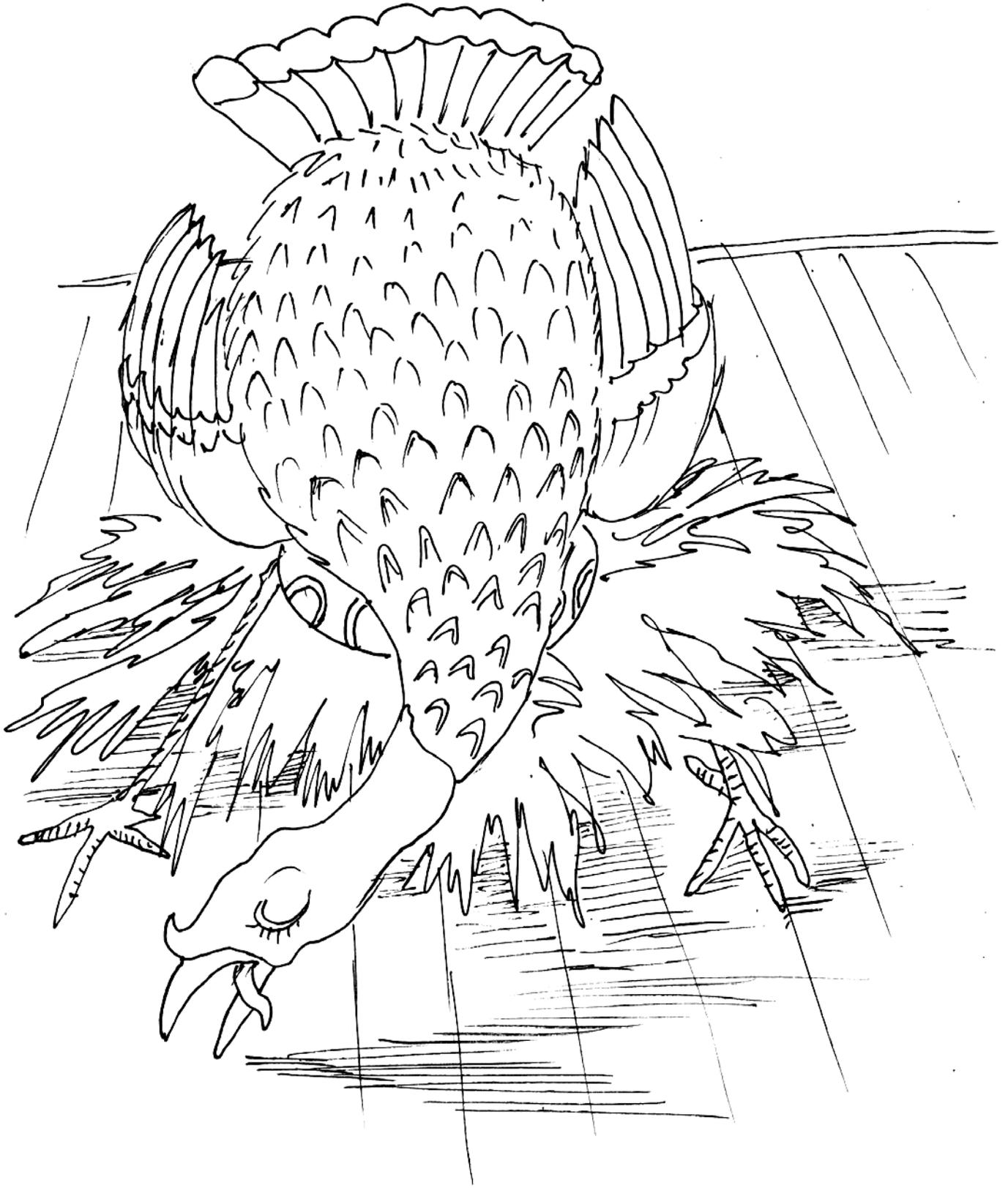


The Chicken and the Turkey and the Duck and the Goose agreed it was the oddest egg they had ever seen.

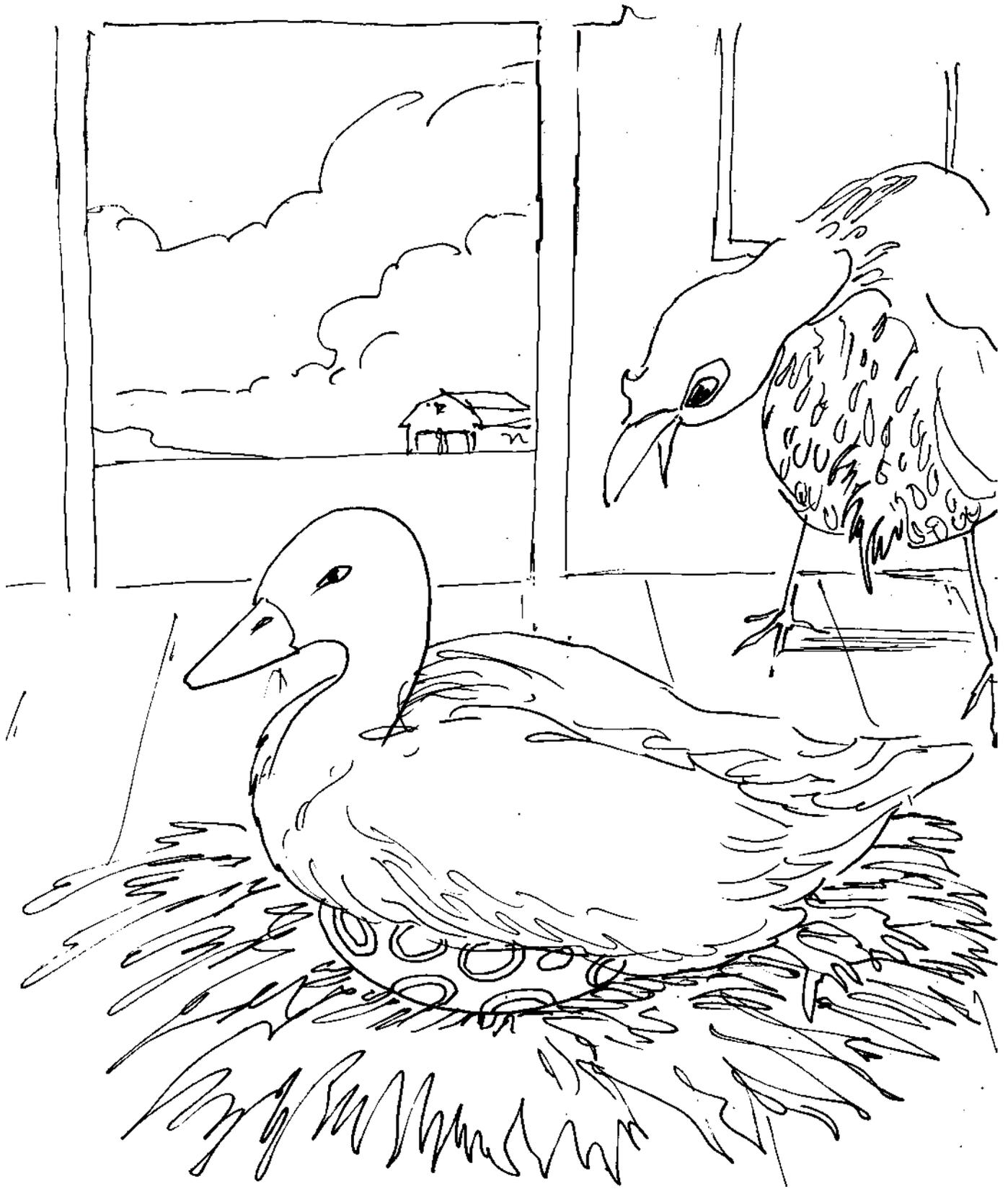
The egg was so special that it took an especially long time to hatch it.



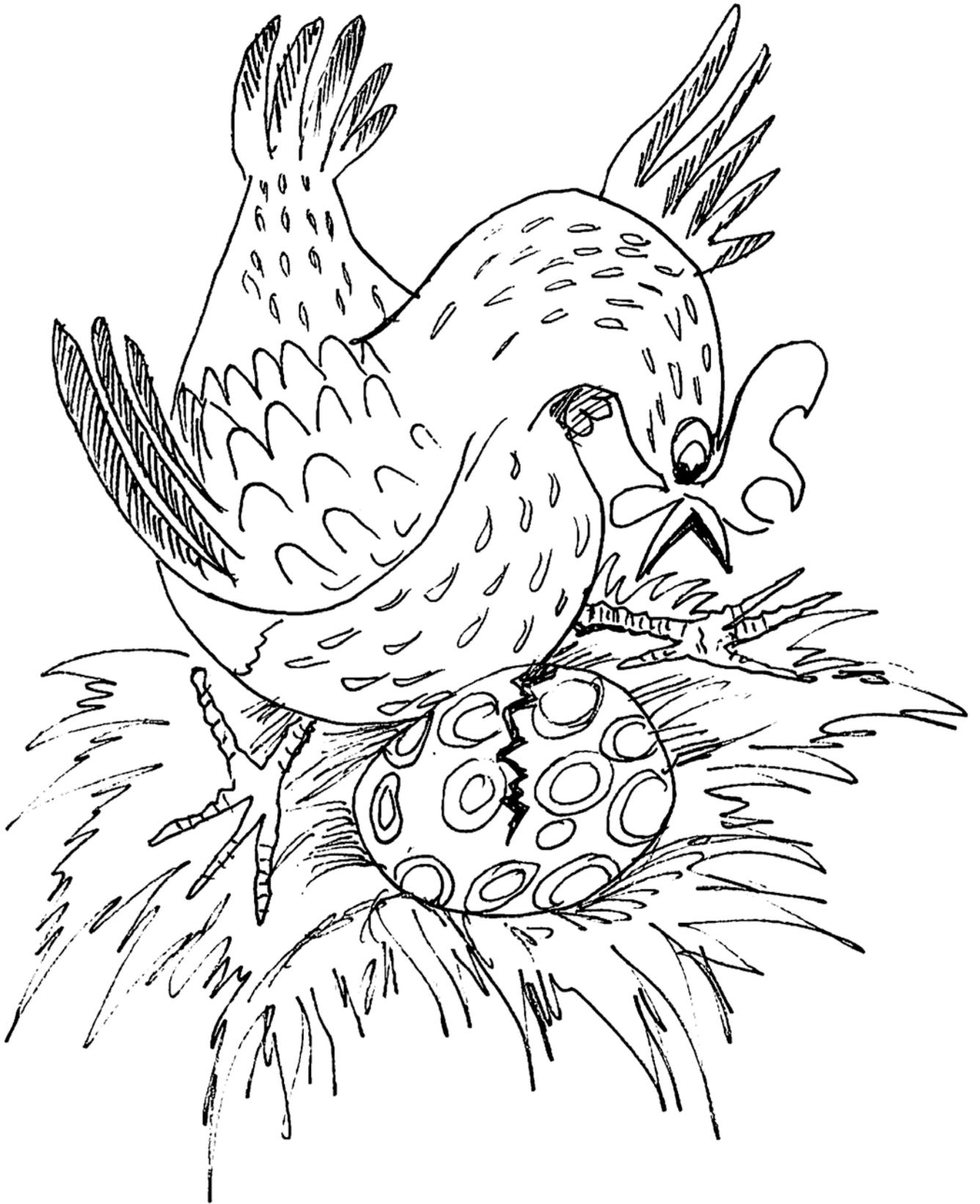
First the Chicken sat on the egg until she got tired of sitting.



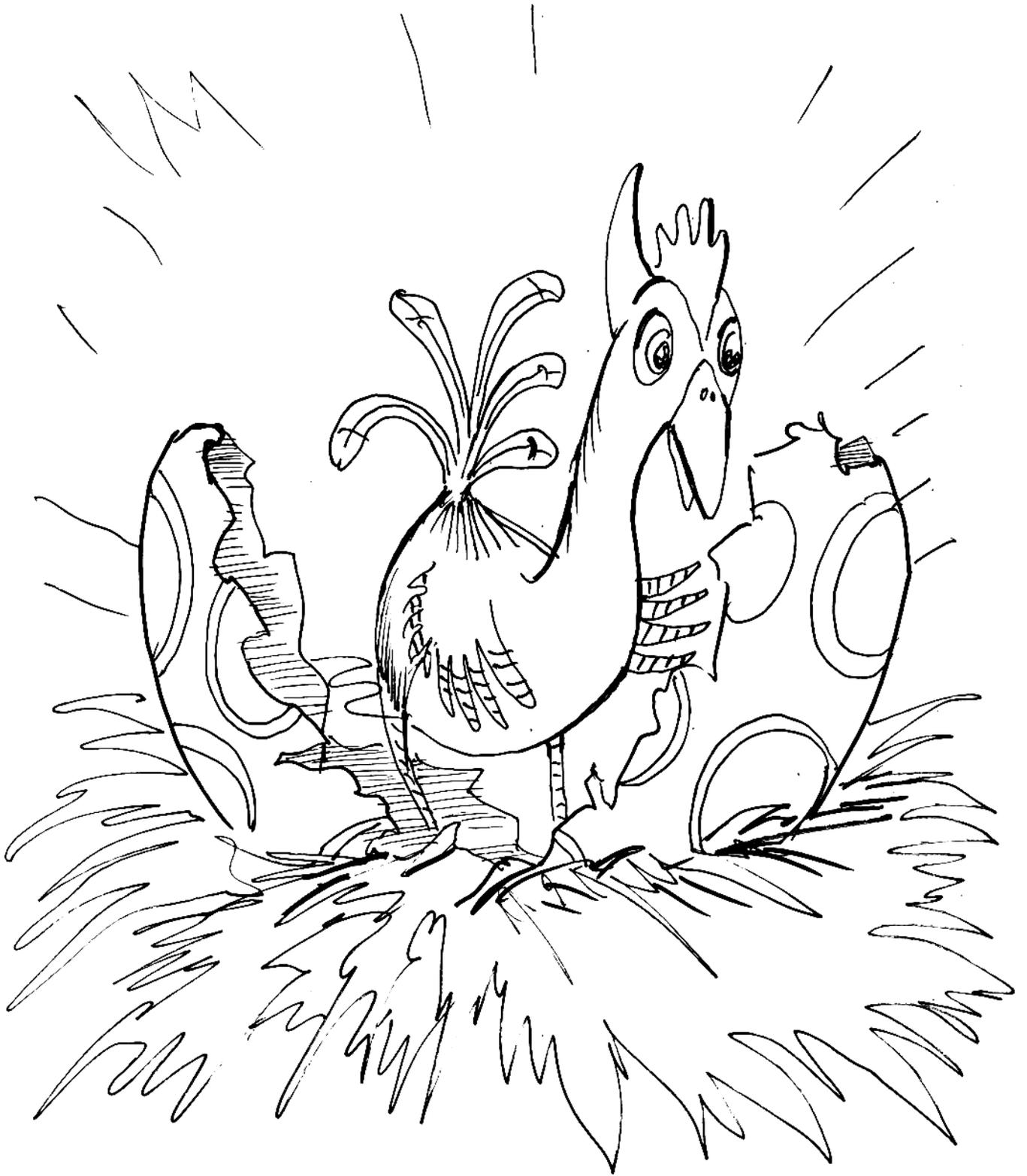
Then the Turkey sat on the egg until SHE got tired.



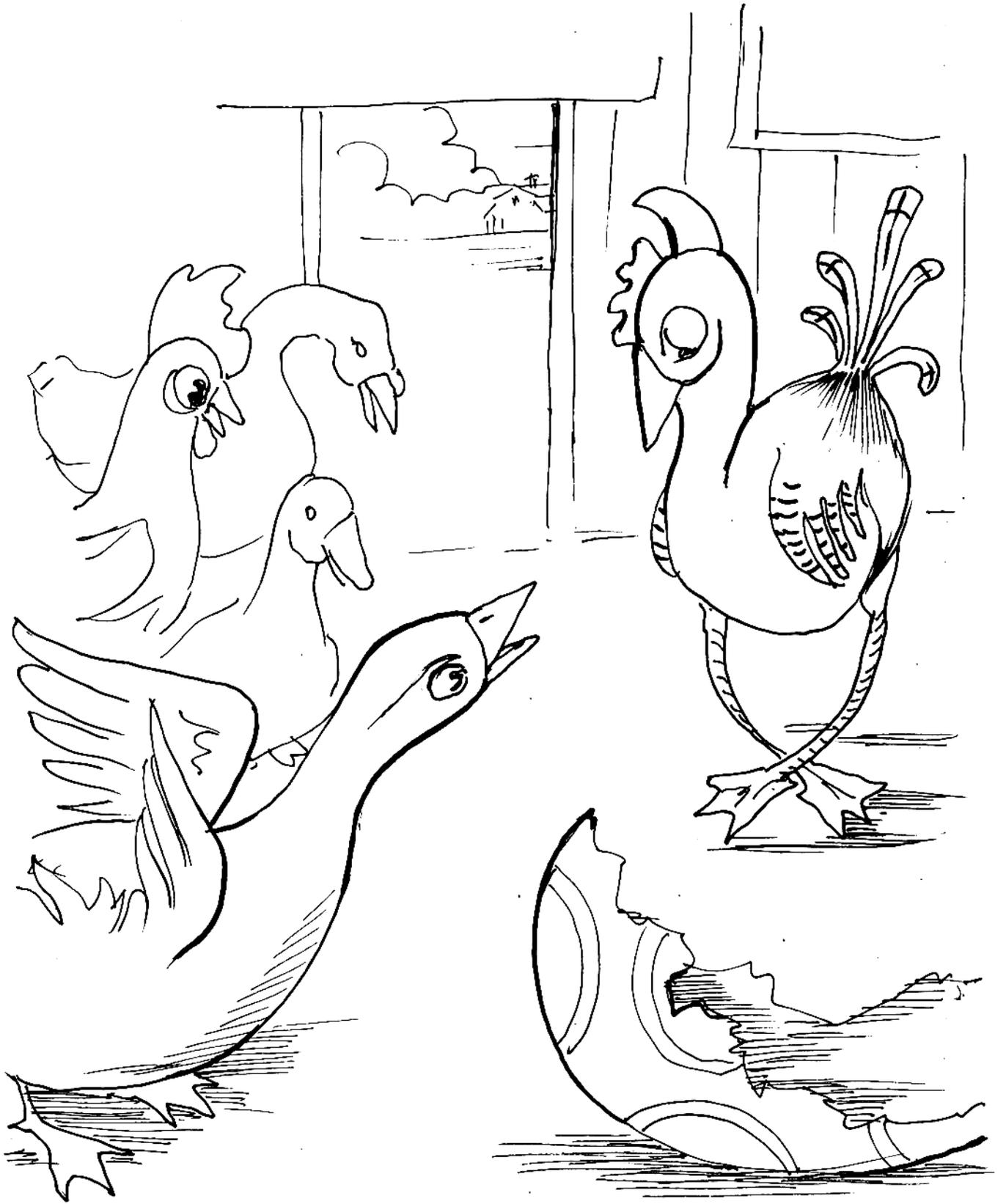
Then the Goose.  
And when the Goose got tired, the Chicken sat on the egg  
again.



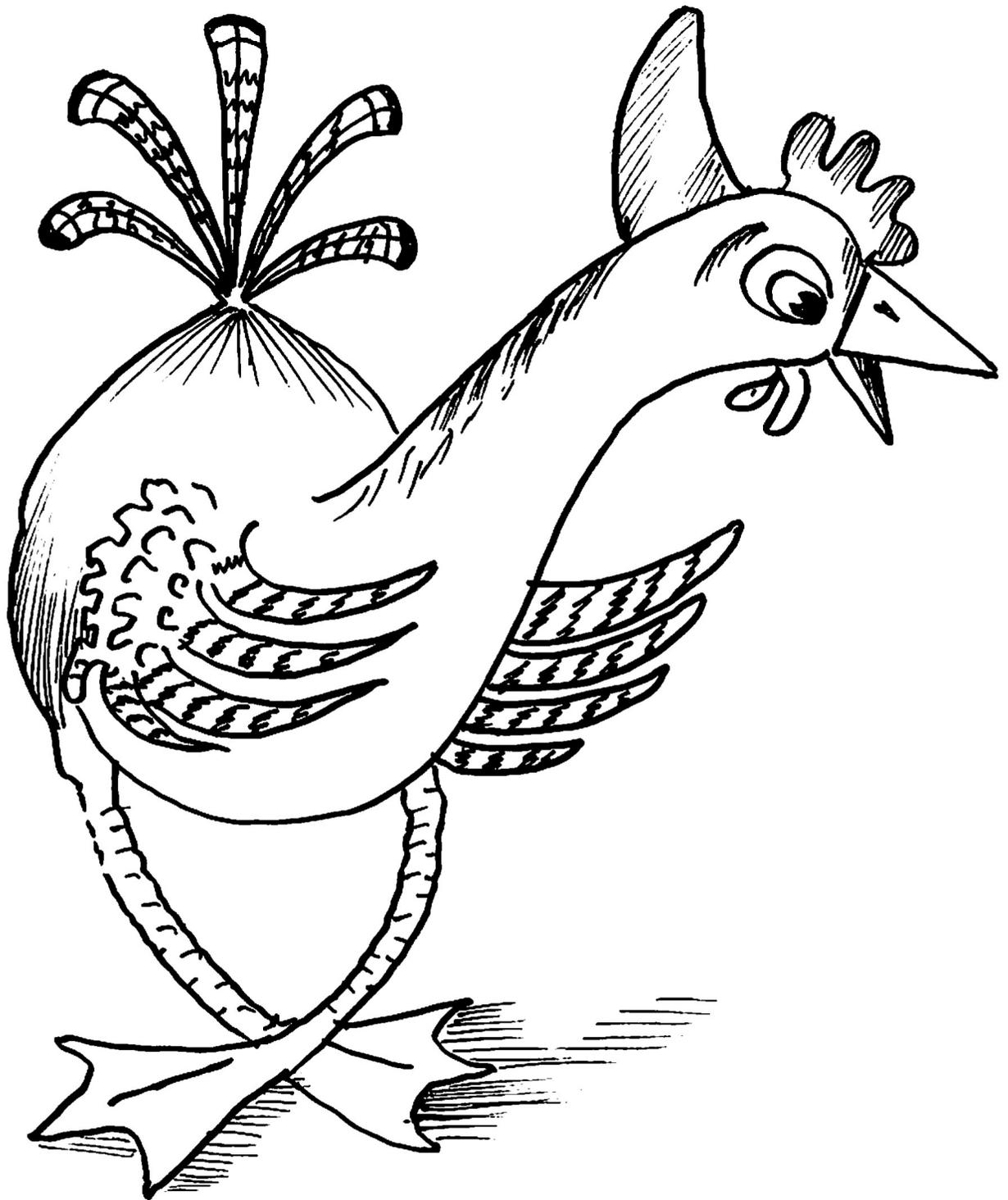
No sooner had the Chicken taken her place on the egg,  
than it hatched.



Out came the most unusual bird they had ever seen.



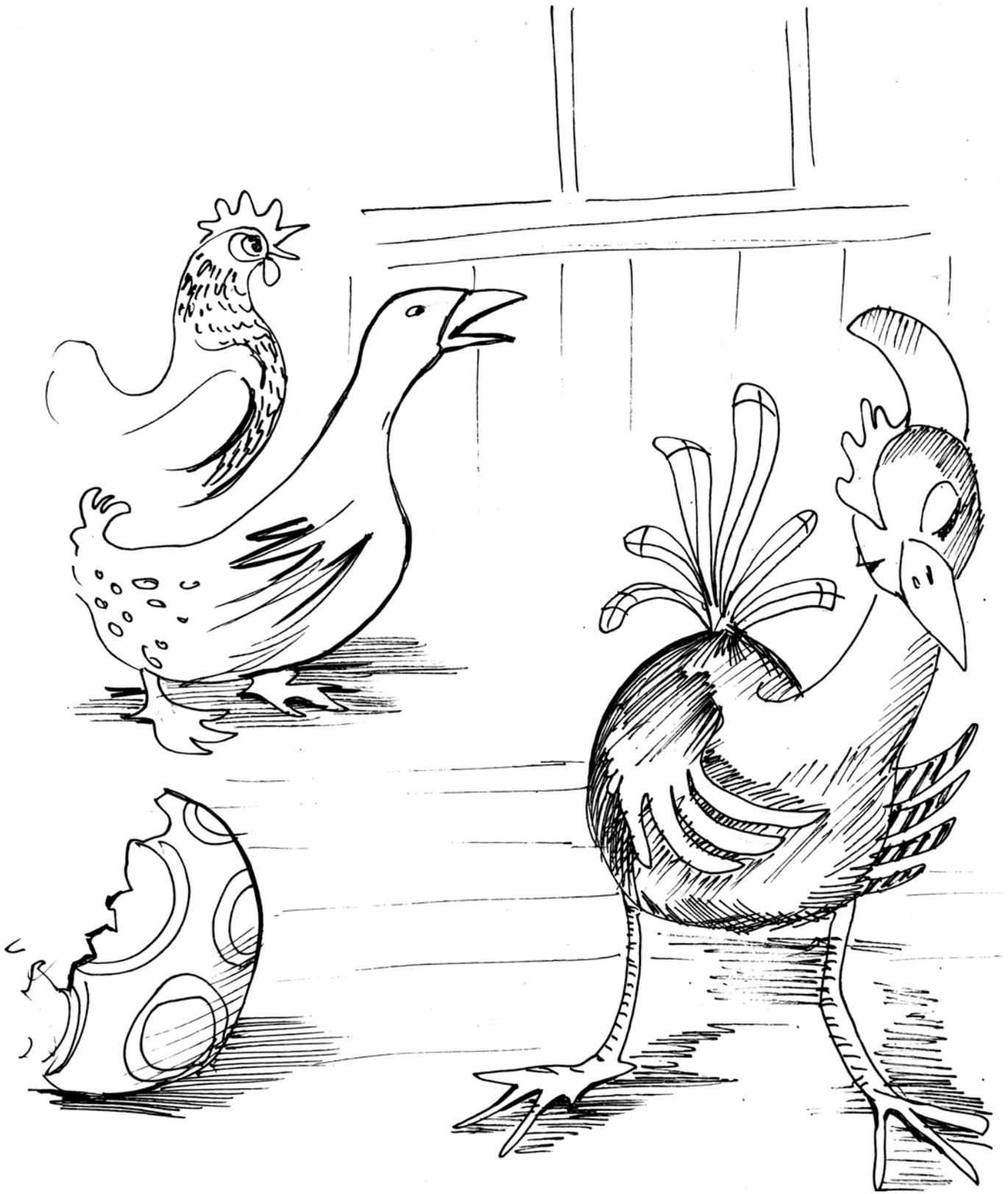
"It looks very peculiar," said the Goose.



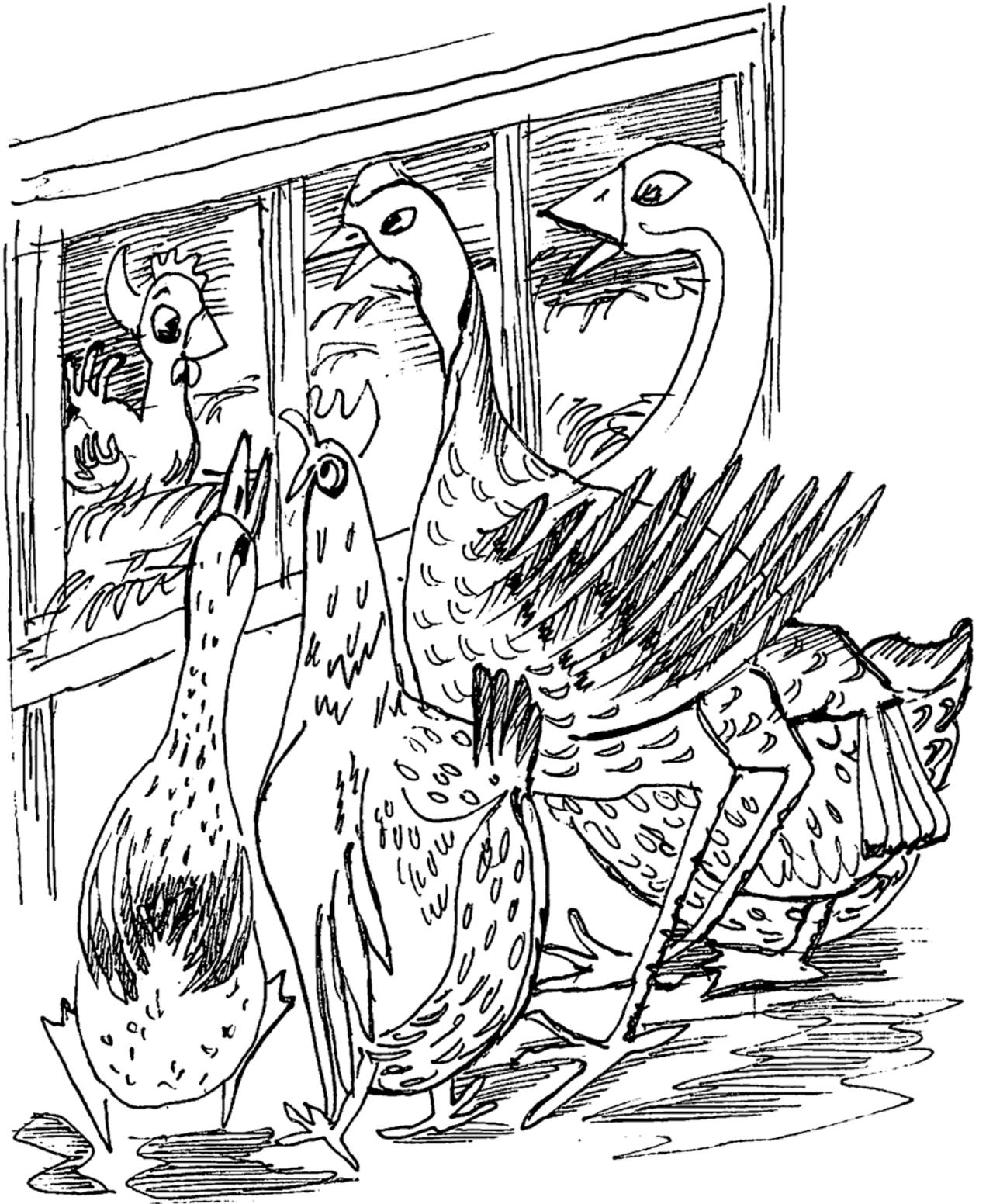
And the Duck asked, "What kind of HEAD is that?"



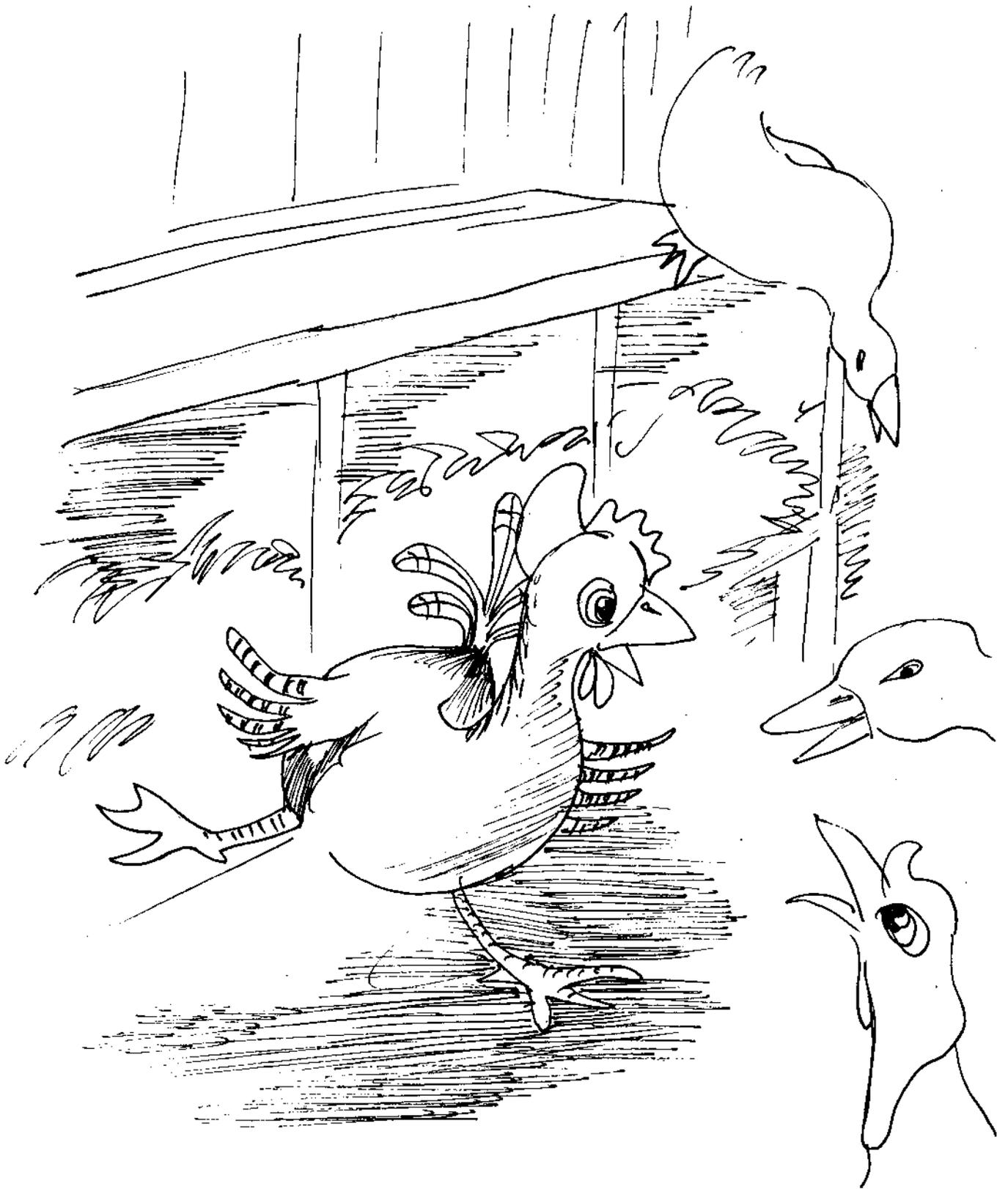
And the Chicken asked, "What kind of BILL is that?"



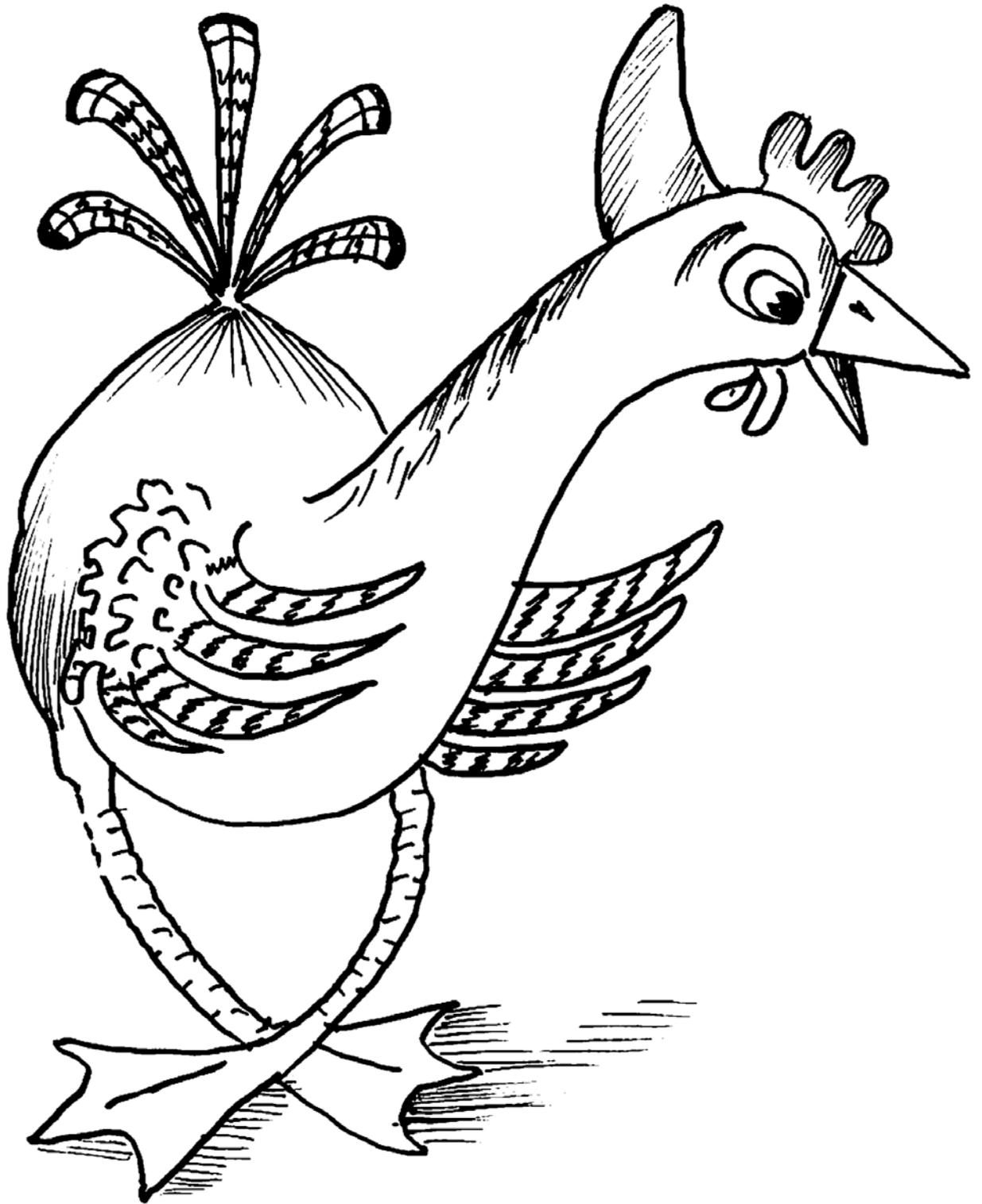
And the Goose asked, "What kind of BODY is that?"



Then they started to ask questions all together.

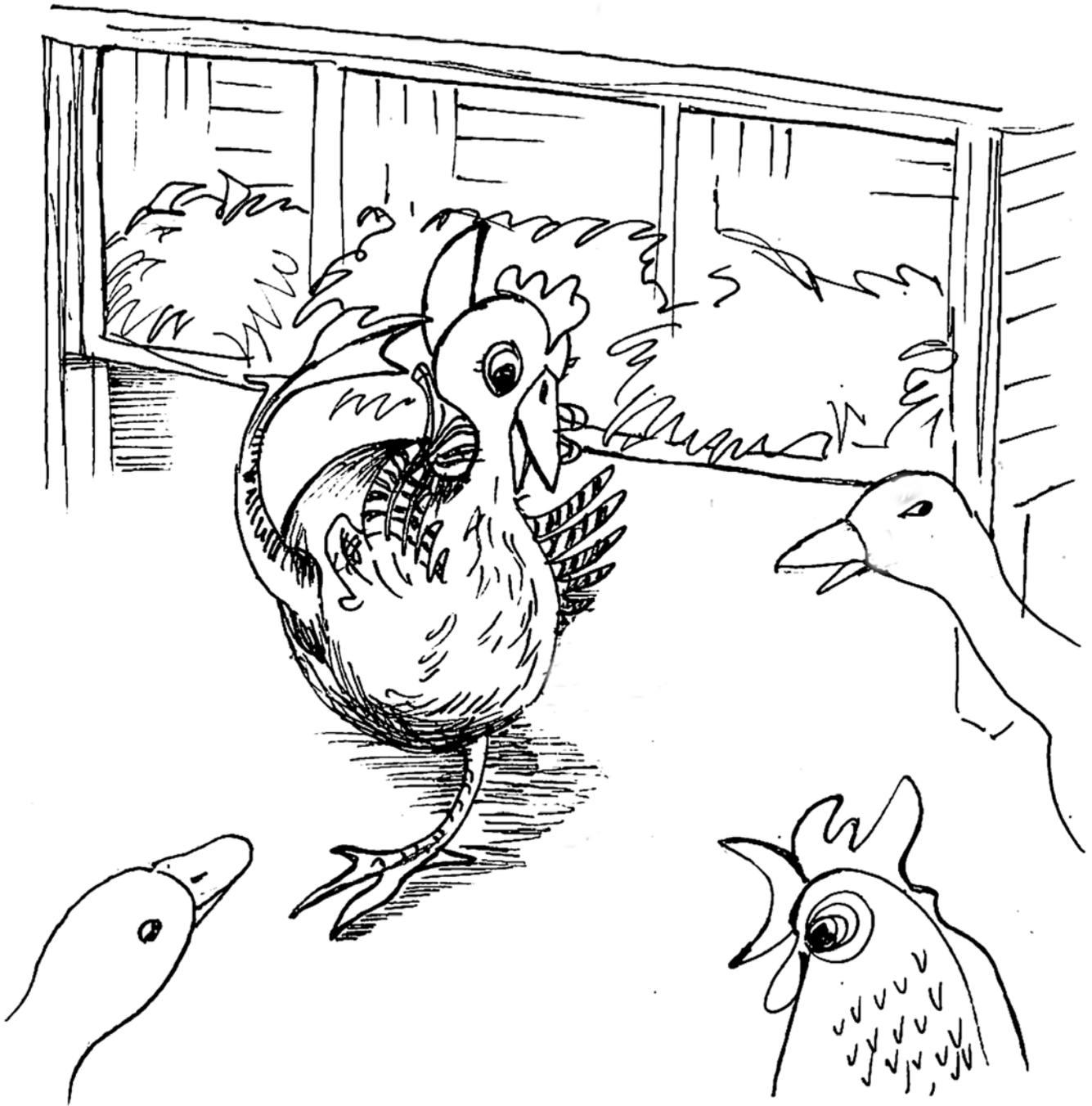


"One at a time, please!" said the new little bird. "One at a time! I'll answer your questions, but one at a time!"



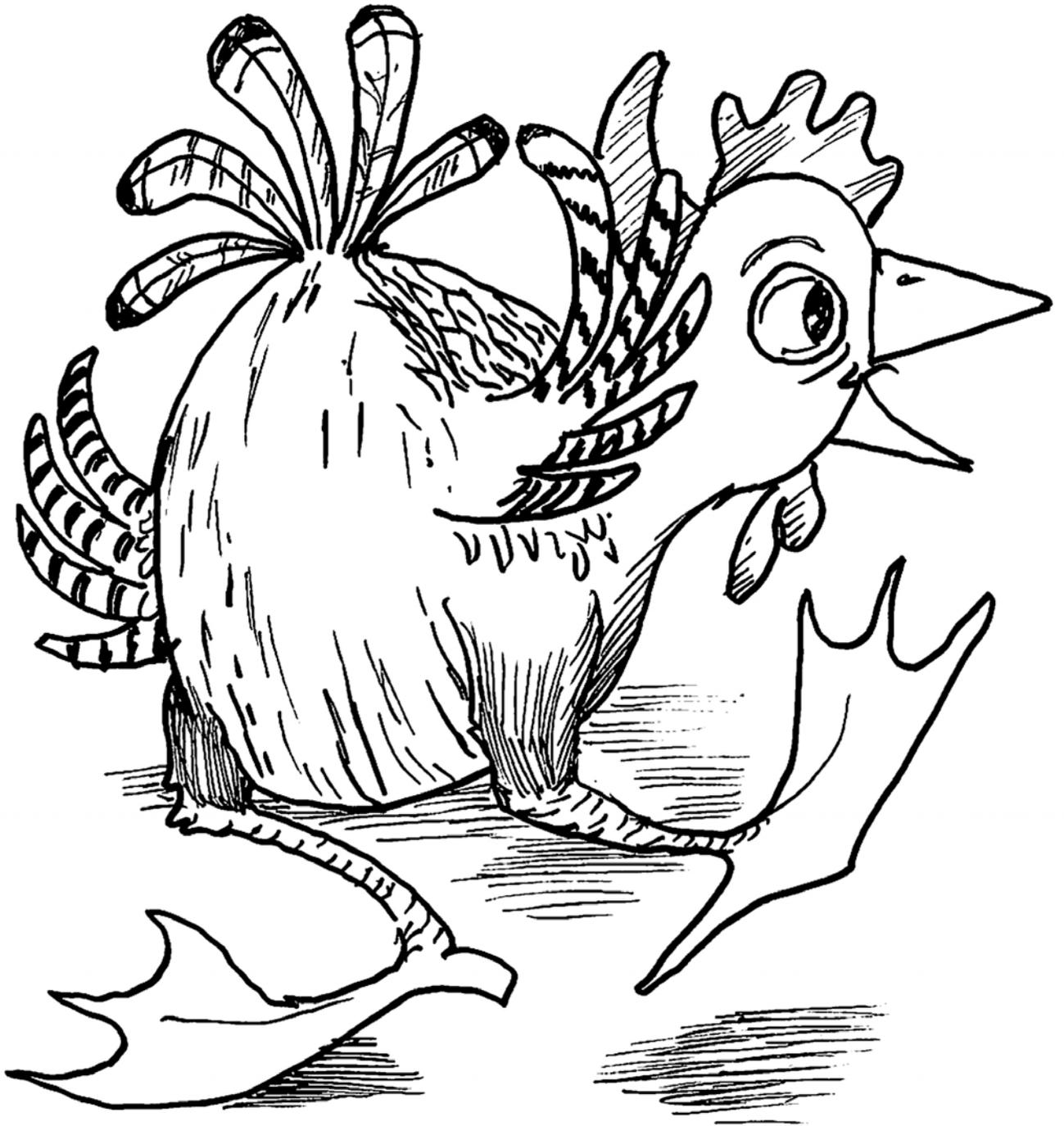
"I have a head like a Chicken, and legs like a Duck.  
Instead of quacking, I say, Yuk! Yuk!  
I've a body like a Turkey, and a bill like a Goose,  
I feel pretty good, but my legs are loose."

What ARE you, anyway?" asked the Chicken.  
And the new little bird replied:



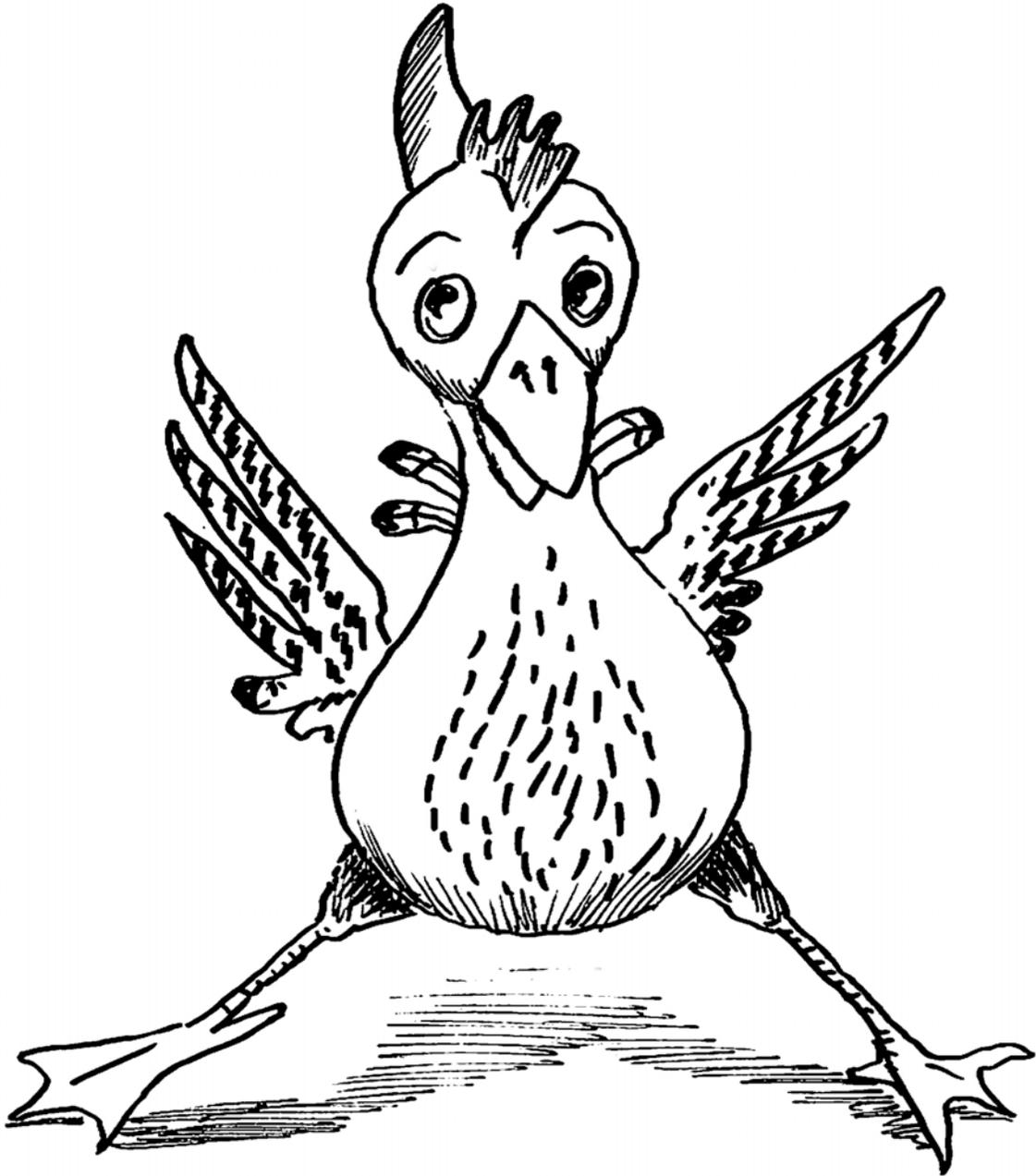
"Well, I'm not a Chicken, and I'm not a Duck.  
I have more brains than I have luck.  
I'm not a Turkey, and I'm not a Goose. Can't you see?  
I'm a Churkendoose!"

"You talk funny," said the Chicken.  
The Churkendoose flapped his wings and said:



"I don't talk all the time,  
But when I do, I talk in rhyme."

"Walk over here! Let's take a good look at you,"  
ordered the Goose.

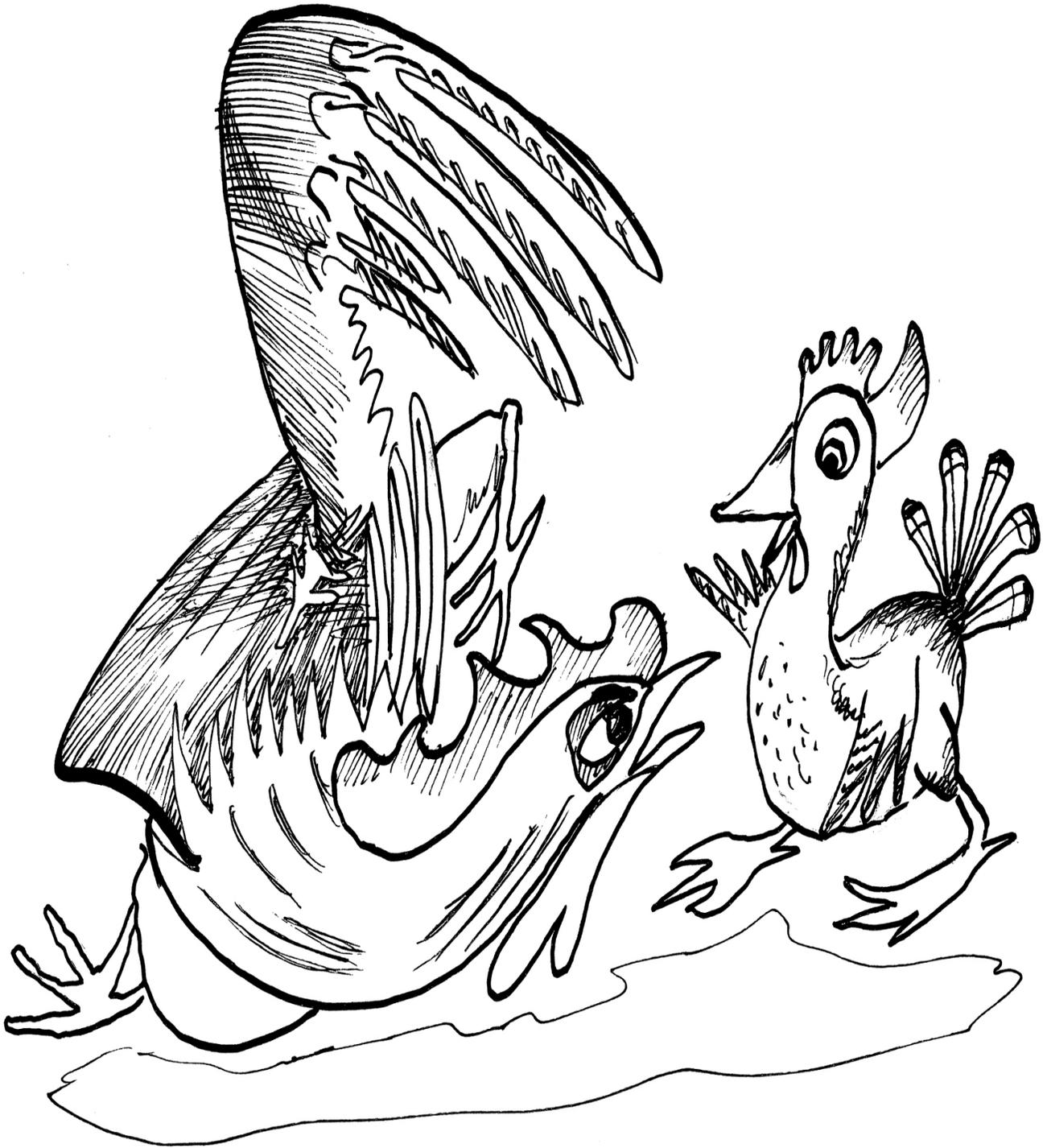


The Churkendoose smiled at her and said,  
" I can't walk, I wouldn't take the chance.  
But if you give me some music, I'll go into my dance."



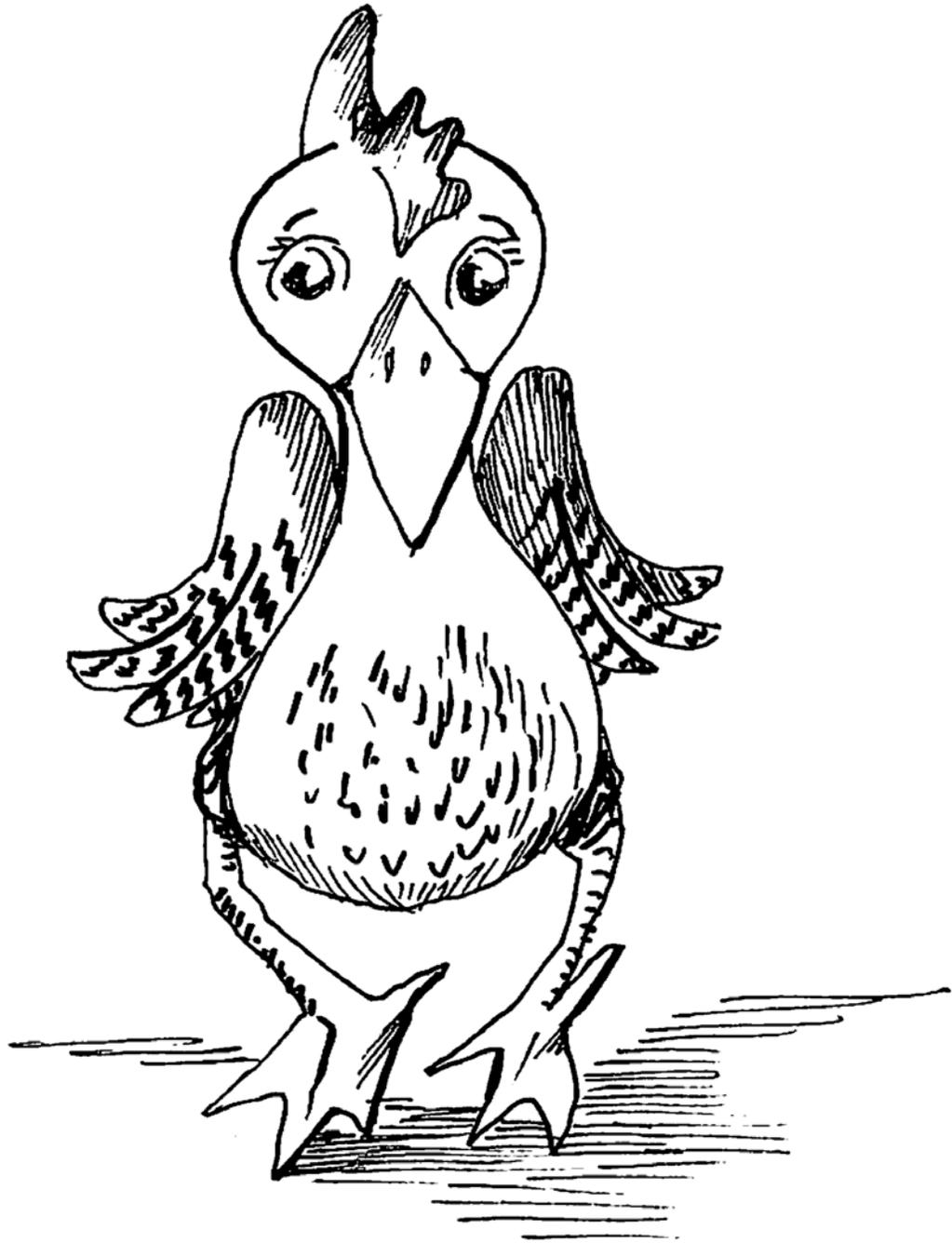
His webbed feet went "tappity - tappity - tap" on the floor of the henhouse. He spun around, bowed this way and that, and started to tap dance his way over to the other birds. It was a lovely dance.

But it ended when the Rooster stormed into the henhouse.



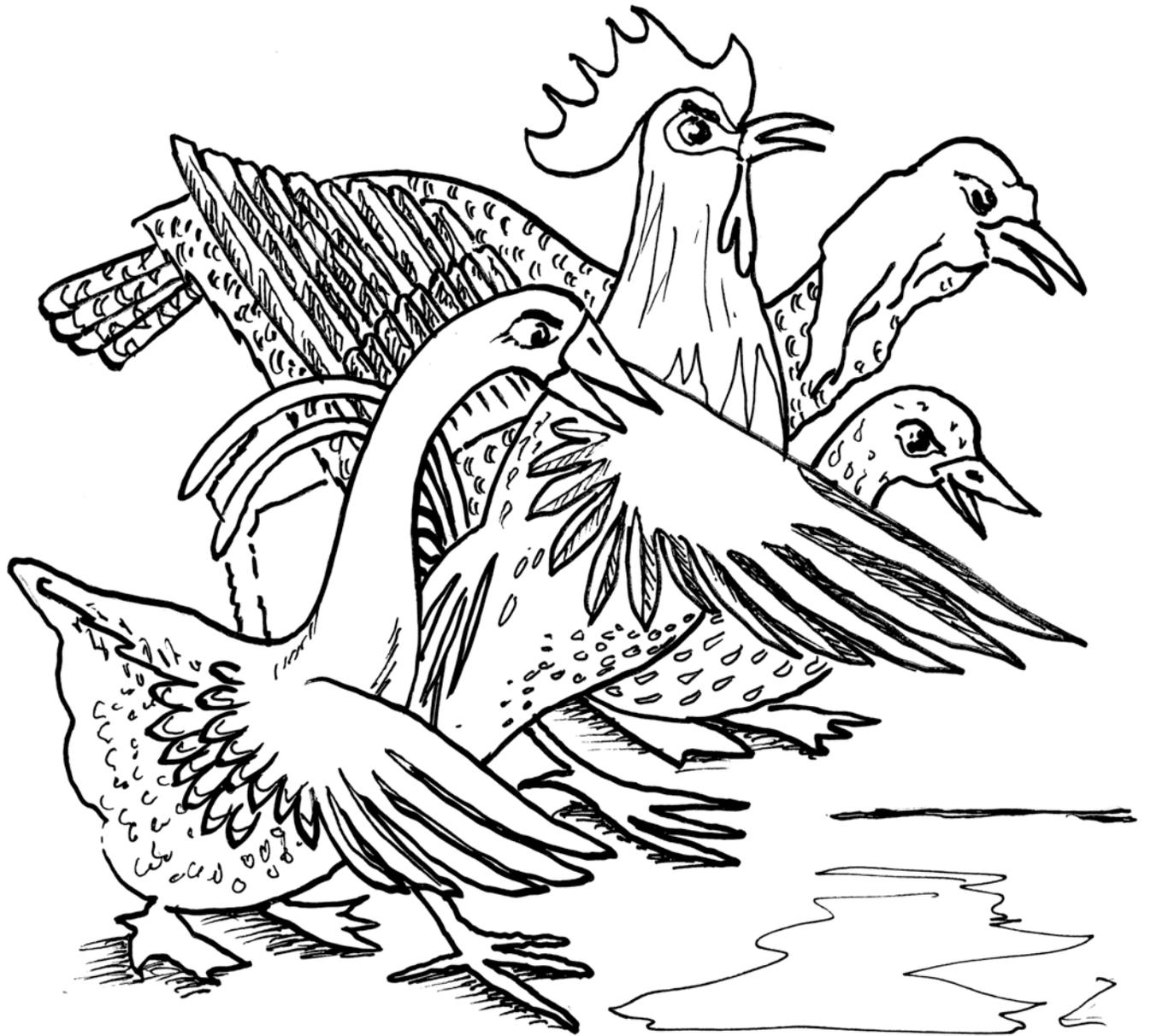
"Just look at you!" he said. "You're too little to be much good for anything. And you're mighty ugly. What good ARE you?"

The Churkendoose answered as best he could.

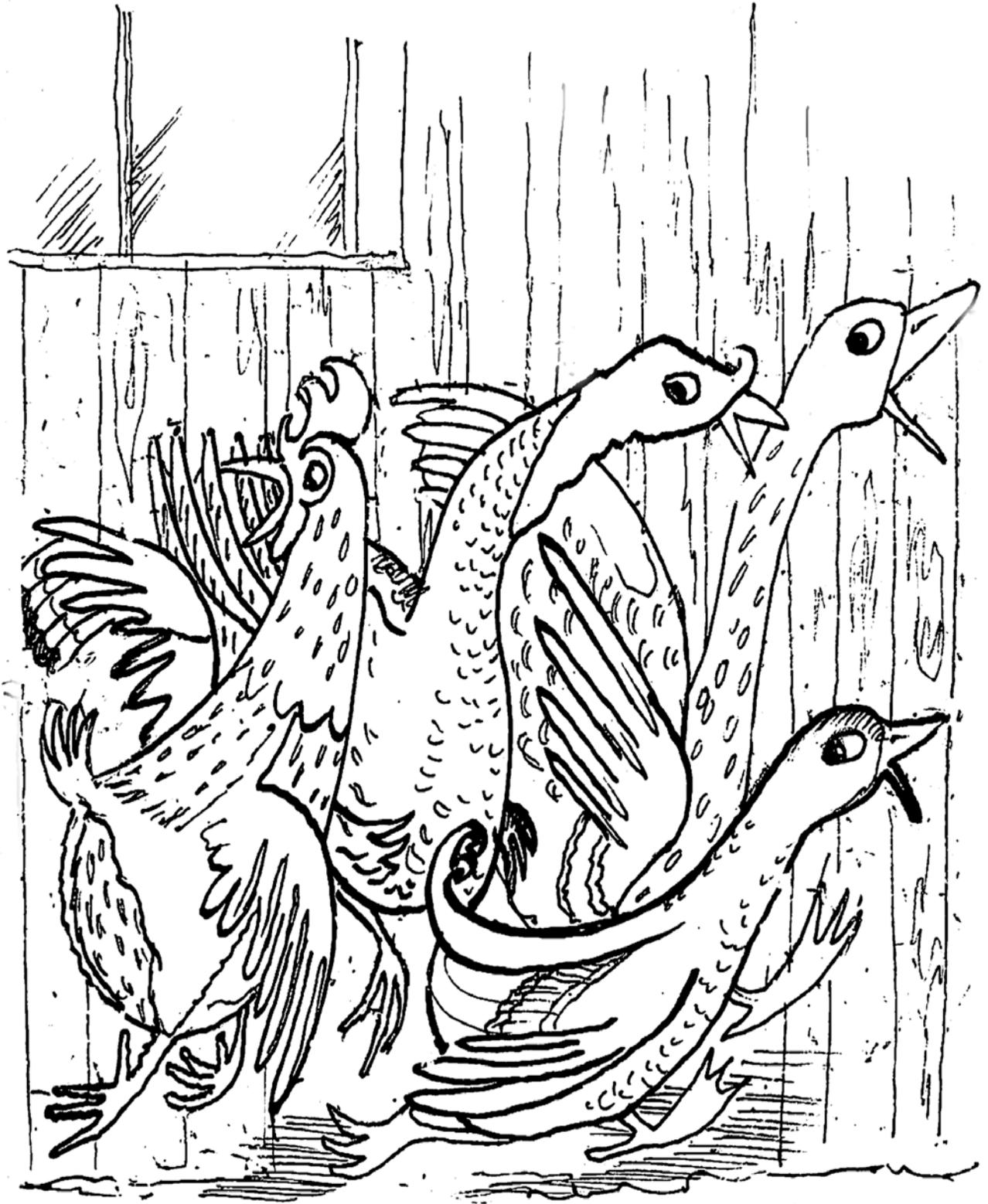


"I'd like to tell you, but I don't know,  
I'm still little, I've got to grow."

"But you know how to tap-dance, don't you!" said the Goose.

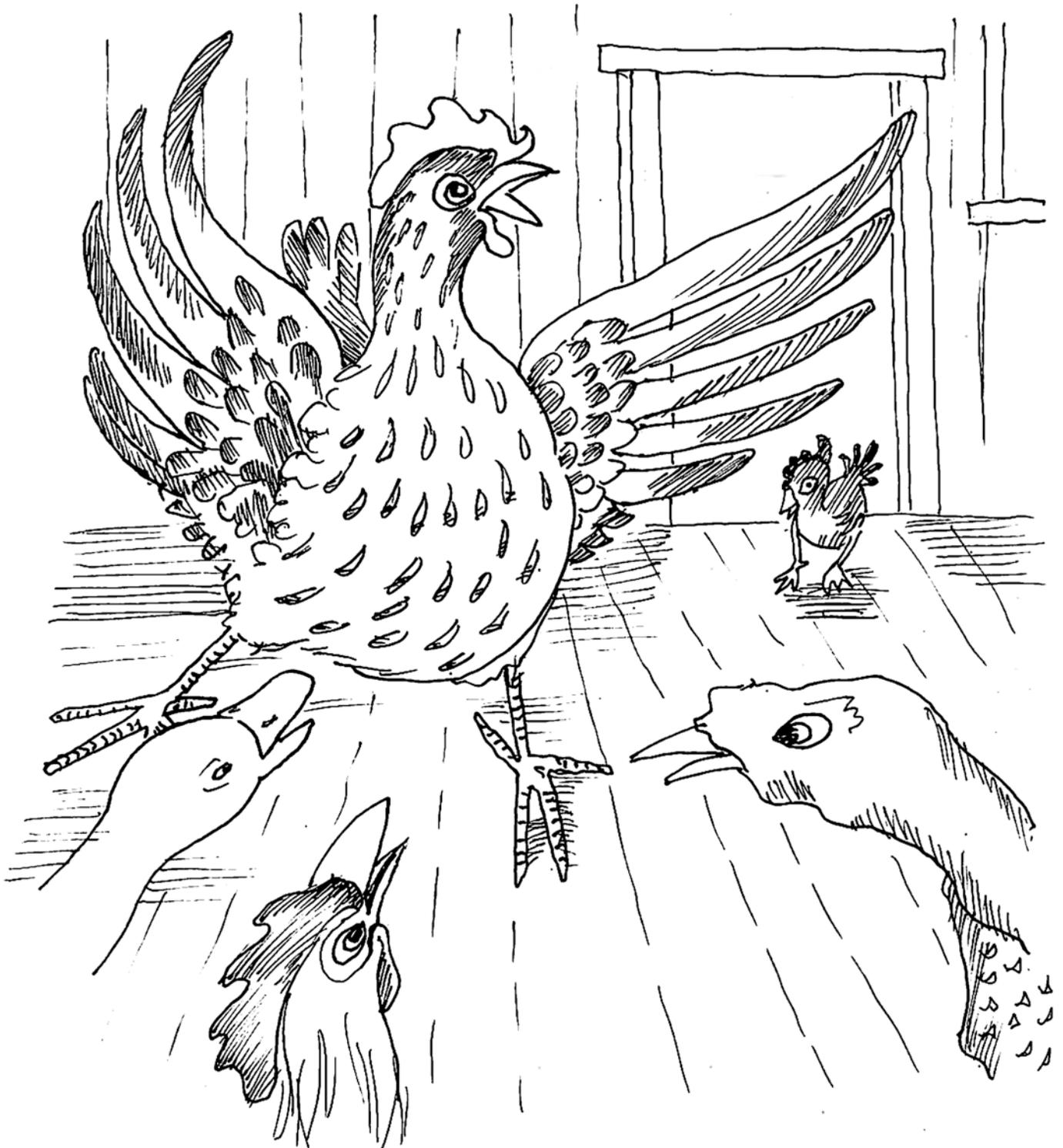


"Yes," agreed the Turkey. "And you know how to recite poetry" "He may be dangerous!" said the Rooster. "Let's chase him off the farm!"

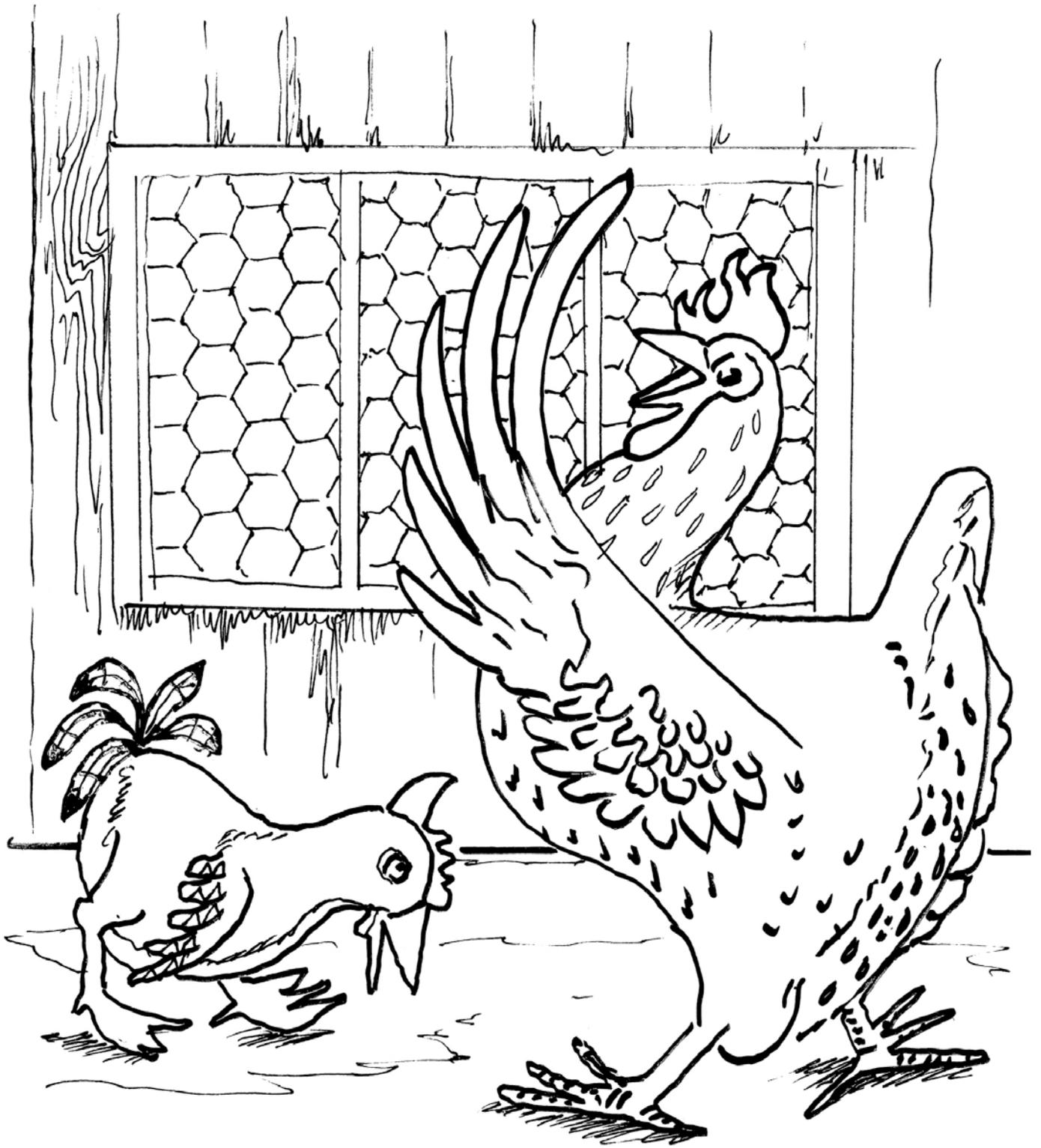


"Yes, chase him away!" screamed the others.  
And they ran towards the Churkendoose.

But the Chicken stopped them. "No! No!" she shouted.  
Listen to me!"



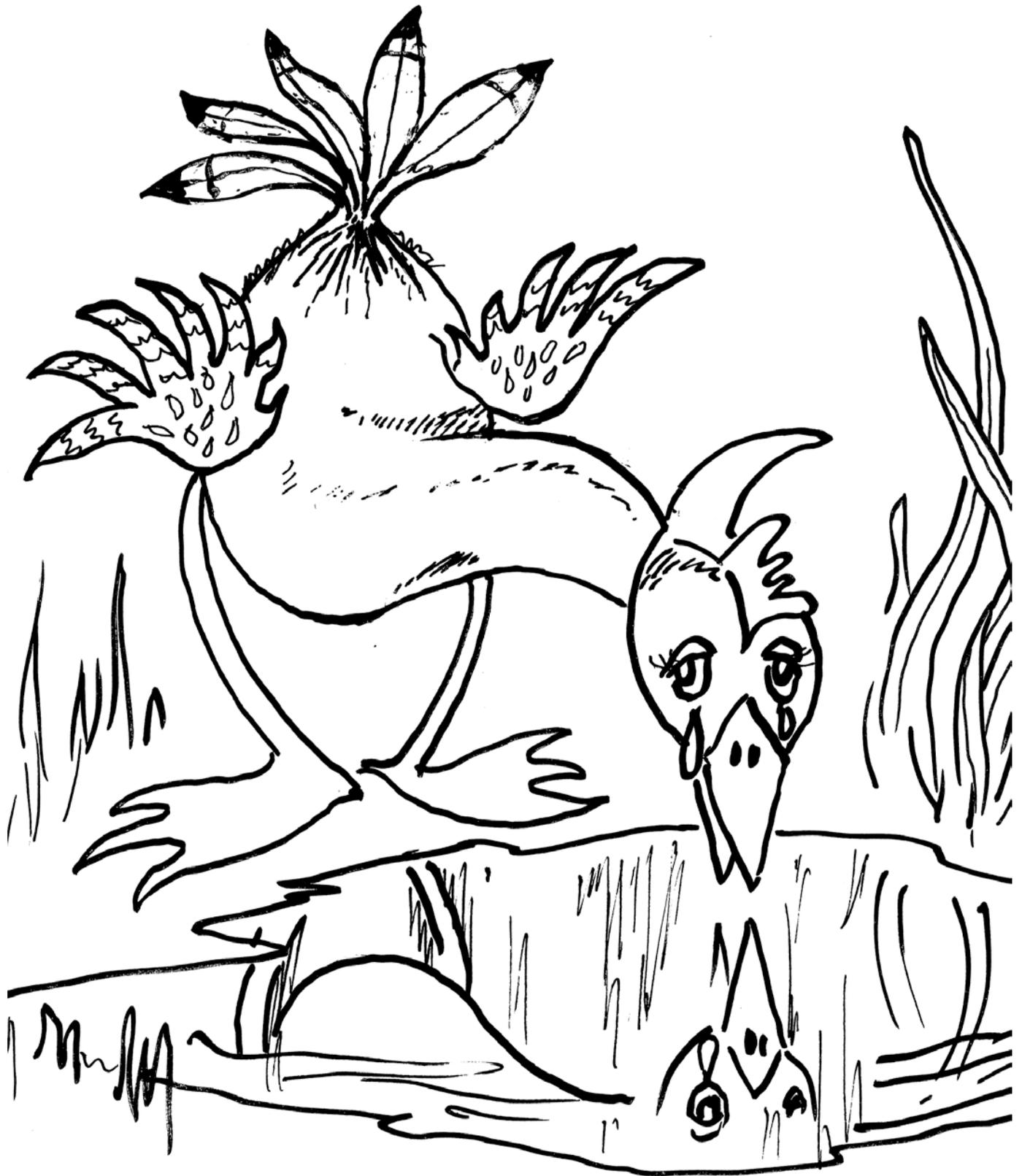
"Let's not be hasty," said the Chicken. "After all, this is important. So let's all sit down and talk it over quietly."



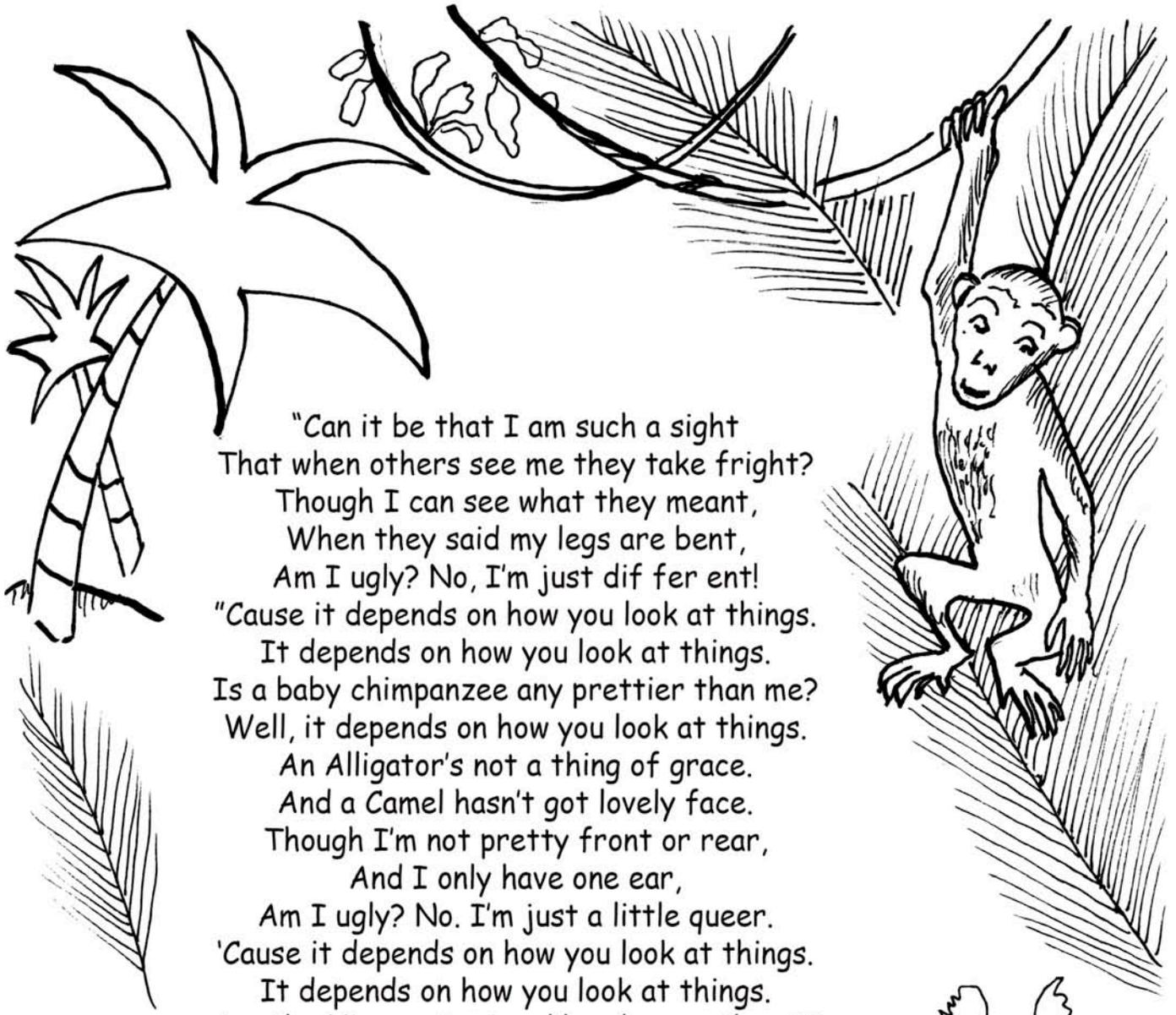
"All right," said the Turkey. "But the Churkendoose will have to wait outside."



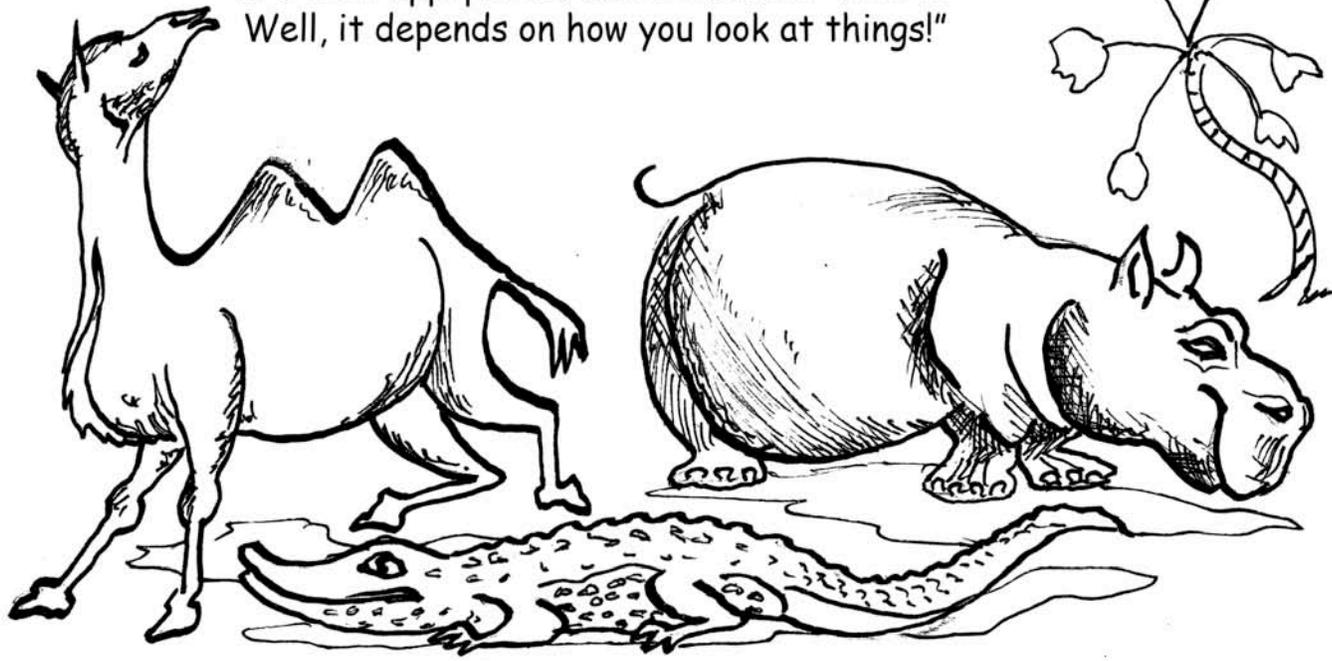
The Churkendoose tap danced out of the henhouse very sadly.



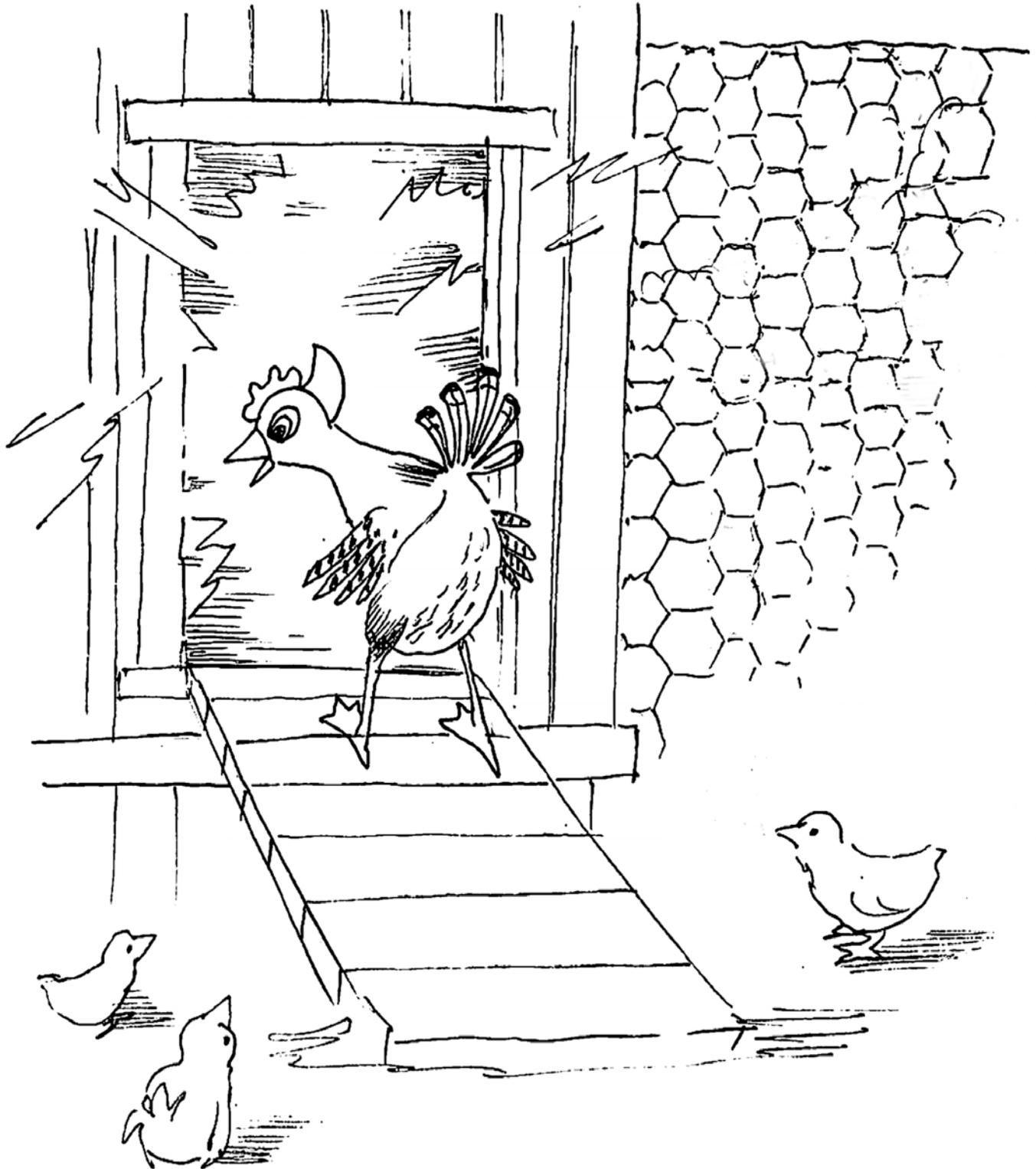
He danced over to a rain puddle and looked at his reflection in the water. Then, as tear rolled off his bill, he said:



"Can it be that I am such a sight  
That when others see me they take fright?  
Though I can see what they meant,  
When they said my legs are bent,  
Am I ugly? No, I'm just dif fer ent!  
'Cause it depends on how you look at things.  
It depends on how you look at things.  
Is a baby chimpanzee any prettier than me?  
Well, it depends on how you look at things.  
An Alligator's not a thing of grace.  
And a Camel hasn't got lovely face.  
Though I'm not pretty front or rear,  
And I only have one ear,  
Am I ugly? No. I'm just a little queer.  
'Cause it depends on how you look at things.  
It depends on how you look at things.  
Are the Hippopotami and handsomer than I?  
Well, it depends on how you look at things!"



He sniffed back his tears, and then - he heard squawks coming from the henhouse. He danced back as fast as he could and looked through the doorway.



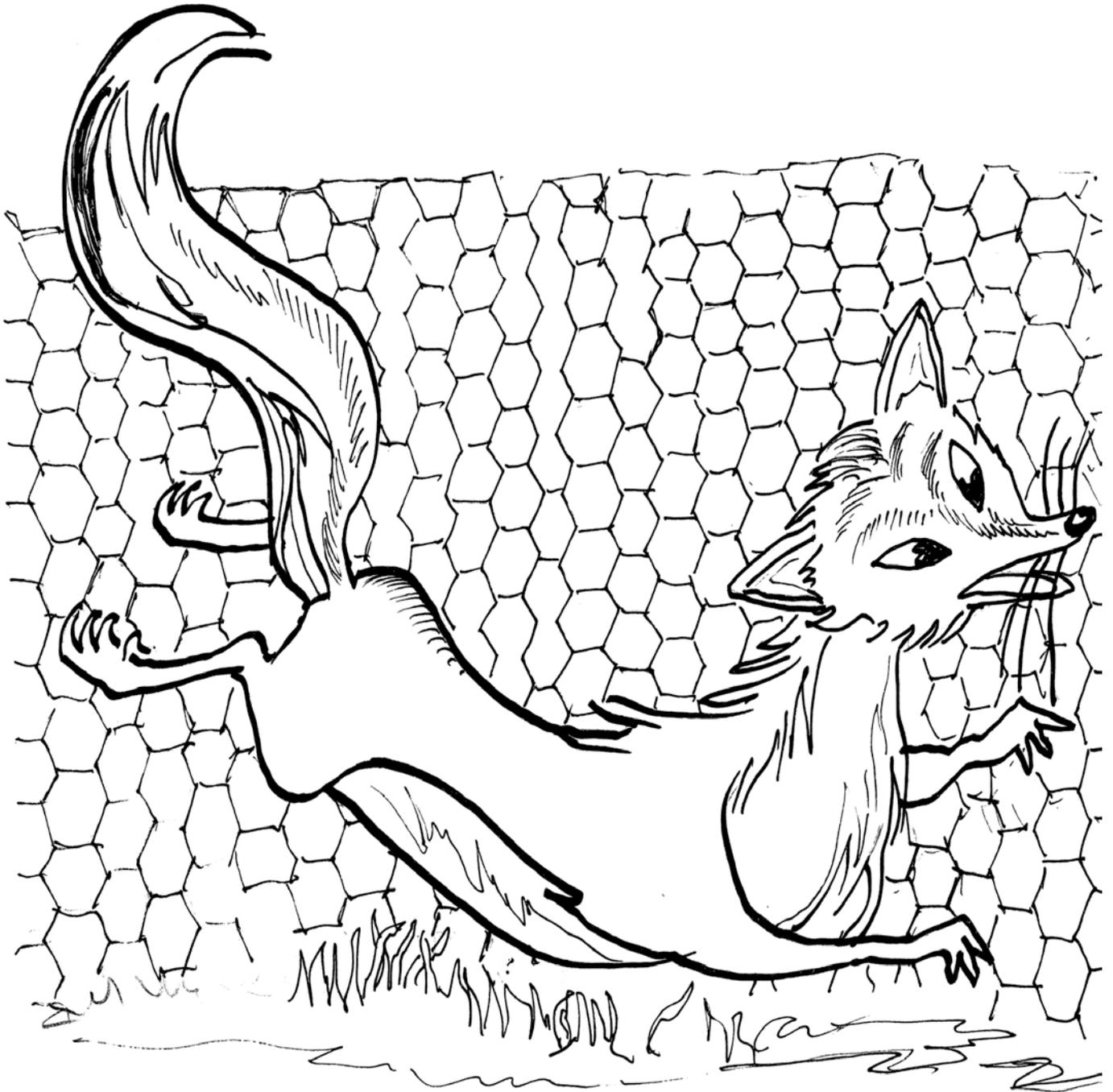


There, in the henhouse, was a Fox! He was running this way and that, leaping up and snapping. He was trying to catch one of the birds.



The Fox heard the Churkendoose come in the door, and he turned to jump at the little bird. But when he saw the Churkendoose, he stood perfectly still. He had never seen a Churkendoose before.

Then a strange thing happened.  
The Fox became frightened!

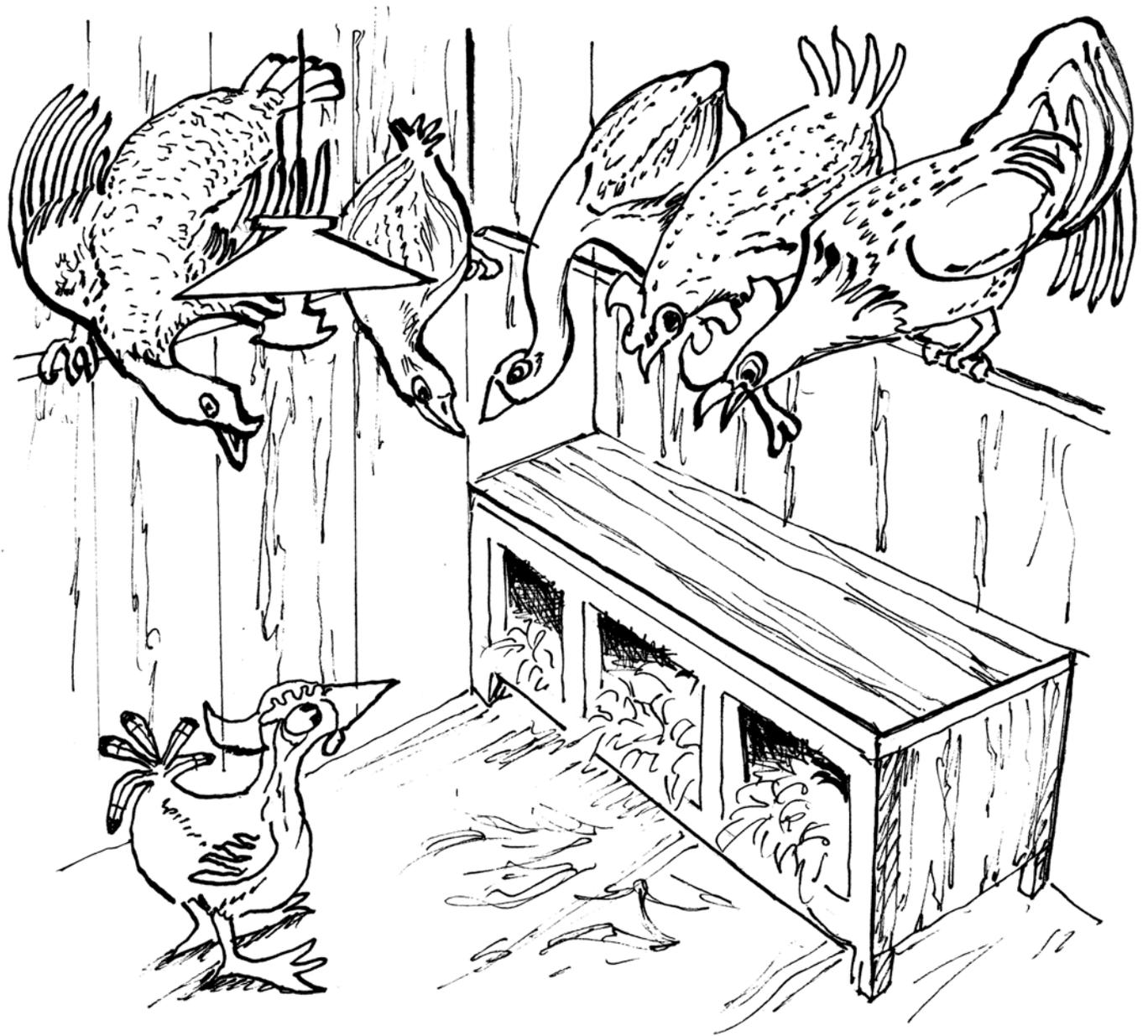


He started to run, and he was in such a hurry, he didn't even turn around. He ran backwards!

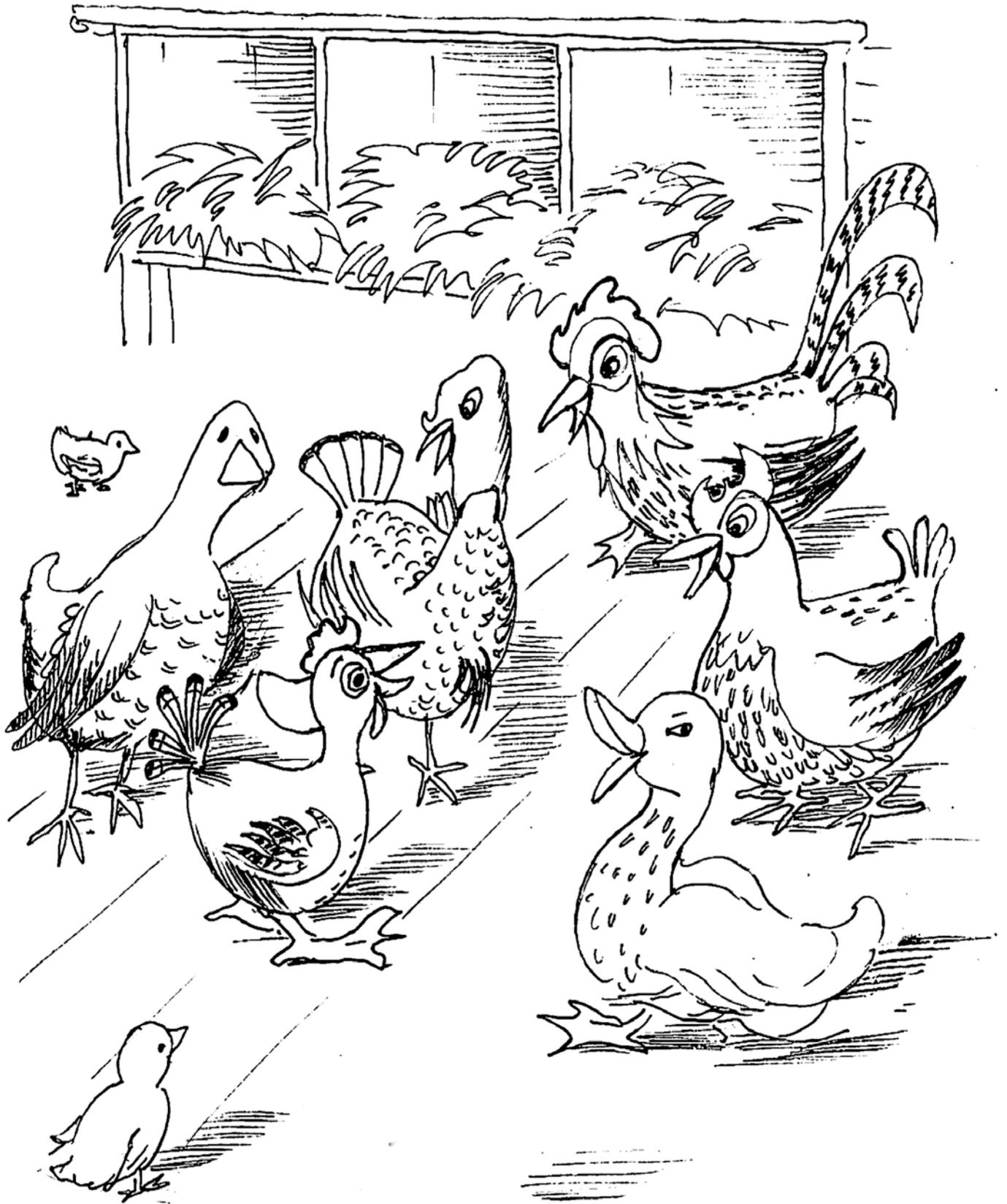


He ran so fast that he took off and FLEW backwards. He flew so fast that it took three days for his shadow to catch up with him!

For a long time after the Fox left, it was quiet in the henhouse. Finally the Rooster lifted his head and looked around.



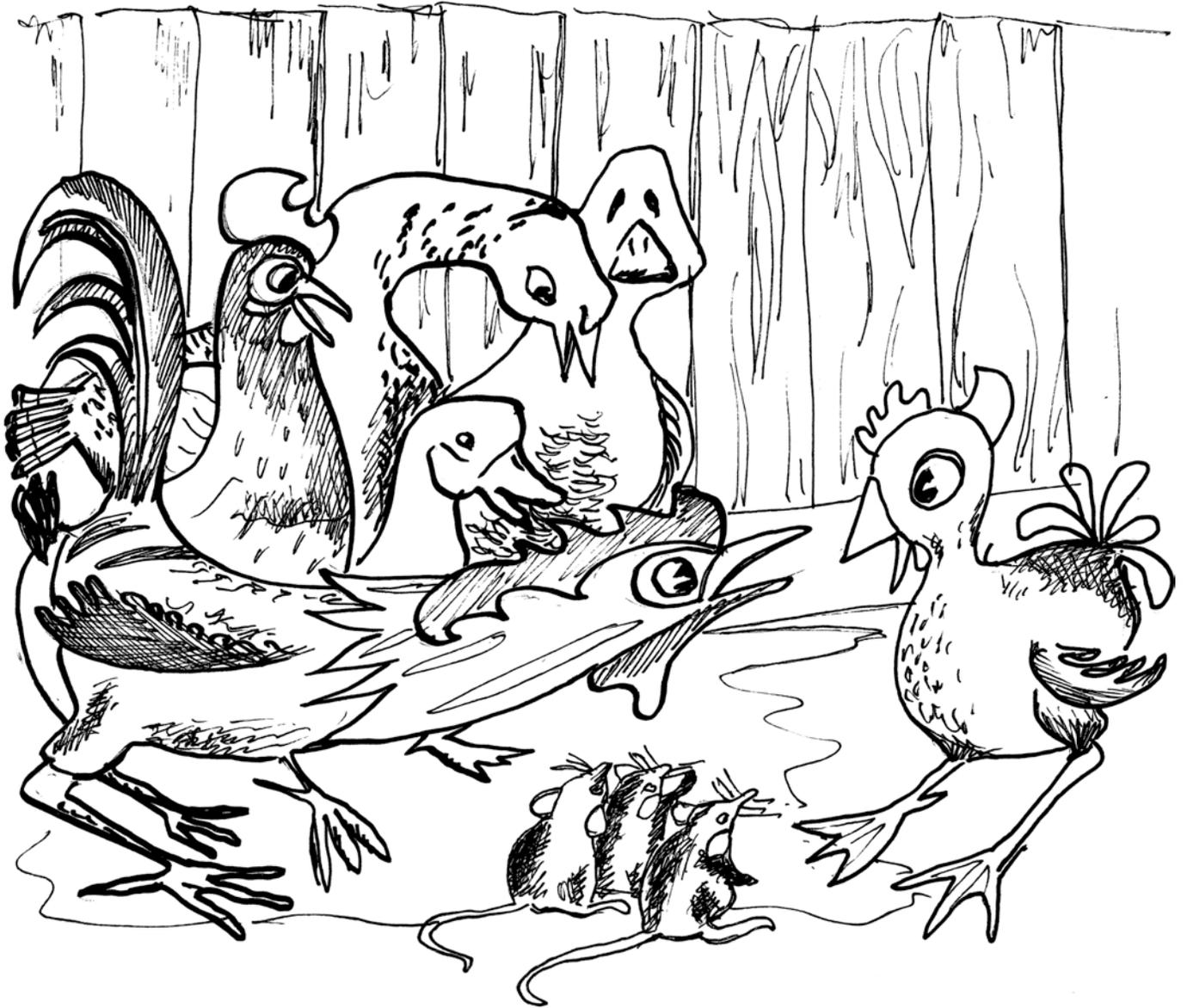
"Has the Fox gone?" he asked.  
"Yes," said the Churkendoose.



The Rooster flew down from his roost and the others followed him. They gathered around the Churkendoose.

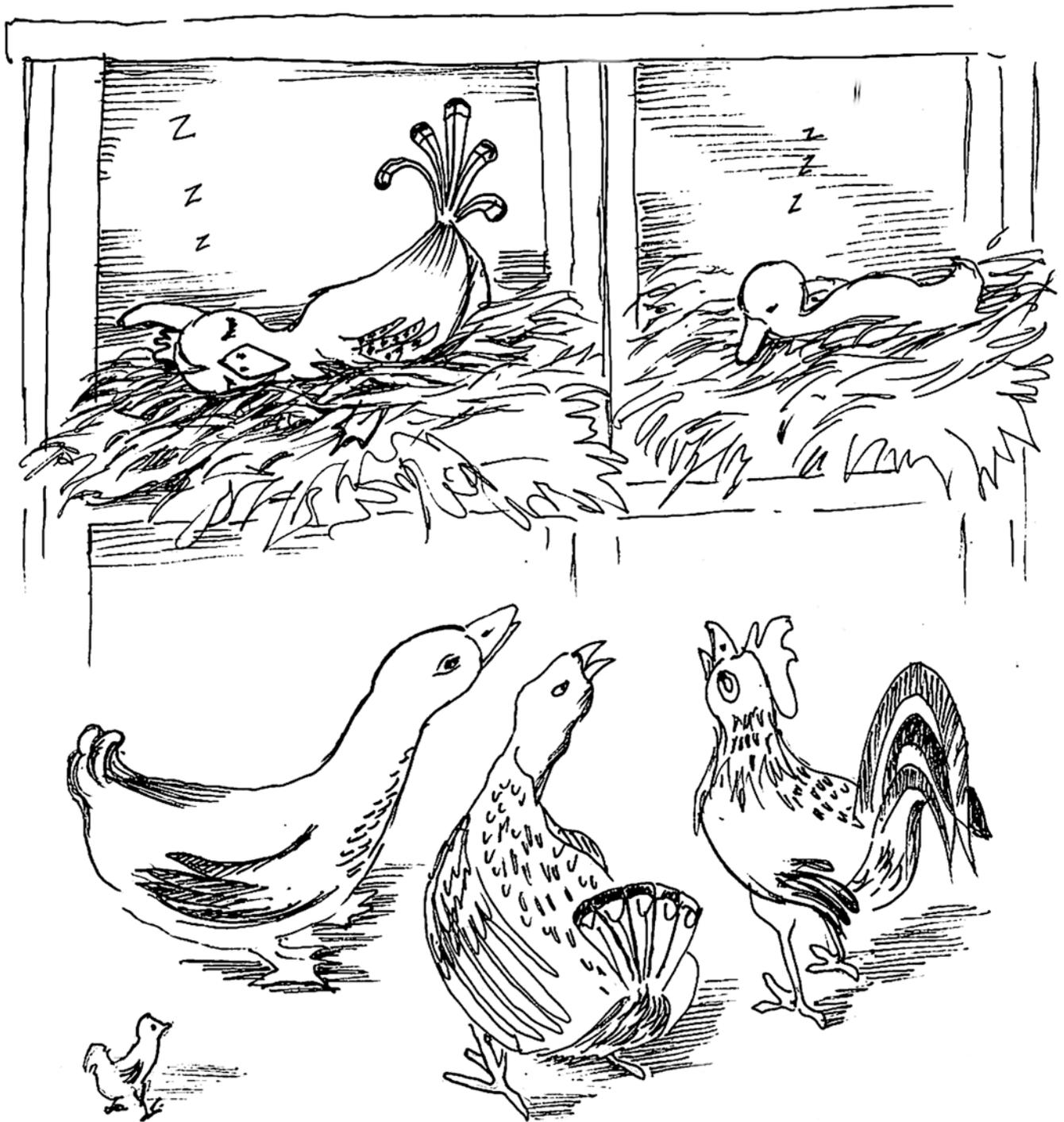


After a long pause, the Rooster cleared his throat and said, "I'm glad we didn't chase you off the farm. We hope you will stay here and be our friend. We really like you, Churkendoose, just because you're you."



And they all nodded their heads very seriously and answered, "Yes, we do!"

Well, the Churkendoose stayed. And he's still there.



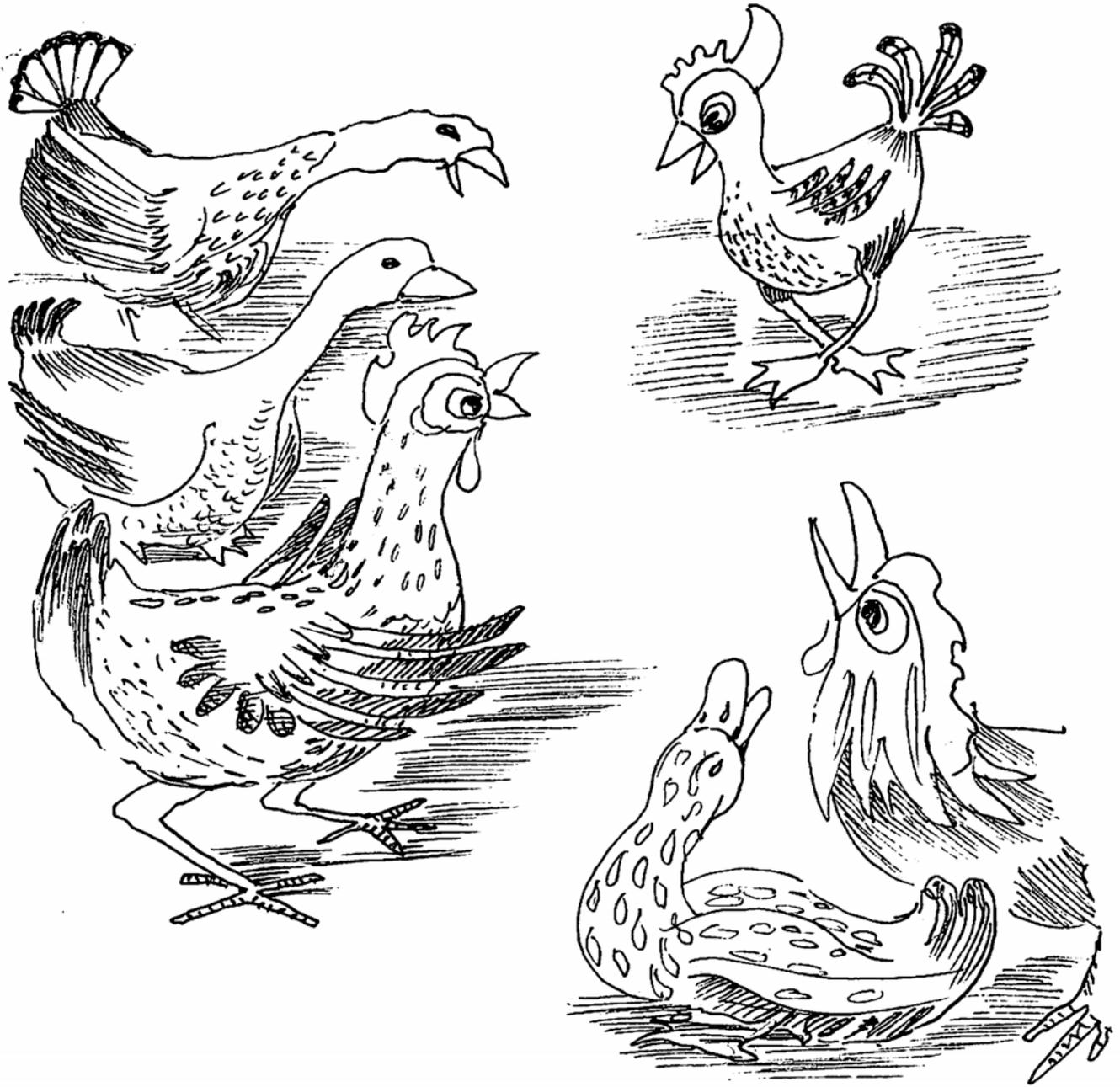


And he and the others DID become good friends. The other day, the Duck started to give the Churkendoose swimming lessons. And the Churkendoose? He is teaching the duck how to tap dance,



What fun they have!  
Now they help each other and learn from each other.

And they all agree with the Churkendoose, when he says:



"It depends on how you look at things.  
It depends on how you look at things.  
Making friends can be a pleasure,  
'Cause a good friend is a treasure,



# The **HANDLE** Institute

*Helping Extraordinary People Do Ordinary Things!*

This story was originally printed as a Wonder Book in 1946. A recording with Ray Bolger released the next year was cherished by Judith Bluestone, our founder, who thought of herself as a churkendoose. Born with physical challenges, Judith knew as a young child that she was different. The Story of The Churkendoose inspired Judith to believe, as she overcame her own irregularities and challenging behaviors that being herself was good enough. Judith became a gifted teacher and brilliant clinician.

The Story of the Churkendoose allows even young children to appreciate the puzzlement of being born with differences, being teased and shunned by others, and ultimately becoming a valued member of a community where everyone's gifts are recognized and appreciated.

The HANDLE Institute is excited to share the Story of the Churkendoose to help create compassionate communities everywhere.

The HANDLE Institute is a 501(c)(3) non-profit providing help and hope to children and adults with neurological challenges that impair learning, memory, movement, emotion and behavior.

Visit us on the web at [www.handle.org](http://www.handle.org)