

The Thankful Turkey & Her Friends

*By Brianna Winbush
Illustrated by the Eco Girls*



For those whose storytelling has enriched
the ECO Girls project: Elizabeth James,
Margaret Noori, and Nyambura Mpesha



Acknowledgments

The author, Brianna Winbush, is a sophomore studying psychology at the University of Michigan, who works in the Department of Afroamerican and African Studies. She enjoys interacting with children and spending time with her family in Chicago.

"The Thankful Turkey & Her Friends" is ECO Girls' first storybook. We would like to thank Dr. Nyambura Mpesha, who was instrumental to the success of this project, for her guidance and support.

We would also like to thank Elizabeth James, Maria Cotera, Margaret Noori, and Laurie Sanders for their help with this project.

Once upon a time there was a little Turkey who lived in the woods with her family. One day while in the kitchen, Turkey's mother said to her, "Daughter, would you please go down to the market to pick up some things for dinner?" So she put on her backpack and headed down the spirally trail through the forest.



While passing the Acacia trees, Turkey saw her friend Tortoise. Only today he was hiding in his shell. Turkey knocked on his shell and said, "Hujambo, Tortoise. How are you today? Why are you hiding?" Slowly peeking out of his shell, Tortoise replied, "Oh Turkey, I am sad! I have lost my sunglasses and the sun is so bright today."





Reaching into her backpack Turkey then said, "Don't be sad! I have a pair of sunglasses. Take them so that you can come out and play." Happily, Tortoise popped out of her shell and smiled at Turkey, "Thank you so much! You are a great friend."

Turkey put her backpack on and went on her way through the forest. After walking for a while and passing many plants and trees, she decided to stop at the pond to take a drink. As she was drinking, she saw Trout swimming very slowly, and said, "Aanii, Trout! Why do you swim so slowly today?"





TROUT swam over to Turkey and said, "Oh Turkey! I lost my favorite necklace, and I have looked everywhere for it." Turkey patted Trout on the head and said, "Don't worry, Trout, I can help you look for it." So Turkey waded in the pond to help Trout search for her necklace. After ten minutes, Turkey finally found the necklace at the bottom of the pond where Trout had not seen it.

Trout was so surprised and said, "Oh thank you, Turkey! I have been looking for it all morning. You are a great friend." Turkey told her she was welcome and strolled along towards the market. Turkey walked and walked, enjoying the beautiful clouds and warm breeze until she saw Tiger lying at the bottom of the Ginkgo tree.

Walking up to Tiger she said, "你好, Tiger! Why do you lie down today?" Slowly raising her head, Tiger said, "Oh Turkey! I seem to have lost my hat. I saved all my allowance to buy it." Turkey cheerfully said, "Don't worry, Tiger. I have a hat. You can borrow it if you would like." Leaping up, Tiger said, "Yes, I would love to! You are such a great friend, Turkey."





Turkey just smiled, said thank you, and handed her the hat. Just down the path from the market, Turkey found Deer crying near the Mariposa lilies. Turkey ran to her and asked, "Hola, Deer. Why do you cry? Can I help?"

Deer sadly said, "I have eaten the last of the lilies, and now I have no more, and I am still hungry." Reaching into her backpack, Turkey said, "Oh Deer, don't cry! I have a sandwich that you can have." Smiling, Deer took the sandwich and said, "Thank you so much, Turkey. You are such a great friend."





Sam

an

the



Turkey told her she was welcome and went on her way toward the market. When she reached the market, Turkey realized she was ten minutes too late. The market had just closed, and she had no other place to get food for her family's dinner.

Turkey quickly ran back home to tell her mother what had happened, fearing that her mother would be upset. But when she finally got there, she found a huge surprise in the kitchen. At the table were all her friends with tons of delicious smelling food.

Dhwani Joshi





Tortoise brought her famous Pilau Rice. Trout brought sweet Maize, Tiger brought tasty roasted Satay, and Deer brought creamy Pan for dessert.



Realizing that Turkey would not get to the market in time because she had helped all of them, they had decided to bring dinner to Turkey and her family. Turkey was very happy and thankful for her friends and for a very scrumptious dinner. They were thankful to have a generous friend like Turkey.

Key Cultural Terms and Symbols

Turkey: The Wild Turkey is native to North America. It is a symbol of thankfulness in American culture.

Tortoise: The Tortoise is a popular animal in African folk tales and stories. Usually a character of cleverness, the tortoise is also depicted as wise and patient.

Trout: Fish was a popular means of nutrition for Native Americans in pre-colonial times. Trout, a fish native to North America, was a common meal for Native American families.

Tiger: The Tiger, a symbol in Asian cultures, embodies beauty and achievement.

Deer: In Mexican folklore, the deer is a magical animal, said to bring people spiritual guidance and artistic inspiration.

Hujambo: Means "Hello" in Swahili .

Aanii: Means "Hello" in the Anishinaabe language spoken by the Native American people of the Southeast Michigan region.

你好: Means "Hello" in Chinese.

Hola: Means "Hello" in Spanish.

Acacia Tree: These are known as the thorn tree of Africa. It is the dominant plant in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Ginkgo Tree: These trees are more than 270 million years old and are considered living fossils. They primarily grow in Central China.

Mariposa Lilies: These are tulip-like flowers prominent in Mexico.

ECO Girls is a project based in the Department of Afroamerican and African Studies at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. ECO Girls engages urban girls in a wide range of eco-cultural activities that expand their experiences and modes of thought, provide a context for positive friendship building, inspire environmentally-conscious and community-minded action, and prepare girls for future leadership in the development of healthy, ethical, sustainable and resilient human cultures on our earth.



Made from recycled paper.