

Harriet's Tail Feathers

A Comedy of Clucks, Clashes, and Chickens

By Xenia Stavrinides

Once upon a sunlit prairie, in a cozy coop beneath the vast, open blue skies, lived Harriet—a hen with feathers fluffier than a stand-up comedian's punchlines and a penchant for poultry drama. Harriet wasn't your average clucker; she was the Shakespeare of the chicken world, complete with feathered soliloquies and grand gestures.

When the roosters began their morning serenade, Harriet didn't just fluff her feathers; she orchestrated a full-blown feathery fandango. Her neck feathers stood tall like avant-garde art installations, challenging the roosters to a duel while trying to out-crow them with a morning squawk that could wake the neighboring farms.

Harriet had peculiar habits that set her apart. She laid her eggs with stealth, swiftly devouring them before any hen could cluck an egg song. And just for fun, she'd roll her freshly laid eggs into another hen's collection, turning the coop into a chaotic game of egg roulette. The other hens, rolling their eyes, often wondered if Harriet attended a "How to Be Eccentric" seminar for poultry.

Her rooster follies were the stuff of legend. Harriet followed roosters like a paparazzi, collecting fallen tail feathers or, in daring moments, plucking out their tail feathers to incorporate them into her flamboyant plumage. Yes, Harriet wanted to stand out—feathers and all.

Despite being the runt of her mother hen's large clutch, Harriet was special. The other hens took turns helping her grow up healthy and happy, like a feathery version of a sitcom supporting cast. Yet, Harriet was determined to be so different that she lost sight of her miraculous existence.

She yearned to be the cock of the walk, blissfully unaware of the comedic chaos she was creating.

One day, a protective mother hen confronted Harriet with her clutch of chicks, triggering a hilarious game of chicken keep-away. The mother hen squawked, Harriet squawked back, and the chicks ran around like headless chickens, unsure of who to follow. It was poultry pandemonium at its finest.

Observing the chaos, Harriet experienced a new emotion—confusion. The mother hen attacked her, defending her chicks from Harriet's perceived threat. Battered and befuddled, Harriet retreated to a safe distance, nursing her bruised ego and a few missing feathers like a diva recovering from a disastrous performance.

Harriet, ever the drama queen, contemplated the idea of having her own family—a realization that surprised her, considering her previous love affair with chaos. Determined to change her feathery ways, she distanced herself from the roosters, interacted positively with the other hens, and even attempted to host a chicken therapy session to discuss the benefits of clucking meditation.

One sunny morning, as she approached the fresh water pond, Harriet saw her reflection—a poultry Picasso with a beak. Her rooster plumage was changing, new feathers emerging like a comedic one-chicken show. Harriet embarked on a journey to prove her worthiness as a potential mother hen and, of course, continue her quest to be the cock of the walk.

In her quest for change, Harriet encountered challenges that could make even a stand-up comedian pause for laughter. She attempted a chicken yoga class, resulting in a chaotic chicken conga line. Her efforts to show respect for her eggs led to a series of slapstick mishaps involving egg cartons and an overzealous egg dance that left the other hens clucking with amusement.

As she navigated the hilarious world of poultry parenting, Harriet found a rooster, let's call him Rocco, who appreciated her newfound quirks. Their close bond involved roosting in an old Oak tree, hunting for beetles and grubs together, and sharing chicken-sized smoothies during their feathered fitness regime.

The once skeptical roosters couldn't quite understand what Rocco saw in Harriet. They watched, feather-ruffled, as Harriet continued her transformation from poultry drama queen to a comedic coop leader. The prairie became a stage for Harriet's feathered follies, a sitcom where every episode left the other hens clucking with laughter.

In the beautiful spring days that followed, Harriet, with her newfound sense of responsibility, collected her eggs and instinctively began to sit on them. The joy she felt when she heard the first pip beneath her wings was overwhelming. Harriet had become a mother, raising her own clutch of baby chicks, who inherited her quirky charm and penchant for poultry pranks.

As she proudly paraded her chicks behind the old red barn, a young hen approached, hoping to join the comedy act. In an instinctive act of protection, Harriet fought off the young intruder, sending a clear message: her chicks were hers to cherish and raise. The other hens rolled their eyes, thinking, "Typical Harriet," as they imagined her hosting a feathered stand-up show.

Nobody knew that Harriet had it in her to be a kind, loving, attentive, and protective mother hen. She enjoyed spending time with her clutch of baby chicks, teaching them to hunt for beetles, bugs, and grubs with a slapstick flair that left the prairie in stitches. And when the sun began to set, Harriet would gather her clutch, performing a chicken conga line back to the coop, keeping them warm beneath her fluffy plumage until sunrise.

As the seasons changed, Harriet's antics and motherly instincts continued to surprise the prairie community. She organized clucky playdates for her chicks, teaching them essential skills while entertaining the other hens with her hilarious anecdotes. The once skeptical roosters now

admired Harriet's dedication and resilience, and they even attempted to join her in the chicken yoga class, resulting in a poultry parody that became the talk of the coop.

Harriet's fame spread far and wide, attracting the attention of a renowned poultry magazine. They sent a reporter to interview the charismatic hen, who proudly showcased her feathered family and shared her unique journey. The story of Harriet's transformation from a drama-loving diva to a nurturing mother became a poultry sitcom that had everyone clucking with laughter.

And so, Harriet found her calling—motherhood, feathers, and all. She became not only one of the most loved and adored hens on the open prairie but also a stand-up sensation, a comedic coop leader who had the entire glen laughing with every flap of her feathers.

The end, or perhaps just the beginning of Harriet's never-ending feathered follies.