

The Turnip

A Ukrainian and Russian Folktale, Retold by Stephanie Goloway

Once upon a time, there was a child who went to visit their grandparents on the farm. The child asked if they could help with the planting.

“Oh, no. You are too little to help with such an important job,” said the grandfather.

But the child kept asking. “Please?”

“PLEASE?”

“PLEASE!”

“**PLEASE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**”

And at last the grandfather gruffly placed a wee teeny turnip seed into the child’s hand. “Here. You can plant this. Though it probably won’t grow.”

The child was so excited! And s/he spotted the PERFECT place to plant it! Way up high on a hill, where it would be close to the sunshine and close to the rain.

Up and up and up the hill the child ran. S/he dug a tiny hole. There s/he carefully placed the wee teeny turnip seed. S/he gently covered it over with dirt, watered it, and went down and down and down the hill.

The sun shone down on the tiny seed, and in the evening, the rain fell softly onto it. The child went up and up and up the hill to check on it. But: NOTHING was there. So s/he pulled the weeds and whispered that s/he would wait.

And every day the sun shone, and every night the rain fell. And every day, the child went up and up and up the hill to check on the seed. But still: NOTHING was there.

The grandfather nodded and said, “I told you so.” The grandmother smiled and said, “You’re just too little.”

But then ONE DAY: the child went up and up and up the hill, and the tiniest leaf of green had popped up!

The sun shone, the rain fell, and the next day: it was bigger!!!!

And bigger, and BIGGER, and **BIGGER** until one day, the child was sure that it was ready to be pulled!

So s/he pulled. And pulled. And PULLED as hard as s/he could.

But the turnip didn’t budge.

So down and down and down the hill s/he ran. “Grandfather! Come help me! My turnip has grown and it’s so big I can’t pull it out.”

Grandfather looked up. “It’s just a weed, I’m sure, and I’m busy!”

“Please, PLEASE, **PLEEEEEAAAAASSSEEEE?!**”

Grandfather grumbled and followed the child up and up and up the hill.

“OH MY!” Grandfather said. “That is indeed a very enormous turnip! Let’s pull it out.”

So the little child grabbed hold of the turnip, and the grandfather grabbed hold of the little child and they pulled. And they PULLED! And they **PULLLLED** as hard as they could but that turnip stayed stuck in the ground.

The grandfather called to the grandmother to come help.

So the grandmother came up and up and up the hill.

“Mercy me,” she exclaimed. “That’s HUGE!”

So the little child grabbed hold of the turnip, and the grandfather grabbed hold of the little child and the grandmother grabbed hold of the grandfather, and they pulled. And they PULLED! And they **PULLLLLLLED** as hard as they could but that turnip stayed stuck in the ground.

About this time, the dog came trotting and sniffing up the hill to see what was going on.

“BARK!” he barked when he saw the turnip!

“Come help!” cried the little child.

So the little child grabbed hold of the turnip, and the grandfather grabbed hold of the little child and the grandmother grabbed hold of the grandfather, and the dog grabbed hold of the grandmother and they pulled. And they PULLED! And they **PULLLLLLLED** as hard as they could but that turnip stayed stuck in the ground.

The grandfather sighed. “I don’t think we can get it out. Let’s just go home.”

“No! PLEASE!” said the little child.

And about that time, the cat came swish-swishing silently up the hill, for it was time for those people to feed her dinner.

“MEOW!!!!” purred the cat when she saw that turnip.

“Come help!” cried the little child.

So the little child grabbed hold of the turnip, and the grandfather grabbed hold of the little child and the grandmother grabbed hold of the grandfather, and the dog grabbed hold of the grandmother and the cat grabbed hold of the dog and they pulled. And they PULLED! And they PULLLLLLLED as hard as they could but that turnip stayed stuck in the ground.

“I’m sorry, dear,” said the grandmother. “But this turnip is just too big. Let’s go down and you can have ice cream for dessert tonight.

“No! Please please please please please! Let’s try one more time,” said the little child.

Just then, an itsy bitsy mouse peeked out from the bushes.

“Come help!” cried the little child.

So the little child grabbed hold of the turnip, and the grandfather grabbed hold of the little child and the grandmother grabbed hold of the grandfather, and the dog grabbed hold of the grandmother and the cat grabbed hold of the dog, the mouse grabbed hold of the cat’s tail and they pulled. And they PULLED! And they PULLLLLLLED as hard as they could.

And all of sudden, the ground began to rumble, and quake... and that **huge enormous turnip POPPED RIGHT OUT!**

“Squeak, squeak, squeak!” squeaked the mouse as it tumbled down down down the hill

“Meow meow meow!” meowed the cat as it tumbled down down down the hill.

“Ruff, ruff, ruff!” barked the dog as it tumbled down down down the hill.

“Mercy me!” cried the grandmother as she tumbled down down down the hill.

“WOAH NELLY” yelled the grandfather as he tumbled down down down the hill.

“YIPPEEEEEEE!” shouted the very happy little child as s/he tumbled down down down the hill.

“BABABOOM, BABABOOM, BABABOOM!” The huge, enormous turnip rolled down down down the hill.

And they all landed in a huge, enormous, laughing pile at the bottom.

The grandmother cleaned and cut up that turnip right there in the yard and made it into a HUGE pot of turnip stew. There was enough for the little child, and for the grandfather, and for the grandmother, and for the dog and for the cat, and for the little mouse, and for me and for all of you, too!

