

WHY ME?

by

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INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

The GHOST TURKEY lurks across from an open-top refrigerated chest with a cardboard sign stuck on the front which reads "Grade A Fresh Turkeys - 1.49¢ lb. - Limit One"

Ghost Turkey is restless as shoppers pass back and forth between it and the refrigerated chest.

Finally, a cart pushed by MOM, a woman in her early thirties accompanied by BOBBY, a little boy, roughly five years of age, stops in front of the chest.

Ghost Turkey becomes even more restless.

GHOST TURKEY
Could this be it? Could it?

The woman peers into the chest as the little boy hops up and down trying to see over the edge.

BOBBY
C'mon, mom. Lemme see. Lemme see!

She laughs and picks him up so he can see.

MOM
Calm down Bobby. See, it's just a bunch of turkeys.

Ghost Turkey circles around to the side of the chest and bobs up and down as though it's trying to see as well.

GHOST TURKEY
Come on, come, on!

BOBBY
(eyes wide)
Wow! There's a lot! Can I pick?

GHOST TURKEY
Yes! Pick, pick!

MOM
You can pick. How about that little one in the back?

BOBBY
(pouty)
It's not picking if you tell me.

MOM
You're right. I'm sorry. I'll keep quiet. You pick.

Bobby searches feverishly as the Ghost Turkey gets more restless.

GHOST TURKEY
Bobby, Bobby, Bobby!

Finally, Bobby's head stops moving and he points.

BOBBY
That one!

Mom's eyes grow wide this time and she bites her lip as Ghost Turkey freezes.

MOM
That one's kinda big, Bobby.
Wouldn't you rather have...

BOBBY
It's got to be that one, mommy!
There has to be enough for grammy!

Mom sighs and looks from Bobby back into the chest.

GHOST TURKEY
Just pick it up!

MOM
(shaking her head)
The three of us will never eat all
that...Oh Bobby. Sure, it's only
once year. Why not.

She sits Bobby back on the floor, bends over into the chest.

Ghost Turkey has become restless again, moving back and forth in a semi-circle, yet staying focused on mom and the chest.

Ghost Turkey moans in anticipation as she comes up with a

Bobby squeals in delight. Ghost Turkey goes more than wobbly.

GHOST TURKEY
It is! It is! Finally!

As mom puts the plastic-wrapped fowl into the cart, Bobby calms down and looks worried.

BOBBY

I'm still not sure why we need a turkey for Thanksgiving. Why?

Mom pats him on the head and starts pushing the cart away.

Ghost Turkey follows.

MOM

Let's go pay for this, and I'll explain at home. We'll pick grammy up on the way.

GHOST TURKEY

Not without me you won't.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING ELEVATOR - DAY

A dirty, graffiti-ridden elevator now includes GRAMMY, a stoop-shouldered elderly woman in her 80s

She holds hands with Bobby and talks continuously.

GRAMMY

It's disgraceful. Unheard of in my day. Why do they have to make people work on Thanksgiving so people can buy groceries?

MOM

I know, grammy. It's a shame people have to work, but if it wasn't open a half-day today, I wouldn't have had a chance to buy our turkey.

The elevator reaches their floor and clunks to a halt. Slowly, the door creaks open and they all move into the

HALLWAY

GRAMMY

And why can't your father be here? That son of mine and his horrible wife...

MOM

You know they always spend the day with her family.

GRAMMY

Some family. More like...

MOM

Grammy...

The steady stream of conversation becomes nothing more than an indecipherable buzz as the wobbly Ghost Turkey's focus strays from the towering trio to the heavy, engorged...

PLASTIC SHOPPING BAG

...swinging at Mom's side all the way down the hall to the drab, scratched up, ugly brown door to Bobby and his Mom's apartment.

Mom sits the bag down to fumble for her keys.

Anxious Ghost Turkey stays focused on the bag as the keys JANGLE, then CLICK to open the lock.

MOM

Bobby, you take grammy in to watch the parade and I'll get things started in the kitchen.

Focus stays on the bag as the group goes into the...

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Just like the elevator and hallway, the apartment is old and run down.

Mom obviously barely has enough money to make it look better cared for than the rest of the building, but that's as good as it gets.

BOBBY

C'mon, grammy. I'll tell you all about the giant bloons!

Mom heads for the kitchen alcove as grammy feels along the top of the dining table chairs despite Bobby's guiding hand.

Anxious Ghost Turkey jerks back and forth between the receding backs of mom going one way and Bobby and his elderly charge the other.

GHOST TURKEY

(terribly nervous)

Oh no! Which way?

Bobby and grammy are almost through the doorway to the living room when Bobby stops and blurts out...

BOBBY

Wait grammy! Wait here.

He releases her hand and runs to mom in the kitchen alcove.

BOBBY

You promised to tell me why we have
to have a turkey for Thanksgiving.

MOM

Bobby, don't leave grammy alone.

GRAMMY

I don't need anyones' help to go
sit in front of the TV.

She feels for the doorframe and disappears into the living
room.

GRAMMY (O.S.)

(muttering)

Don't understand why your useless
father couldn't be here. Grocery
store open on a holiday.
Disgraceful...

Anxious Ghost Turkey watches grammy go, then locks onto mom
and Bobby in the alcove.

GHOST TURKEY

(triumphant)

This way!

The now-steady Ghost Turkey creeps slowly toward the
mother-son duo in the alcove, to the edge of the door...

...and peers inside as mom kneels down in front of the
near-dancing Bobby.

She takes Bobby by the shoulders and smiles sweetly.

MOM

I did promise, Bobby, and I'll keep
that promise.

BOBBY

(tearing up)

But mom, you said..

She takes him in a big hug.

MOM

I will, my little man, right after
I get dinner underway, I'll tell
you the whole Thanksgiving story.

GHOST TURKEY

(dejected)

Ah, geez...c'mon, mom.

GRAMMY (O.S.)

(projecting)

Don't mind me. Not like I've ever
heard the Thanksgiving story. Not
like I couldn't tell it word for
word. Not like I didn't practically
live it!

Mom laughs, hugs Bobby even closer and hollers over his
shoulder.

MOM

Okay, grammy, I get the message.

(to Bobby with a smile)

Go on. grammy will tell you all
about Thanksgiving and the turkey
and I'll get to cooking.

Bobby hops up and down.

BOBBY

Yay!

GHOST TURKEY

All right, grammy!

Steady Ghost Turkey becomes rushing Ghost Turkey, right past
the dinner table into the...

LIVING ROOM

...the PATTERN of 5-year-old feet not far behind as rushing
Ghost Turkey brushes by grammy's leg.

Grammy stiffens up and the breath catches in her throat as
she shivers.

Her unblinking eyes scan the room.

GRAMMY

(stutters)

Bobby, was that you?

BOBBY
(just reaches the chair)
Course it is, grammy. Who else
would it be?

She reaches out and finds his shoulder, then his face.

GRAMMY
(nervous)
It just seemed like.
(beat)
Nevermind. Old lady imagination.
Come on up here, and I'll tell you
all about Thanksgiving.

She pulls him up on the arm of the chair next to her.

BOBBY
And the turkey?

GRAMMY
Of course, Bobby...and the turkey.

Steady again Ghost Turkey watches intently from the corner of the room as grammy's eyes seem to be talking directly to it.

GHOST TURKEY
Pay dirt...

GRAMMY
Now, Bobby. Long ago, before there
were any houses, or apartment
buildings like this, or cars or
planes or trains or TV sets like
you're watching today...

BOBBY
What about grocery stores?

GRAMMY
Not one single grocery store. Not a
single box of macaroni and cheese
anywhere!

BOBBY
(bug-eyed)
No macaroni and cheese? Mommy!

MOM (O.S.)

Don't worry, I've got mac and cheese, Bobby, but you have to at least try some green beans.

BOBBY

(makes a stinky face)

Yuck.

Grammy gives him 'a look' and he calms down.

GRAMMY

A group of people called Pilgrims came over here on boats from countries way far away. It took them months and months sailing on the ocean.

BOBBY

How'd they go the the bathroo..

Again the the face...

GRAMMY

When they got here, it wasn't as easy as they thought it would be. They had no idea how to grow food in this soil, and hunting wasn't something they were any good at. See, they were city-folks like you and me where they came from.

Bobby's eyes start to bulge and he opens his mouth with a squeak...the face puts another end to that.

GRAMMY

Anyway, it was obvious they couldn't do it themselves. They needed help. There were people living here before they came. They were called Indians. The Indians were scared of these strange people, but they were nice Indians, and they agreed to help. They showed the Pilgrims how to plant food in this hard soil and how to hunt the animals of this strange land.

BOBBY

Is this part about the tur...

GRAMMY

(sharply)

One of which was the turkey.
So...with the help of the Indians,
not only did the Pilgrims survive
their hard winters, they were able
to flourish. To celebrate, they had
a great feast and invited the
Indians, who were proud to come.

BOBBY

They also had the turkey too, right
grammy?!

Grammy pats him on the head and smiles as her eyes seem to
bore into steady Ghost Turkey.

GRAMMY

Yes. The turkey was the guest of
honor.

GHOST TURKEY

Wow grammy. Just Wow...

FADE TO BLACK

OVER BLACK: 3 HOURS LATER

FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Grammy's head lolls on her shoulder as her snores emanate
softly. Bobby has moved to the floor.

Ghost Turkey swings back and forth from from Bobby to the
television set as a giant turkey balloon floats by Macy's.

GHOST TURKEY

He's SO huge!

MOM (O.S.)

(hollers)

Okay you two, get out here.
Thanksgiving dinner is ready!

Bobby squeals with delight, jumps to his feet, and starts to
run out of the living room.

Realizes his mistake, comes back and grabs grammy's hand.

BOBBY
Come on, grammy. Time to eat.

GRAMMY
(snaps awake and pretends
she didn't)
I heard, I heard. Lead the way.

He practically pulls her out of the chair and she teeters along with him out of the room.

Hopping with excitement Ghost Turkey follows close behind into the...

DINING AREA

Steaming bowls are already on the table as Bobby guides grammy to a chair then hops up on his own.

BOBBY
Oh boy! Mac and cheese and rolls
and ketchup!

MOM (O.S.)
And here comes the guest of
honor...Mister Turkey!

She carries a big platter with the golden brown steaming turkey out of the alcove and puts it on the table.

GHOST TURKEY
Now that's what I'm talking about!

BOBBY
I want a leg!

GHOST TURKEY
(tilted)
What the? That can't be right?

Mom grabs a huge carving knife and starts sawing at a leg.

Grammy is breathing hard and staring around the room.

Mom hands it to Bobby and he takes a huge bite.

BOBBY
That tastes great, mommy!

GHOST TURKEY
(makes a retching sound)
That's the guest of honor? I died
for that?

Grammy looks sick and her unblinking eyes are terribly sad
as she stares at the retching Ghost Turkey.

GHOST TURKEY
The story seemed so sweet. So nice.
It's all so...horrible. How could
they do this to me?

FADE TO BLACK

A smoky gray turkey shape spreads its wings as a bright
white light from above envelopes it. The turkey glows until
it blends with the light in a blinding flash.

And it's gone.

GRAMMY (V.O.)
(barely audible)
Oh my God.

FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT - DINING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Grammy slowly sits down her untouched forkful of turkey.

MOM
Is there something wrong with the
turkey, grammy?

GRAMMY
No dear, I just don't think I want
any turkey this year.

FADE OUT

THE END