

Squinty, the Comical Pig

By Richard Barnum

Chapter 6: Squinty and the Boy

“Mamma, did you hear what they were saying about Squinty?” asked Wuff-Wuff, as the boy and the two men walked away from the pig pen.

“Oh, yes, I heard,” said Mrs. Pig. “I shall be sorry to lose Squinty, but then we pigs have to go out and take our places in this world. We cannot always stay at home in the pen.”

“Yes, that is so,” spoke Mr. Pig. “But Squinty is rather young and small to start out. However, it may all be for the best. Now, Squinty, you had better keep yourself nice and clean, so as to be ready to go on a journey.”

“What’s a journey?” asked the comical little pig, squinting his eye up at the papa pig.

“A journey is going away from home,” answered Mr. Pig.

“And does it mean having adventures?” asked Squinty, flopping his ears backward and forward.

“Yes, you may have some adventures,” replied his mother. “Oh dear, Squinty! I wish you didn’t have to go and leave us. But still, it may be all for your good.”

“We might hide him under the straw,” suggested Wuff-Wuff. “Then that boy could not find him when he comes to put him in a box, and take him away.”

“No, that would never do,” said Mr. Pig. “The farmer is stronger and smarter than we

are. He would find Squinty, no matter where we hid him. It is better to let him do as he pleases, and take Squinty away, though we shall all miss him.”

“Oh dear!” cried Curly Tail, for she liked her little brother very much, and she loved to see him look at her with his funny, squinting eye. “Do you want to go, Squinty?”

“Well, I don’t want to leave you all,” answered the comical little pig, “but I shall be glad to go on a journey, and have adventures. I hope I don’t get lost again, though.”

“I guess the boy won’t let you get lost,” spoke Mr. Pig. “He looks as though he would be kind and good to you.”

The pig family did not know when Squinty would be taken away from them, and all they could do was to wait. While they were doing this they ate and slept as they always did. Squinty, several times, looked at the hole under the pen, by which he had once gotten out. He felt sure he could again push his way through, and run away. But he did not do it.

“No, I will wait and let the boy take me away,” thought Squinty.

Several times after this the boy and his sisters came to look down into the pig pen. The pigs could tell, by the talk of the children, that they were brother and sisters. And they

had come to the farm to spend their summer vacation, when there was no school.

“That’s the pig I am going to take home with me,” the boy would say to his sisters, pointing to Squinty.

“How can you tell which one is yours?” asked one of the little girls.

“I can tell by his funny squint,” the boy would answer. “He always makes me want to laugh.”

“Well, I am glad I am of some use in this world,” thought Squinty, who could understand nearly all that the boy and his sisters said. “It is something just to be jolly.”

“I wouldn’t want a pig,” said the other girl. “They grunt and squeal and are not clean. I’d rather have a rabbit.”

“Pigs are so clean!” cried the boy. “Squinty is as clean as a rabbit!”

Only that day Squinty had rolled over and over in the mud, but he had had a bath from the hose, so he was clean now. And he made up his mind that if the boy took him he would never again get in the mud and become covered with dirt.

“I will keep myself clean and jolly,” thought Squinty.

A few days after this Squinty heard the noise of hammering and sawing wood outside the pig pen.

“The farmer must be building another barn,” said Mr. Pig, for he and his family could not see outside the pen. “Yes, he must be building another barn, for once before we

heard the sounds of hammering and sawing, and then a new barn was built.”

But that was not what it was this time.

Soon the sounds stopped, and the farmer and the boy came and looked down into the pig pen.

“Now you are sure you want that squinty one?” the farmer asked the boy. “Some of the others are bigger and better.”

“No, I want the squinty one,” the boy said. “He is so comical, he makes me laugh.”

“All right,” answered the farmer. “I’ll get him for you, now that you have the crate all made to carry him home in on the cars.”

Over into the pig pen jumped the farmer. He made a grab for Squinty and caught him.

“Squee! Squee! Squee!” squealed Squinty, for he had never been squeezed so tightly before.

“Oh, I’m not going to hurt you,” said the farmer, kindly.

“Squinty, be quiet,” ordered his papa, in the pig language. “Behave yourself. You are going on a journey, and will be all right.”

Then Squinty stopped squealing, as the farmer climbed out of the pen with him.

“At last I am going on a journey, and I may have many adventures,” thought the little pig. “Good-by!” he called to his papa and mamma and brothers and sisters, left behind in the pen. “Good-by!”

“Good-by!” they all grunted and squealed. “Be a good pig,” said his mamma.

“Be a brave pig,” said his papa.

“And—and come back and see us, sometime,” sniffled little Curly Tail, for she loved Squinty very much indeed.

“I’ll come back!” said the comical little pig. But he did not know how much was to happen before he saw his pen again.

“There you go—into the box with you!” cried the farmer, as he dropped Squinty into a wooden box the boy had made for his pet, with a hammer, saw and nails.

Squinty found himself dropped down on a bed of clean straw. In front of him, behind him, and on either side of him were wooden slats—the sides of the box. Squinty could look out, but the slats were as close together as those in a chicken coop, and the little pig could not get out.

He did not want to, however, for he had made up his mind that he was going to be a good pig, and go with the boy who had bought him for a pet from the farmer.

Over the top of the box was nailed a cover with a handle to it, and by this handle the pig in the little cage could be easily carried.

“There you are!” exclaimed the farmer. “Now he’ll be all right until you get him home.”

“And, when I do, I’ll put him in a nice big pen, and feed him well,” said the boy. Squinty smacked his lips at that, for he was hungry even now.

“Oh, have you caged him up? Isn’t he cute!” exclaimed one of the boy’s sisters. “I’ll give him the core of my apple,” and she thrust it in through the slats of the box. Squinty was

very glad, indeed, to get the apple core, and he soon ate it up.

“Come on!” cried the boy’s father. “Is the pig nailed up? We must go for the train!”

“I wonder what the train is,” thought Squinty. He was soon to know. The boy lifted him up, cage and all, and put him into the wagon that was to go to the depot. Squinty knew what a wagon was and horses, for he had seen them many times.

Then away they started. Squinty gave a loud squeal, which was his last good-by to the other pigs in the pen, and then the wagon rattled away along the road.

Squinty had started on his journey.