



The Great Turkey Walk

Kathleen Karr

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Yeeeeeee-haw! Git along, little . . . turkeys?

Big, brawny Simon Green, who's just completed third grade (for the fourth time), may not be book smart, but he's nobody's fool. When it's time to be done with school and make his way in the world, Simon hatches a plan that could earn him a bundle. He intends to herd a huge flock of bronze turkeys all the way from his home in eastern Missouri to the boomtown of Denver, where they'll fetch a mighty price. In the year 1860, the hazards of such a trek are many - how does one shepherd the birds across a river, for instance? - but Simon is undaunted. Accompanied by a faithful drover, and eventually to be joined by two boon companions, he undertakes the biggest journey of his young life, in this high-spirited Wild Wild West adventure by an acclaimed author of historical fiction.

The Great Turkey Walk Details

Date : Published September 1st 2000 by Square Fish (first published 1998)

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Author : Kathleen Karr

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From Reader Review The Great Turkey Walk for online ebook

Madisyn says

i didnt really like this book the only part i liked was when he took the turkeys to denver

Jenny says

Set in the United States in 1860, this is a story about a boy, Simon, who repeated 3rd grade four times making you wonder if he would ever make anything of himself. It was a story about Simon's journey of how he made something of himself and his dreams come true. Along the way, he runs into some shady characters, which left me skipping over some shady language and shady character descriptions to keep things clean for my kiddos. Let's just say Simon was quite interested in the lady circus character and her skimpy outfit. Overall, it was a clean book, minus a few omissions. I'd prefer reading this one aloud, than handing it over to my kids for private reading, for that and the fact there is some challenging vocabulary throughout the book. Written in what I interpreted as "southern slang," I had to read this out loud to my kids in a country accent - haha! My 10 year old loved it, and my 8 year old tolerated it but found it quite boring.

Dan says

A fun filled story, written to draw the reader in and keep you wondering what is going to face the unlikely group of travelers. I and my son truely loved it.

Heather says

I love browsing for books at used bookstores while on vacation, and getting this fun, quirky book was the result of stopping in at Booked on 25th in Ogden, Utah, last weekend.

The mob of turkeys on the cover grabbed my attention. Turkeys can almost always guarantee humor. This adventure of herding those turkeys is well-paced. It has its hurdles and challenges, but is optimistic and lighthearted.

And, as a bonus, the last page talks a little about historical turkey walks that the book was loosely based on. Herding turkeys was a real thing!

G

Kristin says

My kids love this book. Great (and funny) read-aloud.

Marie says

My kids found this funny and I thought it was moderately educational (Westward expansion, pioneer life, etc). Very young children might be upset or confused by the fact that the lead villain is the lead hero's father. The violence is done in a cartoon-y way with no one actually getting hurt (again possibly not a good choice for very young children though). What is sweet about the story is it's a bunch of seeming losers/misfits (a teenage boy considered stupid by most of his hometown, a man who became an alcoholic when his family died, and a runaway slave) who make it big, and their best prize of all is the family that they form in the process.

Sharon Peterson says

I read this aloud to my four kiddos. When I finished, my nine-year-old:

1. said he was sad because it's over,
2. hoped there was a sequel, and
3. is now contemplating a career in turkey farming.

All that to say, we loved this book. Simon Green, our narrator, is 15-year-old, and admittedly "not too smart" but he's also endearing and so likable. His voice comes through immediately. That made it a fun read-aloud. As a mother of a child with dyslexia, I loved that Simon wasn't exactly "book smart (I suspect he too was dyslexic)," but he was gifted in so many other ways--hardworking, enterprising, a natural-born leader.

Also, the book is full of "teachable" moments about history and geography and touches on slavery and Native American relations among other things.

Such a great read. (Now I'm off to help a kid research a "turkey ranch." Oh, boy)

Christopher J. says

In The Great Turkey Walk Simon Green and his accomplices attempt to move a flock of one thousand turkeys from Missouri to Denver. Throughout his adventure he becomes acquainted with Mr. Peece, the wagon driver, Jabeth, an escaped slave, and Lizzie, a beautiful young lady. Along the way they run into Simon's long lost father, who turns out to be their biggest challenge. He tries to steal the turkeys from Simon multiple times without success. Eventually, Simon and his party make it to Denver and sell their turkeys for a large profit.

Sometimes I want to complete a large project, but no one believes I can do it. This can relate to Simon's life; he wanted to walk one thousand turkeys hundreds of miles with little to no experience with the birds. He felt rejected by his friends and family, which I feel like sometimes. He also felt accomplishment when he finished the great adventure. I can relate to his feelings here when I complete a project that had many trials I had to overcome. There are many ways my life relates to Simon's.

In total, I thought it was a great book. It was a grand adventure with many trials and humor slipped in ever so

often. My favorite part had to be when the turkeys flew over the river, it sounded so cool. I thought the author did a really good job of making the story interesting and making the reader want to read on. I thought the author could have described the characters in better detail.

I think lots of different people would enjoy reading this novel and I would suggest it to others. I think people looking to read a funny book with some great adventure should look into reading this book. It contains humor and great trials the characters had to overcome. I would give it a four and a half star rating.

I read all the book

Shiloah says

The Great Turkey Walk is a hilarious, fun, and enjoyable book to read aloud as a family!

Nicola Mansfield says

Reason for Reading: Read aloud to the 9yo to go along with our history studies.

Summary: Set in 1860, the book starts with 15-year-old Simon Green being politely graduated from school and told to go find his place in the world. Simon is quite taken aback, as he has just finished third grade for the fourth time and he'd figured on being in school quite some time to get the rest of the grades completed. Simple-minded Simon comes upon a plan to walk a flock of a thousand turkeys from his hometown in Missouri, where he can purchase them for two bits a head, all the way to Denver where they say turkeys will go for five dollars a head. The story follows him on his Wild West adventure across the country making friends and escaping dangers along the way.

Comment: This was a fun book to read aloud! Written in Simon's voice: a frontier, uneducated drawl with most of the other character's following suit. While Simon may be simple-minded he isn't as stupid as the folks back home think he is. He's a quick judge of a man's character and he's got a lot of honest to goodness common sense and these prove him well on his business venture. I enjoyed the book, the adventures they got caught up in were a riot and the runaway slave boy they meet up with and take with them as they head north also adds some varying points of view of the time period covered in the book. The author's note at the end explains how she based her story on similar events that really happened.

My son on the other hand was only so-so about the book. He even said at one point that he didn't like it, but whenever we were reading it he was laughing and having a good time. The story just didn't hold with him when we were away from it. I think it would have benefited from illustrations, even just one line drawing per chapter. Ds usually likes these wild west types of stories and it's hard for me to pinpoint exactly what he didn't connect with in this one but I'm thinking the age of Simon had something to do with it, even though Simon was mentally younger than his age. So, I'm thinking the most appreciative age for this book is going to be ten and overs.

Clarabel says

Une épopée vivifiante, racontée sur le ton de l'humour cocasse, mais qui décrit très bien l'ambiance western avec ses espoirs et ses désillusions. On partage avec notre équipe de bras cassés un élan de convivialité, d'optimisme et d'aventure qui fait un bien fou ! Franchement top.

<http://blogclarabel.canalblog.com/arc...>

Chris says

In 1860 after completing 3rd grade for the 4th time, 15 year old Simon decides it's time to venture out into the world and seek his fortune. His "bird brained" idea is to walk 1,000 turkeys from Missouri to Denver where meat is scarce and sell the turkeys at a big profit. So begins the turkey walk. Along the way, Simon and his washed up mule driver Mr. Peece, are joined by a runaway slave and a newly orphaned homesteader girl. Together they face turkey rustlers, eloquent Indians, hungry US cavalry troops and Simon's long lost, money hungry father along with the logistics of walking 1,000 turkeys through the frontier from Missouri to Denver. This story is based on fact. Turkey walks did take place. This is a funny book in which characters that could be very predictable are quite the reverse.

Danica Midlil says

This was hilarious! Excellent as an audiobook.

After completing the third grade for the fourth time, fifteen year old Simon Green is summarily graduated by his teacher. "Go out in the world and spread your wings, Simon," she says. She is sorry to see him go, Simon has always been her kindest and most helpful student. (After all, he single-handedly cuts all the firewood in the winter.) Once Simon finds that Missouri turkeys sell for twenty times the local price in the hungry boom town of Denver, he hatches his first business scheme. Even at fifteen, Simon towers over his uncle and cousins, but they tease him about being all brawn and no brains. No one thinks Simon has much chance of success except his teacher. She has such faith that she invests her entire life savings of \$250 in a flock of 1,000 birds for Simon to herd by foot all the way to Denver. Along the way Simon meets up with a host of colorful characters including a runaway slave, Indians, the U.S. Cavalry, lions, tigers, camels, and the father who abandoned him when his mother died 10 years ago. Will Simple Simon fail miserably in the real world or surprise everyone?

Sheri says

This is the story of fifteen-year-old Simon, who has been "graduated" after repeating third grade five times without making progress. Simon has long been told he is pea-brained, both by his fellow students and his less-than-loving aunt, uncle, and cousins, but his teacher tells him he is capable. Simon learns from a turkey farmer that turkeys would be worth vastly more in booming frontier-town Denver than they are in Simon's native Missouri, and Simon takes it into his head to purchase a flock and walk them hundreds of miles cross-country to sell at a profit. Along the way, he faces many kinds of trials, and he also finds that sometimes your family might not be the people you're related to.

This book would probably appeal most strongly to students on the cusp of middle school. My kids found it interesting, but not riveting.

Victoria says

I actually had a blast reading this to my sons. I sometimes put on an accent even while reading it.

Simon is not a smart kid and was left back a lot. When it came to the time that he was fifteen years old, his teacher said she couldn't teach him any longer, as that is how far she taught for school. Since he graduated, he decided he had to make something out of his life. His teacher was always really inspiring to him and told him to spread his wings. That is when he noticed all the turkeys on a farm in his town and decided that he would make a business out of those turkeys. With the support of his teacher, he was able to make a purchase of a thousand turkeys and decided to take them with him to Denver where he was sure he'd be able to make a profit.

I loved the characters throughout this book. They were really likeable or unlikable. Simon had some really great times on the trail and some really terrible ones too. This was such a unique tale about the late 1800s when people really did do Turkey Walks like he did. My sons really had a fun time listening to this story and I like seeing them so engaged because it makes reading to them so much more fun. Definitely a good one to read to your kids! It brings up great discussions too about various situations that came up and certain people that they came across too.
