
A REGGIE CAT TALES STORY
Reggie and the Thanksgiving Guest
REGGIE
By Claudia Woolard

Reggie and the Thanksgiving Guest
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It was a beautiful autumn day. Reggie and his best friend, Sammy the Squirrel, decided to take a walk to the town square to see the farmers market. Along the way, they played a game.

“I spy with my little eye something purple,” said Sammy.

“Oh! That’s easy,” said Reggie.
He pointed and laughed. “It’s that big, purple barn over there!”



In no time at all, they arrived at the farmers market.

“So many people!” said Reggie. “Watch your tail, Sammy!
Be careful you don’t get stepped on!”

“It’s so noisy!” complained Sammy.

“It’s a farmers market,” explained Reggie. “Everybody comes to shop for the best bargains and the freshest food.”

Suddenly, they heard shouting and the sound of running feet.



An orange cat raced past them, clutching a fish in his mouth.

Reggie and Sammy looked at each other in amazement.

“What was THAT all about?” said Reggie.

“Let’s go see!” said Sammy.

So they ran after the man who was running after the orange cat! Far down the road, the orange cat was just a tiny orange dot.

Puffing and huffing, the man soon gave up.
“If I ever catch that cat, I’ll—” he grumbled as he turned back.

Reggie and Sammy, hiding in a bush, didn’t hear what the man would do.

They crept out of the bush and continued down the road. After a while, Reggie’s nose began to twitch. He smelled fish.

“I smell fish,” said Sammy. “And… somebody’s singing.”

O ho, ho! It’s a cat’s life for me!
Every day is wonderful,
Exciting as can be!

O ho, ho! I’m happy to be free!
Everywhere I go,
There’s plenty of food for me!

Coming closer, Reggie and Sammy saw that the singer was the orange cat! He was washing his face and paws.

They watched as he rubbed his tummy and stretched.
“Burp!”

Sammy giggled.



“Who’s there?” The orange cat jumped up, ready to fight.
“Show yourselves!”

Reggie looked at Sammy. “This may not have been our best idea,” he whispered. Sammy chittered in agreement.

“Don’t worry,” Reggie called as he stepped out of hiding.
“We’re friendly!”

“Hrummph,” said the orange cat. “I’ll be the judge of that. Who is WE, by the way?”

“My name is Reggie,” said the black cat with a steady voice. “And this is my friend, Sammy.”
Sammy shook his finger at the orange cat. “Did you steal that fish?” he demanded. “You really shouldn’t steal!”

Reggie quickly put a paw over Sammy’s mouth.
“Not now, little buddy,” he whispered.

Reggie looked at the orange cat.
“What’s your name?” he asked.

“My name is Charles Oscar Ferdinand LeRoy Jones III,” said the orange cat with immense dignity.
Reggie and Sammy blinked at the sound of the name.

“Charles … Oscar …?” said Reggie. A small smile tugged at the corner of his mouth. “Uh … what’s the rest of it again?”

“Huh?” said Sammy with wide eyes.

The orange cat gave a huge, long-suffering sigh.
He lifted his chin and said graciously,
“You both may call me … MISTER Jones!”
He paused.

“And I DID NOT steal that fish!”

“You didn’t?” asked Sammy.

“Why was that man chasing you?” asked Reggie.

Sammy high-fived his friend.
“Good question, Reggie!” said Sammy. “That man was very angry!”

“That human has a terrible temper!” Mr. Jones said.
“I have no problem at all with any of the other humans at the market. They give me food, and I always pay them. The butcher gives me very tasty meat. The dairy farmer gives me fresh milk…”

Mr. Jones licked his chops at the memory.
“Yum,” he said.

“How do you pay them for the food?” asked Reggie curiously.

“Haven’t you noticed that humans always give a flat leaf in payment for their food?”

Mr. Jones lifted his chin proudly. “I do the same thing.”



“I always give the farmer a beautiful maple leaf. Only the finest. Nothing broken or dirty. And … as a bonus, I patrol the barns and keep out little critters that steal the grain for the cows.”

Sammy looked up at Reggie.
“You can’t do more than that,” he said.
Reggie nodded. “That’s right. You can’t.”
“I’m sorry that I accused you of stealing,” said Sammy.

The orange cat waved a paw. “Hey, *no problemo, amigo!* I’m as honest as the day is long, but how would you know that?” he said. “I’m free as a bird! I go where the wind blows! Nobody to tie me down. That’s the type of cat I am!”
He crouched down and looked them straight in the eye. “What do you think about that?”

Reggie shrugged. “I guess … it’s the cat’s life for you?”
The orange cat laughed. “Yes!”
Sammy chittered nervously. “I don’t know, but I don‘t want the wind to blow me around,” he said softly.
“It’s just a saying, little buddy,” said Reggie.
“Oh,” said Sammy.

”I’m a cat, happy, and free to go wherever I want,” said Reggie. “And I have a wonderful family waiting for me at home.”
Sammy smiled. “I’m happy too, but I have a question. So, if you’re free as a bird, Mr... Mr... uh ... Cat—” Sammy stopped, flustered. He’d forgotten ALL of the cat’s names.
“Just call me Mister JONES ... or Charles Oscar Ferdinand Leroy Jones” the orange cat interrupted with a smirk.
Embarrassed, Sammy squeaked, crossed his arms, and thumped his back foot.



“Why do you have so many names?” asked Reggie.
The orange cat shrugged. “I was named after my father. It’s a tradition,” he said.

Sammy frowned. “So, Mr. Jones, if you are free as a bird and go where the wind blows, where do you live?”

“Oh, here and there, wherever I want to,” answered Mr. Jones. He licked his paw and continued his bath.

“But where is your family?” asked Sammy.

Mr. Jones paused as he cleaned his whiskers.

“Family?” he said. “Well … I have a cousin. He has a big family—kittens all over the place! You can’t turn around without stepping on a kitten!”

He yawned and stretched. “But I haven’t seen them in a long time.”

“But don't you have a home?” asked Reggie. “Your own human?”

“Of course!” said Mr. Jones. “My human is a soldier. He's far away right now, so I stay with his father, the dairy farmer.”

“Oh!” said Reggie. “The one who gives you milk?”

“Precisely!” said Mr. Jones. “But I like to take care of myself. Makes less work for the old gentleman. And I still pay him,” he added.

“And take care of his barn,” added Sammy brightly.

“Yes, I do,” said Mr. Jones.

He yawned again, even bigger than before.
“Now, if you don’t mind, it’s time for my nap.”
He curled up in a big pile of leaves and promptly fell asleep.

Reggie and Sammy looked at each other, eyebrows raised.
Reggie shrugged. “Let’s go home,” he said.
They walked quietly for a while.

“I feel sorry for Mr. Jones,” said Sammy suddenly. “His human is so far away.” He sighed. “Let’s talk about something happy.”

“Okay,” said Reggie. He thought for a moment. “Tomorrow is Thanksgiving Day. What are we thankful for?”

“Easy!” said Sammy. “I’m thankful for my family, who I chase from tree to tree, tasty nuts to eat, a warm nest high in the trees, and my best friend, Reggie.”

“And I’m thankful for my family, good food to eat, a good home to live in, and my best friend, Sammy!” said Reggie.

“We have a lot to be thankful for, don’t we?” said Sammy.

“Yes, we do, little buddy,” said Reggie.

The next morning, Reggie woke to the delicious smell of Thanksgiving dinner cooking in the oven. After a quick breakfast, he went out to play. He looked up, took a deep breath, and smiled.

“Hello, sky! Hello, clouds! Hello, trees!” he meowed.
He saw a perfect maple leaf on the ground.
I wonder if Mr. Jones would like to have this?
He picked it up.
The sun felt comfortably warm on his fur.
I’m so grateful for this beautiful day, he thought.

He walked a little farther, carrying the maple leaf in his mouth.
Oh! There’s the farm with the purple barn. Hmm … I wonder if Mr. Jones is there?

As Reggie came close to the barn door, he saw Mr. Jones lapping up milk from a small bowl.

“Good morning!” called Reggie.
“Morning,” answered Mr. Jones. The orange cat licked his paw and began washing his face. “Help yourself,” he said. “There’s plenty.” He grinned as he waved a paw at a nearby maple leaf. “It’s bought and paid for.”

“Thanks,” said Reggie. He smiled as he placed his own perfect maple leaf at Mr. Jones’s front paws. Then he began to drink.



Reggie looked up from the bowl of milk.
“You have a milk mustache,” said Mr. Jones with a chuckle.
“Thanks for telling me,” said Reggie.
“Anytime,” said the orange cat with a big, lazy grin.

Reggie carefully cleaned his face and paws. He cleared his throat.

“Today is Thanksgiving Day, Mr. Jones, and my family and I would be honored to have you as our guest for dinner,” said Reggie. “That is … if you are available, of course.”

Mr. Jones grew quiet. He looked down at the maple leaf lying on the barn floor, close to his paws. Reggie waited. Mr. Jones jumped up on a bale of hay and energetically sharpened his claws.

Finally, he looked at Reggie and grinned.

“Thanks!” he said. “What’s for dinner?”



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