



*Yang Yang and Hoo Hoo, or
the Song of the Left Foot of the
Shadow of the Goose in
Oklahoma*

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Yang Yang and Hoo Hoo were two girls who used to live in Battle Ax, Michigan, before they moved to Wagon Wheel Gap, Colorado, and back to Broken Doors, Ohio, and then over to Open Windows, Iowa, and at last down to Alfafa Clover, Oklahoma, where they say, “Our Oklahoma home is in Oklahoma.”

One summer morning Yang Yang and Hoo woke up saying to each other, “Our Oklahoma home is in Oklahoma.” And it was that morning the shadow of a goose flew in at the open window, just over the bed where Yang Yang and Hoo Hoo slept with their eyes shut all night and woke with their eyes open in the morning. The shadow of the goose fluttered a while along the ceiling, flickered a while along the wall, and then after one more flutter and flicker put itself on the wall like a picture of a goose put there to look at, only it was a living

picture—and it made its neck stretch in a curve and then stretch straight. “Yang yang,” cried Yang Yang. “Yang yang.” “Hoo hoo,” sang Hoo Hoo. “Hoo hoo.”

And while Hoo Hoo kept on calling a soft, low coaxing hoo hoo, Yang Yang kept on crying a hard, noisy nagging yang yang till everybody in the house upstairs and down and everybody in the neighbor houses heard her yang-yanging. The shadow of the goose lifted its left wing a little, lifted its right foot a little, got up on its goose legs, and walked around and around in a circle on its goose feet. And every time it walked around in a circle it came back to the same place it started from, with its left foot or right foot in the same foot spot it started from. Then it stayed there in the same place like a picture put there to look at, only it was a living picture with its neck sometimes sticking up straight in the air and sometimes bending in a long curving bend.

Yang Yang threw the bed covers off, slid out of bed and ran downstairs yang-yanging for her mother. But Hoo Hoo sat up in bed laughing, counting her pink toes to see if there were ten pink toes the same as the morning before. And while she was counting her pink toes she looked out of the corners of her eyes at the shadow of the goose on the wall. And again the shadow of the goose lifted its left wing a little, lifted its right foot a little, got up on its goose legs, and walked around and around in a circle on its goose feet. And every time it walked around in a circle it came back to the same place it started from, with its left foot or right foot back in the same foot spot it started from. Then it stayed there in the same place where it put itself on the wall like a picture to look at, only it was a living picture with its neck sticking up straight in the air and then changing so its neck was bending in a long curving bend. And all the time little Hoo Hoo was sitting up in bed counting her pink toes and looking out of the corners of her eyes at the shadow of the goose. By and by little Hoo Hoo said, “Good morning—hoo hoo for you—and hoo hoo again, I was looking at the window when you came in. I saw you put yourself on the wall like a picture. I saw you begin to walk and come back where you started from with your neck sticking straight up and your neck bending in a bend. I give you good morning. I blow a hoo hoo to you. I blow two of a hoo hoo to you.”

Then the shadow of a goose, as if to answer good morning, and as if to answer what Hoo Hoo meant by saying, “I blow two of a hoo hoo to you,” stretched its neck sticking up straight and long, longer than any time yet, and then bended its neck in more of a bend than any time yet. And all the time Hoo Hoo was sitting in bed feeling of her toes with her fingers to see if she had one toe for every finger, and to see if she had one pink little toe to match her one pink little finger, and to see if she had one fat flat big toe to match her one fat fiat thumb. Then

when the room was all quiet the shadow of the goose lifted its left foot and began singing—singing just as the shadow of a goose always sings—with the left foot—very or Song of softly with the left foot—so softly you must listen with the softest little listeners you have deep inside your ears. And this was the song, this was the old-time, old-fashioned left foot song the shadow of the goose sang for Hoo Hoo: Be a yang yang if you want to. Be a hoo hoo if you want to. The yang yangs always yang in the morning. The hoo hoos always hoo in the morning. Early in the morning the putters sit putting, Putting on your nose, putting on your cars, Putting in your eyes and the lashes on your eyes, Putting on the chins of your chinny chin chins. And after singing the left foot song the shadow of the goose walked around in a long circle, came back where it started from, stopped and stood still with the proud stand- still of a goose, and then stretched its neck sticking up straight and long, longer than any time yet, and then bended its neck bent and twisted in longer bends than any time yet. Then the shadow took itself off the wall, fluttered and flickered along the ceiling and over the bed, flew out of the window and was gone, leaving Hoo Hoo all alone sitting up in bed counting her pink toes.

Out of the corners of her eyes she looked up at the wall of the room, at the place where the shadow of the goose put itself like a picture. And there she saw a shadow spot. She looked and saw it was a left foot, the same left foot that had been singing the left foot song. Soon Yang Yang came yang-yanging into the room holding to her mother's apron. Hoo Hoo told her mother all the happenings that happened. The mother wouldn't believe it. Then Hoo Hoo pointed up to the wall, to the left foot, the shadow spot left behind by the shadow of the goose when it took itself off the wall. And now when Yang Yang and Hoo Hoo sleep all night with their eyes shut and wake up in the morning with their eyes open, sometimes they say, "Our Oklahoma home is in Oklahoma," and sometimes they sing: Be a yang yang and yang yang if you want to. Be a hoo hoo and hoo hoo if you want to.

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