

Thanks for Being Nice

 COLOR THE PICTURE



The morning was cold and clear, and the sky over Sunny Square was so blue it looked freshly washed.

Under the Wishing Tree, the stack of flat leaves was waiting right where Bruno had sat on it all night. Beside it sat three bowls of berry paint: red, purple, and blue.

"Today," said Mr. Moose, "is for our own homes. Our families."

"Mama and Daddy Monkey," said Mr. Monkey, rolling up his sleeves, even though he didn't have sleeves. "And Mama and Daddy Moose. Let's paint!"

Mama Monkey had shown them how the leaves would work. On the front of the leaf, you paint who it's for, so everybody can see. On the back, you paint the thank-you. Then you hang it on the tree with the thank-you side turned toward the trunk, so nobody can see it. "It stays a surprise," she said, "until the Thankful Feast."

Mr. Monkey grabbed a leaf. He dipped his finger in the red paint. On the front, he painted a little monkey face with a big smile: Mama Monkey. Then he flipped it over and painted the thank-you. It took him about two seconds. A big round smiley face.

"Done!" he said. "Thanks for being nice!"

Mr. Moose looked at the smiley face. It was a very nice smiley face. "Mr. Monkey," he said, "what did Mama Monkey actually do?"

Mr. Monkey thought. "She's nice," he said.

"But what did she DO?"

Mr. Monkey thought harder. Then he remembered. The high vines. The falling. Fwoop. Mama's arms.

"She caught me," he said. "A hundred and one times."

"Then that's what goes on the leaf," said Mr. Moose.

Mr. Monkey grabbed a new leaf. This time, on the back, he painted the high vine, and Mama Monkey underneath it with her arms out wide. And then he started painting little Mr. Monkeys falling into her arms. One. Two. Three. Four. Five little monkeys falling...

"Are you painting a hundred and one?" asked Mr. Moose.

"Yes," said Mr. Monkey, painting very fast.

By monkey number twelve, he had run out of leaf. So he kept going on the next leaf. By monkey number twenty, he had run out of that leaf too. He looked around. He painted monkey number twenty-one on a rock. Monkey twenty-two on Mr. Moose's hoof. Monkey twenty-three on his own tail.

Then he looked down at himself. He was covered in tiny red monkeys.

"Mr. Moose," he said. "I think I'm the leaf now."

"Ha-ha-ha!" laughed Mr. Moose. "You're a hundred and one monkeys."

Mr. Monkey looked at his first leaf, the one with the vine and Mama and twelve falling monkeys. "Maybe twelve is enough," he said. "She'll know."

Meanwhile, Mr. Moose was painting his leaf for Daddy

Moose. Mr. Moose painted very slowly and very carefully. He painted the brook. He painted the skinny log. He painted Daddy Moose standing in the water. Then he started painting tiny moose calves falling off the log, one at a time, each one with very careful legs.

By the time Mr. Moose finished moose number three, Mr. Monkey had finished four whole leaves.

"How many are you painting?" asked Mr. Monkey.

"Twenty-two," said Mr. Moose. "Daddy counted."

Mr. Monkey looked up at the sun, then back down at the very slow, very careful moose number four. "Mr. Moose," he said, "we're going to be here until the Thankful Feast."

"Hee hee hee!" Mr. Monkey flopped onto his back in the leaves.

"Ha-ha-ha!" laughed Mr. Moose, and his paint hoof wobbled, and moose number four came out with an extra leg. He looked at it. "That's okay," he said. "That's the day I fell in really funny."

When the leaves were dry, it was time to hang them. Mr. Monkey climbed up into the Wishing Tree with a leaf in his teeth and a vine around his shoulder. He found the perfect branch, right next to his big banana wish. He hung Mama Monkey's leaf there, with her little monkey face out and the thank-you turned toward the trunk.

Then the wind blew.

Fwip-fwap-fwip. The leaf spun on its vine and flipped all the way around, thank-you side out, so everybody could see the twelve falling monkeys.

And right at that moment, Mama Monkey came walking across Sunny Square with her laundry basket.

"Ack!" said Mr. Monkey. "Don't look!" He jumped in front of the leaf and spread his arms out wide. The wind blew again, and the leaf flipped back. Then it flipped again. Mr. Monkey hopped left. He hopped right. He hung upside down in front of it with his arms and legs and tail all stretched out, wiggling like a starfish, trying to cover every side at once.

Mama Monkey stopped and looked up at him. "Is there something on that branch, sweetheart?"

"Yes," said Mr. Monkey, upside down. "It's a secret."

"Ha-ha!" laughed Mama Monkey, and she kept walking, very slowly, looking straight ahead the whole way, so she wouldn't spoil it.

When she was gone, Mr. Monkey hung there with his arms still out. "Mr. Moose," he said, "if the wind keeps flipping them, everybody's going to see. It won't be a surprise."

Mr. Moose looked at the leaf swinging on its single vine. One vine at the top meant it could spin all the way around, like a top. What if it couldn't spin?

"It needs two knots," said Mr. Moose slowly. "One at the top, and one at the bottom. Then it can't flip."

"Like Ricky's knot!" said Mr. Monkey.

"Like Ricky's knot," said Mr. Moose.

Mr. Moose reached up and held each leaf flat against the trunk with his nose, very gently, thank-you side in. And Mr. Monkey tied one vine at the top and one vine at the bottom, with the knot that never slips. Mama Monkey's leaf. Daddy Monkey's leaf. Daddy Moose's leaf, with four careful moose calves on the back, one of them with five legs. And Mama Moose's leaf, which Mr. Moose painted last, very fast for him, which was still pretty slow. Not one of them could flip.

Then the wind blew. *Whoosh.* The wishes swung and clacked on their vines. But the thank-you leaves stayed right where they were, faces out, secrets in.

That afternoon, Daddy Moose came out of the big maple with an armful of firewood. He stopped. He looked up. There, tied to the trunk, was a leaf with his face painted on the front.

He looked at it for a long time.

"Is that my nothing?" he asked.

"It's not nothing," said Mr. Moose.

Daddy Moose put down his firewood. He didn't try to peek. He just stood there, looking at the front of the leaf, with his hand on his chest, the way Mama Monkey had at the Backward Feast.

Then Ricky came by. He saw Daddy Moose looking at the leaf. "Rule twenty-two!" he called. "No peeking!"

"I'm not peeking," said Daddy Moose. "I'm just looking."

Mr. Monkey sat on a branch near the top of the Wishing Tree, between his big banana wish and Mama Monkey's leaf. He looked at the banana. He looked at the leaf. Then he looked at the leaf some more.

"Mr. Moose," he called down. "I keep looking at the leaf."

"Me too," said Mr. Moose.

Mr. Moose looked at their basket. It still had five leaves in it from all week. And now four new leaves were on the tree, with lots more noticing still to go.

"What a day!" said Mr. Monkey as the sun went down. "My first leaf just said I was nice. Then I painted a hundred monkeys, but only twelve fit, and the rest went on my tail. Mr. Moose painted four moose calves all day, and one had five legs. The wind kept flipping Mama's leaf, so I was a starfish. And Daddy Moose found out he didn't get nothing."

Mr. Monkey whistled, and Mr. Moose hummed, and together they sang:

*We are better together,
Moose and Monkey forever.*

And on the Wishing Tree, four painted leaves sat snug against the trunk, faces out and secrets in, while the wishes swayed around them in the dark.

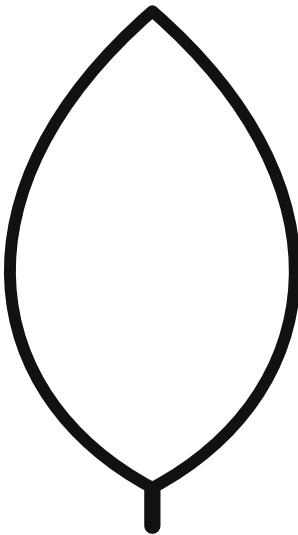
Let's Talk

- 1 Mr. Monkey's first leaf just said, "Thanks for being nice." What did Mr. Moose ask him?
- 2 Think of someone in our house. What is one thing they actually did for you?

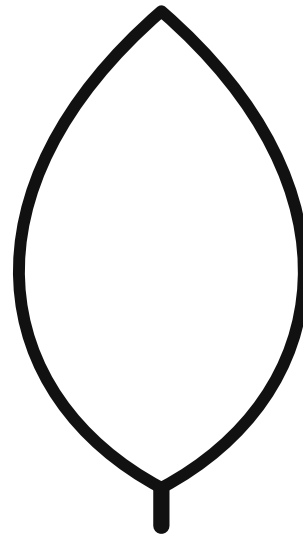
Your Turn

Plan a leaf for someone in your house. Write their name on the front. Draw what they did on the back.

FRONT: THE NAME

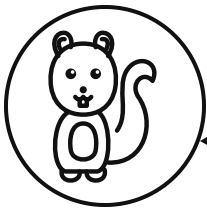


BACK: THE THANK-YOU



Make a real one: with a grown-up, hold plain paper over this page against a sunny window and trace both leaves. Cut them out, glue them back to back, and save it for your family's Thanks Giving Tree.

SAMMY'S JOKE



What do you call a pig that does karate?

Crack Sammy's code! Find each picture in the key and write its letter on the line.

A _____ !



KEY



👁 Spot the Difference

Look closely. Can you find 5 differences?



 Read With Me

DRAW THE STORY

Up, Tip, Got! is up on top.Tip! Mom got .Up on top. Tip! Mom got .

Up, tip, got! Up, tip, got!

“Mom is fun!” said .**PICTURE WORDS**  Mr. Monkey

For grown-ups: New sounds: c, u, g. New words to learn by heart: said.



Color a star each time you read it.

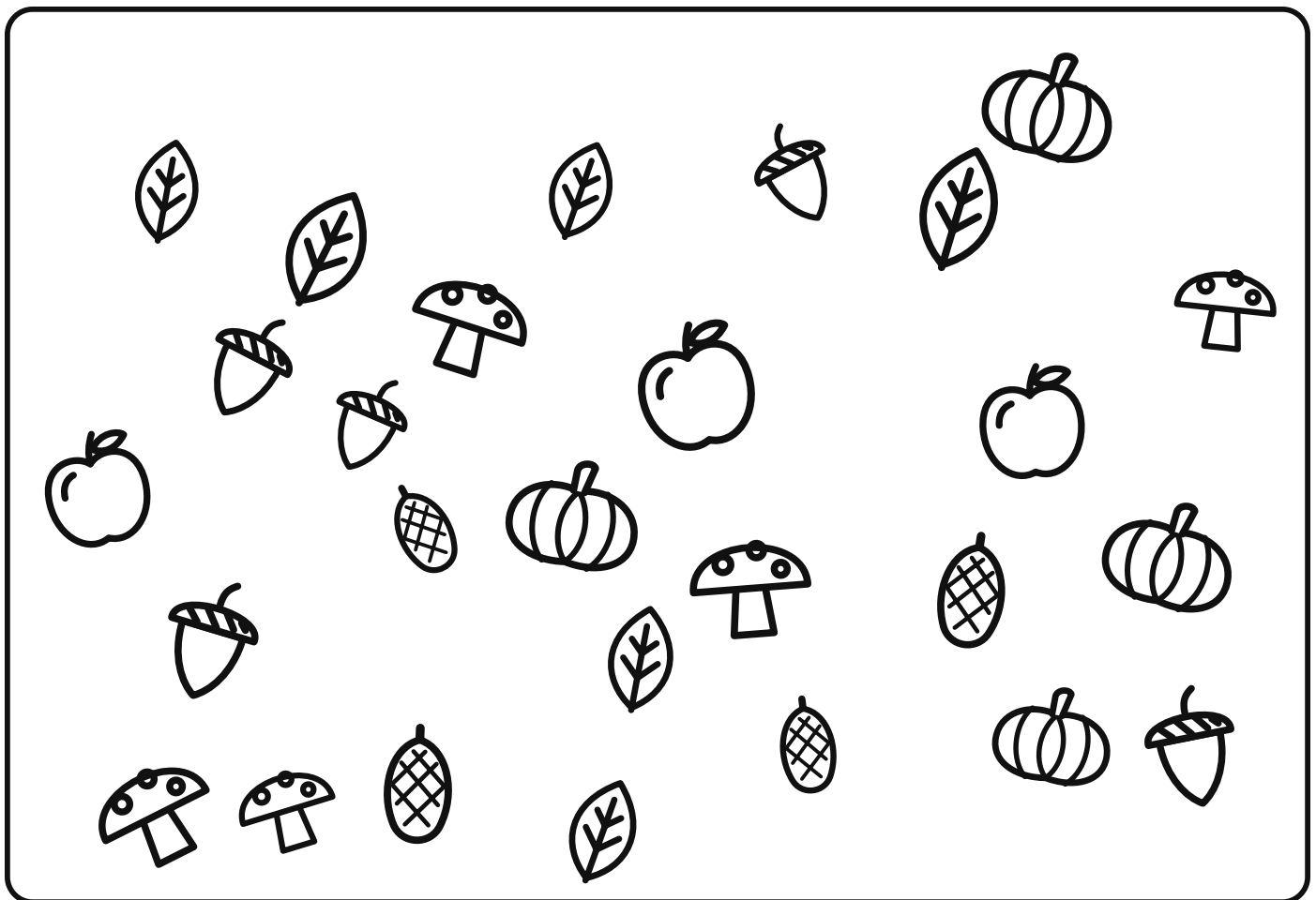
♥ My Thank-You

Trace the dotted words. Write their name on the line, or draw a tiny face. Read it to them!

Thank you.
for making my life better.

👁 Fall I Spy

Find and count each one. Write how many in the box.



											
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