

Do Tell Story Swap Summaries

January 14, 2025

Vicky Ness started the evening with a “pocket story,” a short one you always have ready to tell. Her pocket story was about multi-colored ribbons that hung down from a dark cloud above. Should we pull on one? Would it bring disaster down upon us? Would it bring the answer to all our dreams?

Renu Narayan joined us from India to tell the story of two men who spent the night in a village where snoring was punishable by death. Would they survive the night?

Kenneth Foster called in from Ephraim, Utah, to tell the story of being hit by a golf club as he tried to help his friend learn the proper stance. The days in the hospital were eye-opening and full of ice cream, and the scar is still there to show.

Sharon Elwell told a true story of a woman alone who faced an intruder and told her story from the stand in a courtroom.

Brandon Spars recounted one of his first days as a 9th grade teacher on a retreat in the redwoods. When one of the boys needed emergency batteries, social dynamics changed dramatically.

Genevieve Franklin told of her long relationship with a red vacuum cleaner, which she eventually had to give up.

Shirley Anne, portrayed by **Katy Mangan**, told of the Christmas when Covid changed the celebration in their tiny English village.

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February 11, 2025

Beth Wakelee opened the evening with an indigenous creation folktale. Hawk searches the watery world for a place to land, and finally the lowly coot is able to dive deep enough under the water to bring up enough mud to start the world.

Vicky Ness told the story of Alma Tidybones, a sturdy woman who resisted the plans of Elias Grubb to turn her five-acre wood into a retail development.

Rose Owens shared the tale of a princess who would give her hand to the man who could bring her a blue rose.

Sharon Elwell shared one of her stories about Mary Ellen Pleasant, a 19th century abolitionist.

Renu Narayan called in from India to tell us about a wife who was jealous of her husband's love for his puppy – until a dramatic event changed her mind.

Laura McHale Holland shared a tale from her new book, Shinbone Lane. The scary story advises listeners not to go near Stowe Lake in Golden Gate Park at night.

Sree Karuna told us about a popular professor who prepared an elaborate lecture, only to find that there was just one student to listen. What should he do?

Katy Mangan ended the evening with a visit to the magical world of Eduardo, who taught his friend Alice how to honor her mother, her mother's mother, and her mother's mother's mother.

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March 11, 2025

Rose Owens called in from Livermore to share a personal story about life in a household of 16 children.

Meg Brown told “The Wish Ring,” a folk tale about a man who helped an old woman and got a ring from her as a gift. The ring granted only one wish. What should he wish for?

Renu Narayan joined us from India to tell the story of a lazy donkey who could never wake up on time. All of the animals tried making their sounds to rouse him, and one finally succeeded.

Vicky Ness shared her latest story about a refugee girl who had learned from shadow puppet stories that courage and generosity always win in the end. With “highly improbably optimism,” she collected leftover vegetable seeds to plant gardens to feed her family.

Sree Karuna called from India to tell of a young woman going through all the trials of a marriage decision, a husband who didn’t cook, morning sickness, post-partum depression, and eventually menopause. Her beloved daughter gives her the key to surviving the turbulent waters of a woman’s life.

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April 8, 2025

What a night!

Brother Ben Tucker was our guest teller, and he delighted us with an Armenian folk tale about an invincible rooster who outsmarted a greedy king.

Rose Owens joined in the spirit of poultry with a story called “The Little Rooster and the Turkish Sultan.”,

Sharon Elwell in Washington shared a children’s story about Milli McBean, who was “meaner than any kid you’ve ever seen.”

Chester Weems called in from Oklahoma to tell the true story of a blind man who led federal workers to safety when the Oklahoma City federal building was bombed.

Beth Wakelee told a thoughtful folk tale called “The Traveler and the Bear,” which led her listeners to think about where to put your trust.

Shilpa called “from tomorrow” in India to share the story of a woman who learned the importance of telling your stories and sharing your songs.

Renu Narayan in India told a heartwarming story of the reconciliation of a father and son.

Meera in India told a “crispy, crunchy” story with music about rice cakes and chutney that made all of us hungry.

Sree Karuna ended the evening with the tale of a traveler caught between a bear and a tiger – with an unexpected outcome.

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May 13, 2025

We had a full evening and a great variety of storytellers!

Meg Brown kicked off the evening with the poem, “The Glory Trail,” from a book called Sun and Saddle Leather by Badger Clark. The poem recounted the unfortunate fate of a man who roped a mountain lion.

Chester Weems called in from Oklahoma City with the story of a funeral service where the hearse was frozen shut.

Ken Foster came to us from Ephraim, Utah, with a story of Luther Burbank’s walnut trees that ended up made by Ken himself into bowls.

Vicky Ness told about a grandma who smoked without tobacco and shared secrets with her granddaughter.

Sharon Elwell shared a personal story of a hospital patient who endured his situation by cherishing his favorite memories.

Laura McHale Holland sang a poem about an aspiring San Francisco artist.

Renu Narayan called from India to tell of a wise mother who settled disputes between her son and daughter-in-law.

Genevieve Franklin quoted Edith Wharton’s line: “My little dog – a heartbeat at my feet,” to tell us about her beloved pet, Chipper.

Sree Karuna called from India to tell about a disciple of Buddha who needed to improve in order to prepare himself to teach.

Katy Mangan ended the evening with a visit to the magical world of Eduardo, and a birth that celebrates the spring equinox.