

# Preview

## FLOYD AND THE TRAVELING YARD SALE Stories of the Blue Ridge Border

by RLB Hartmann

### “Floyd and the Minipig”

The funniest thing Josie ever saw was Floyd chasing a pint-sized pig through the woods behind the cow shed.

It happened this way: Floyd drove in with a water bucket on the seat of his truck, and when everyone ran to find out what he had, he reached in, saying, "Ain't he the prettiest little thing you ever did see?"

Opening his cupped hands, Floyd revealed a tiny, hairless creature with its eyes squinched tight and a feeble "squeee-squeee" issuing from its throat. "Look at that!" he marveled, closing thumb and forefinger around its scrawny neck.

Josie didn't think the pig was a bit pretty. It wasn't black-and-white spotted, or even the kind with a nice white band around its shoulders. It was pink.

"What on earth will you name a pink pig?" she wanted to know.

"Arnold," Floyd said promptly. "Didn't you ever hear of a smart pig on t.v. named Arnold? Well, this one's going to be even smarter, 'cause I'm going to train him." He put the piglet back into the tin water bucket and set the bucket on the ground.

"What'll you train him to do?" asked Mawie. "Hunt for biscuits?"

"I might. I figure, next fall I can take him to the county fair."

"Think he'll win a ribbon for being the littlest pig on record?" asked Daddy.

"Nope," Floyd said, unabashed. "I got a secret pig ration I'm workin' on, and if it does what I think it'll do, he'll be a sight for sore eyes, come October."

All the time they had been talking, the neglected captive had been renting the air with squeals which grew in volume and frequency. Suddenly, all fell silent.

"Oh, there goes my pig!" Floyd cried, and sprinted across the yard with the grace of a race horse wearing hobbles. The piglet zig-zagged behind the cow shed, Floyd in close pursuit and making ineffective swipes at the curly, bouncing tail.

"Oooooooh! Catch him! Catch him!" Josie yelled, jumping up and down.

Out the other side of the cow shed shot the pig, into a thick mound of oak leaves. Into the mound shot Floyd. Oak leaves flew wildly about, and a fresh assault of ear-piercing squeals flew out with them. He emerged clinging to one hind leg, the rest of the minipig attached.

"Wow, Floyd," she cried. "You sure can run!"

Panting, he brought back Arnold cuddled in one hand, while the other kept the leg in a vise-like grip. "I had to," he gasped. "I couldn't let this little darlin' get away."

Whenever Josie saw Floyd during the summer, she always asked about Arnold. Floyd always said, "He's doin' real good." Then one day he helped her and Mawie into his truck and took them to his house.

With silent pride, he led the way through his stand of giant sunflowers to the pig lot. Now, however, he called it the hog lot. In a double mesh fence, reinforced with barbed wire and old boards, stood the biggest hog she had ever seen. "THIS is Arnold?" she asked, not daring to venture too close. He had grown thick hair, so he was no longer pink but a pale cream color. His voice was no longer shrill, but a mellow "oink, oink" as he rooted out acorns at the base of his pen.

"What on earth did you feed him?" Mawie asked. "I never seen such a pig."

"Well, I gotta keep that a secret. But, you know," Floyd went on sadly, "he got so mean, I never did have a chance to teach him anything, except where the food trough is, and most of the time to keep his feet out of his water bucket. So, instead of putting him in the fair, I guess I'm going to have to take him to the Rock Creek freezer locker."

"What's that?" asked Josie.

"The butcher," Mawie told her. "I sure would like to have a piece of ham off him."

"Me, too," Josie said, a little doubtful. She liked ham, but as she stared at the beast and tried unsuccessfully to picture the baby pig running through the woods with Floyd chasing it, she felt sorry for Arnold, who had eaten himself into an early frying pan.

**16 Floyd Stories are available in a large format, 90-page book**

#### **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>Introducing Floyd</b>	<b>9</b>
Josie and Mawie meet Wind-up	
<b>Floyd and the Traveling Yard Sale</b>	<b>13</b>
The T-man tries to get the goods on Floyd	
<b>"...one of Floyd's old dresses."</b>	<b>17</b>
Josie needs a frock for the Rock Creek Elementary School Commencement	
<b>Floyd and the Watch Possum</b>	<b>21</b>
Floyd uses a unique method of dealing with the T-man	
<b>Floyd and the Minipig</b>	<b>24</b>
Floyd hopes to win a ribbon at the county fair	
<b>Floyd Packs a Picnic</b>	<b>27</b>
AKA Floyd and the Backroads, or, Floyd and the Chlorophyll Cure	
<b>Floyd and the Spread-Natter</b>	<b>37</b>
Evicting unwanted tenants from beneath Mawie's hen house	

<b>Floyd Buys a Gold Mine</b>	41
Benny and Junior learn how much fun it is to work	
<b>Floyd and the Circus Cat</b>	44
A stray tom and the transforming aspect of love	
<b>Charlie's Basket</b>	51
"And he did it all by hisself."	
<b>Floyd's Christmas Dinner</b>	55
Floyd demonstrates his prowess in the culinary arts	
<b>Further Adventures of Floyd</b>	59
The rise and collapse of the egg market	
<b>Floyd Goes to Charleston</b>	64
Taking chances in the big city	
<b>Floyd's Decision</b>	73
Mawie says it all	
<b>Missing Floyd</b>	78
The Circus Cat pines and plays, while Josie writes	
<b>The Return of Floyd</b>	81
Back among friends	

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