

# BAPTIST FEATURES

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CHILDREN'S PAGE  
June 2, 1955

RANGOON, THE SCAREDY-COCK  
BY: Solveig Paulson Russell

Mother Hen clucked proudly when she took her first look at the baby rooster who chipped his way from the last egg she had been sitting on.

"Ah," she said, "what a beautiful child he is! I shall call him Rangoon."

After Rangoon was just a few days old, Mother Hen began to wonder if she hadn't made a mistake in giving him such a proud, brave name. The little fellow wasn't proud or brave. He was a scaredy-cock! When all the other chicks were out scratching and cheeping about, he was staying very close to Mother Hen. When she finally dug out a worm for him, he looked at it and darted under her wing, trembling.

All the other chicks laughed. That is, all except Seeannie, his middle-sized sister. She crept under Mother Hen's wing, too, and whispered, "Come on, Rangoon, it won't hurt you. It's just a tiny little worm."

Finally Rangoon came out, but the worm was gone.

Rangoon, continued to be a scaredy-sock, even when all the fuzz was gone from his young body.

One day the farmer looked him over and said to his wife, "Now, there's a fine young rooster for you. Look at the size of him and the build! He's going to be a prize winner, for sure!"

Mother Hen heard him and she was proud but there was a gleam of doubt in her eyes.

Seeannie whispered to the little rooster, "See! Even the farmer knows you are a fine young cock, and I know it, too! Just stand up for your rights once or twice and you'll begin to feel just like the grand cock-of-the-walk you're going to be!"

Rangoon tried not to be so timid. He tried stretching out his wings and flapping them. He tried running across the barnyard. Yet every time he saw anything looming up before him he scurried back to Mother Hen.

Then, one day, one of Mrs. White Duck's children snapped its broad bill at Seeannie. That made Rangoon mad. He rushed at the duck child and was just about to peck him hard when the young duck turned. He faced the rooster with a wide-open mouth and darting eyes. Rangoon gulped, saw that Seeannie was out of the way, and

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turned tail and hurried under a bush where he'd be safe.

"Ha-ha! Ah-quack-ha!" screamed all the young ducks. "Scaredy-cock! Scaredy-cock!"

Rangoon felt ashamed. He stayed out of sight as much as he could, but Seeannie kept an eye on him.

"Never mind about that old duck affair," she said. "I was proud to think you'd even start after that old broad bill!"

Rangoon's tail feathers began to grow and come out in beautiful colors. "You're going to be a beautiful Chanticleer!" exclaimed Seeannie.

"A Chanticleer!" whispered Rangoon to himself. "That's a wonderful name for a very fine rooster! Chanticleers always fly high and crow loudly. Guess I'll try!"

He flew to the very highest post in the barnyard. He stretched his head and flapped his wings. He opened his mouth to crow. But, oh, dear, the noise that came from his yellow mouth was only a funny kind of a screech--not a full proud crow at all. Rangoon ducked his head, and looked down at all the barnyard fowl. They were looking up at him with queer grins and snickers. He went to hide behind the barn, and tucked his head under his wing and shivered in despair.

After that, Rangoon just quietly tended to his own business. He scratched for food, said little to anyone, and felt very lonely. Then, one day as he and Seeannie were scratching near the old straw stack, a dark shadow fell across his path. He looked to see a strange, black, full-grown rooster making his way into the barnyard. He held his head importantly.

"I heard there was a scaredy-cock over here," he said. "I thought I'd just come and take over this barnyard for myself."

Rangoon's wattles turned a brilliant red and the spurs on his legs stiffened. He marched up to the strange cockerel and said, "You can't do that. I'm Rangoon, the rooster, and this is my barnyard!"

Seeannie clucked joyfully and cried, "Go for him, Rangoon! Drive him away!"

Rangoon didn't need to go for him. The black rooster took one look at his angry eyes, and flapped his wings wildly and ran off.

Rangoon was flushed with happiness.

"I did it! I stood up for myself and I scared him!"

"If only the others could have seen it! You'll never be afraid any more," said

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3- Rangoon the Scaredy-Cock

Seeannie. "I'm really proud of you!"

Rangoon flew to the highest posts of the fence and looked over the barnyard and there was a new gleam in his flashing eyes.

It was while he was standing on the high post that the real test of Rangoon's courage came. He stood there, stretching his neck, looking in every direction, his eyes caught a movement in the tall grass next to the fence.

Fur! Long slinking shape! Sneaking feet and sniffing nose! Rangoon had never seen a weasel before, but he knew that this creature meant death to the barnyard fowl. Quickly he gulped air, then he stretched himself upward and flapped his wings wildly.

"Cock-a-doodle-do! Cock-a-doodle! Danger-to-you!" he screamed. "Weasel! Weasel!"

In a second every fowl flew up on a safe perch and huddled together clacking wildly. The farmer heard the noise and came running. The weasel hurried off.

"Must have been a weasel," said the farmer to his wife. "Boy! Did you hear that rooster! And look at him standing up there on the post like a real Cock-of-the-walk!"

All the barnyard fowl looked up, too.

"Rangoon, the Rooster--a true Chanticleer!" they cried.

Rangoon stretched his neck to the sky and flapped his big wings twice.

"Cock-a-doodle-do! Cock-a-doodle-do!"

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THERE'S A BLUR OF BLUE

BY: Blanche De Good Lofton

There's a blur of blue on the lilac now  
And a tangle of white in the cherry bough!

How can I sit at my desk and think,  
When the quince tree blushes a rosy pink?

When red-breast robins play hide-and-peek--  
When biddy's expecting her chicks, next week?

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