

Why the Buzzard's Head Is Bare

A Traditional Cherokee Story
retold by

James Isaac Smiley

for his Cherokee Grandmother
Maxine Eggenesperger



Illustrated by Rand Stewart

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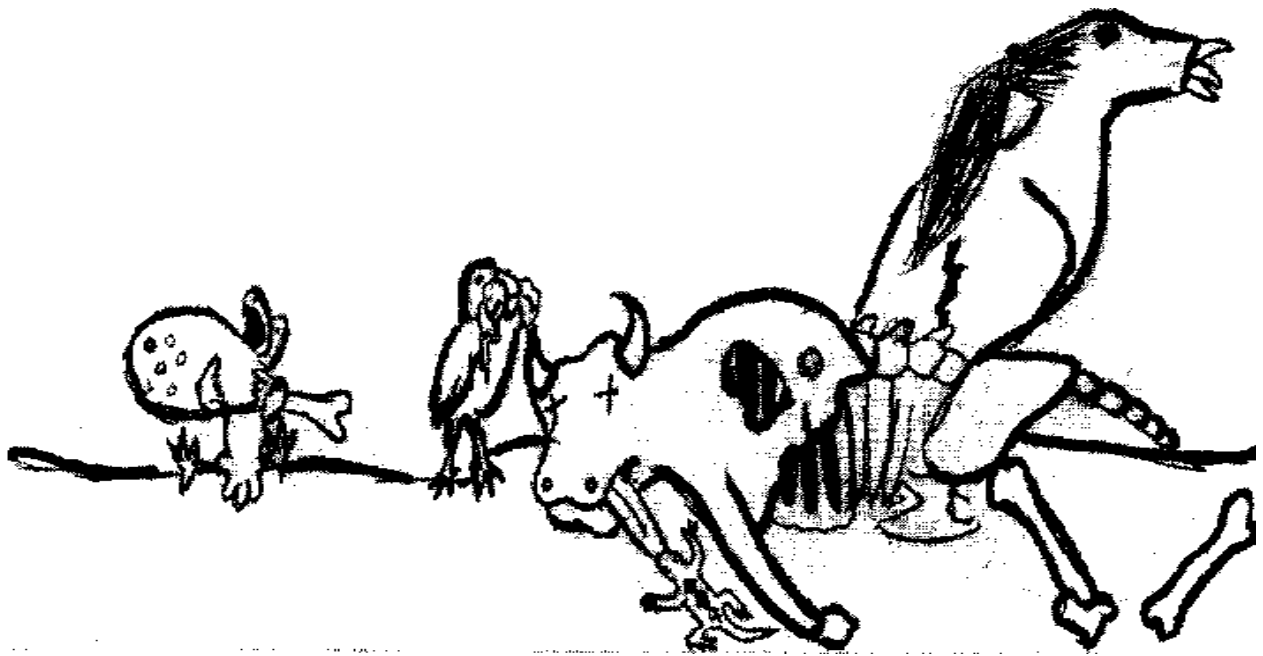
Published by Ho Anumpoli!

Many, many years ago, they say,
Buzzard had a fine topknot.

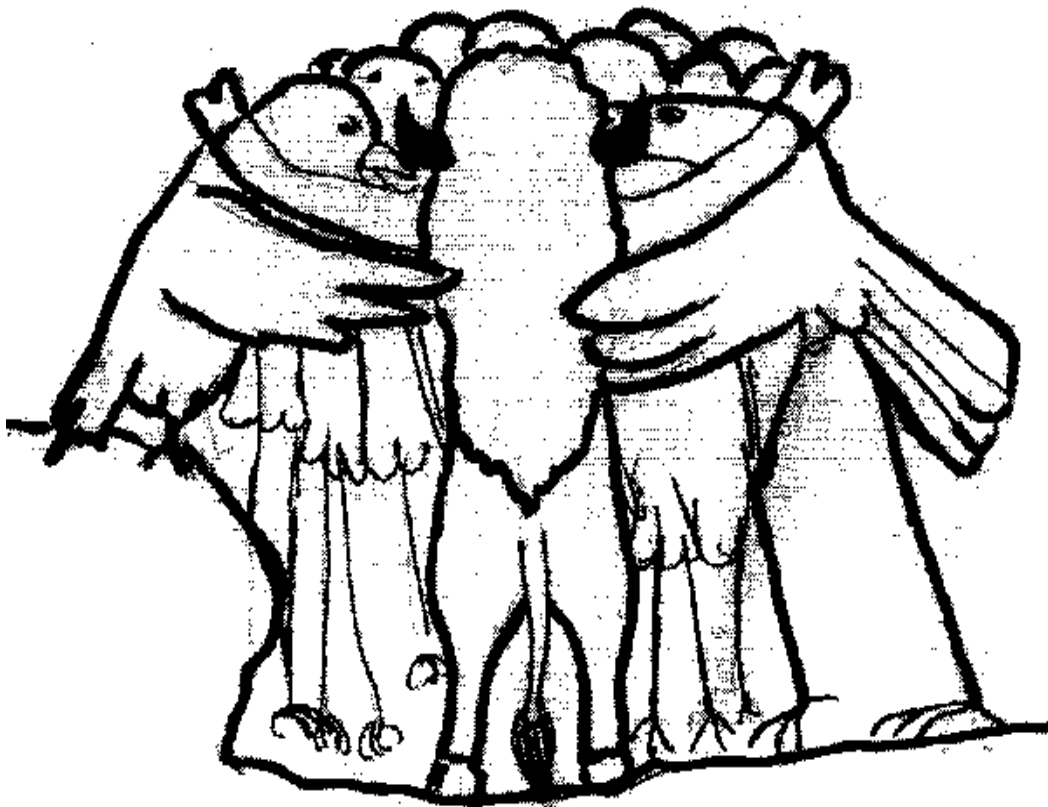


Because he was so proud of it, he refused to eat anything that was already dead. The other birds were happy to peck away at the body of Deer or other animals that they had found. But Buzzard just walked about proudly, too proud to eat with them.

He said, “You can have it all. It is not good enough for me!”



Finally, the other birds just decided to teach him a lesson. They asked Buffalo for his help. Then, the other birds and Buffalo made a plan.



One day, Buffalo went to Buzzard's house to give him a present. It was shampoo.

Buffalo said, "Buzzard, this will make your topknot very shiny."



But, in fact, it was really feather remover. So Buzzard lost his topknot along with nearly all the feathers on his head.



And he also lost his pride at the same time. Now, they say, he is willing enough to eat carrion with the other birds.



The End