

Ole Ireland

By

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“I’ll bet ya a Ben Franklin you can’t catch that chicken.” George points at the crowned bird strutting among the hens in the barnyard.

“That’s a rooster, you fool, and I’ll take that bet. I’ll ring his neck too after I catch him.” Leroy saunters to the edge of the porch, taking the toothpick from his mouth and flicking to the ground.

George said, “You’re on. My money’s on Ole Ireland.”

At the mention of his name, the old rooster crowed and scratched at the dirt as if defiantly challenging Leroy.

“That’ll be the last squawk out of your beak you bandy legged devil.” Leroy shouted as he raced off the porch toward Ole Ireland.

The bird did not initially move and stared sideways as the human form barreled with wild abandon straight toward it. And, as the form dove at him, Ole Ireland leaped five feet straight up in the air, allowing Leroy to skid face first into the dusty barn yard. With a few flaps, Ole Ireland soared a few yards away, landing regally, staring back at the form sitting upright, wiping the dirt from his eyes and spitting mud balls into the dirt between his wide-spread legs. Ole Ireland stood tall, flapped his wings and crowed as if laughing at Leroy.

Leroy jumped up muttering something unintelligible about the bird and the chase was on. Ole Ireland, zigged and zagged, sped up and slowed, always keeping just out of Leroy’s outstretched hands, further enraging Leroy.

Then, in what might be construed as crafty, if a rooster can be said to be so, Ole Ireland sprinted ahead fifteen to twenty yards stopping dead in his tracks in front of the inside corner of a fence, in front of a large fence post.

Seeing that this not so crafty bird had placed itself in a corner, Leroy smiled and dove for the bird. Again, Ole Ireland leaped high as Leroy flew head first into the post, knocking him silly. Ole Ireland landed on Leroy’s humped up behind, stood tall, flapped his wing and crowed victoriously.

George smiled and dug a special treat out of his bib overalls for Ole Ireland.