Thanksgiving at the Tappletons’
by Eileen Spinelli

Characters:

Narrator 1  Narrator 2  Narrator 3  Narrator 4  Narrator 5
Narrator 6  Mrs. Tappleton  Mr. Tappleton  Mike the milkman  Mrs. Simms
Jenny  Kenny  Uncle Fritz  Grandfather  Grandmother

Aunt Hetta

Narrator 6: Thanksgiving at the Tappletons’ by Eileen Spinelli.

Narrator 1: Thanksgiving at the Tappletons was always a big day.

Narrator 2: Thanksgiving at the Tappletons meant, of course the Tappleton family:

Narrator 3: Mr. Tappleton, Mrs. Tappleton, Jenny Tappleton, Kenny Tappleton, and Grandmother Tappleton and Grandfather Tappleton and Aunt Hetta and uncle Fritz...

Narrator 4: And most certainly...

Narrator 5: the turkey and the trimmings.

Narrator 6: It was still dark when Mrs. Tappleton lit the oven and took the big turkey out of the refrigerator. Just then someone knocked at the kitchen door.

Narrator 1: It was Mike the milkman.

Mike the milkman: Good morning, Mrs. Tappleton. I thought you might like some eggnog for the holiday.

Narrator 2: said Mike the milkman.

Narrator 3: As Mrs. Tappleton reached for the eggnog, the turkey slipped from under her arm. Now, on a warmer day this might not have been a problem. But this Thanksgiving Day was quite cold and the steps were covered with ice.

Narrator 4: Before she or Mike could even think, the turkey had slithered into the yard.

Mrs. Tappleton: “Get it!”
Narrator 5: shouted Mrs. Tappleton.

Narrator 6: Mike reached out but the turkey skidded past him, through the gate and into the street.

Mrs. Tappleton: “Hurry!” STOP THAT TURKEY!

Narrator 1: screamed Mrs. Tappleton.

Narrator 2: The milkman chased the turkey...

Narrator 3: Mrs. Tappleton chased the milkman...

Narrator 4: And the turkey slid down the hill into the pond.

Narrator 5: Plop! Splash! It bubbled out of sight.

Narrator 6: When Mr. Tappleton came down to breakfast, he took a long sniff.

Father: “I don’t smell turkey,”

Narrator 1: he said to his wife.

Mrs. Tappleton: “Of course you don’t smell turkey, you have a cold,”

Narrator 2: she replied.

Mr. Tappleton: “I don’t have a cold,”

Narrator 3: Mr. Tappleton insisted.

Narrator 4: Mrs. Tappleton shook some pepper in the air. Her husband sneezed.

Mr. Tappleton: ACH-OOO

Mrs. Tappleton: “See, you do have a cold.”

Narrator 5: After breakfast Mr. Tappleton put on his coat and scarf and hat and gloves.

Mr. Tappleton: “I’m going to the bakery to buy our pies,”

Narrator 6: said Mr. Tappleton.

Mrs. Tappleton: “Wear these. I know for a fact that it is quite slippery out today,”

Narrator 1: said Mrs. Tappleton.

Narrator 2: Simms’ bakery was so crowded the line reached out into the sidewalk.
Narrator 3: Mr. Tappleton hated to wait in long lines, so he went to the diner for a cup of coffee.

Narrator 4: By the time he got back, the long lines were gone...

Narrator 5: and so were the pies.

Narrator 6: No pumpkin...no mince...no rhubarb...nothing.

Narrator 1: Mr. Tappleton was afraid to go home with nothing.

Mr. Tappleton: “Two boxes tied up with string, please,”

Narrator 2: he said.

Narrator 3: Mrs. Simms the baker stared at him. She asked,

Mrs. Simms: “You mean two empty boxes?”

Mr. Tappleton: “That’s right.”

Narrator 6: Mr. Tappleton replied.

Mrs. Tappleton: “My, these feel light,”

Narrator 2: remarked Mrs. Tappleton.

Mr. Tappleton: “Certainly they are light. Mrs. Simms prides herself on how light her pies are,”

Narrator 3: Mrs. Tappleton set the table. She called her son,

Mrs. Tappleton: “Kenny, you may make the salad. There are lettuce, carrots and radishes in the refrigerator,”

Narrator 4: Kenny’s face grew pale. Just yesterday he had emptied the refrigerator and fed all the vegetables to the rabbits in Mrs. Butterworth’s class.

Narrator 5: How could he tell his mother? He couldn’t.

Narrator 6: So he covered the empty salad bowl with aluminum foil and stuck it in the back of the refrigerator.

Narrator 1: When the others went to pick up the relatives at the train station, Jenny stayed behind to mash the potatoes. Every year this was her job. She loved it.

Jenny: This year, I’ll make them even better. I’ll use the electric mixer.
Narrator 2: she thought.

Narrator 3: Just as Jenny flicked the switch on, the phone rang. It was her best friend, Nora. If there was one thing Jenny loved to do better than mash potatoes, it was to talk.

Narrator 4: Jenny talked and talked and talked to Nora, and she still might be talking today had not a wet *glump* of something hit her on the back of the head.

Narrator 5: She turned to see what it was. Splat! Another *glump* hit her in the face!

Narrator 6: The mixer was going wild and mashed potatoes were flying everywhere.

Narrator 1: Without even saying good bye to Nora, Jenny hung up the phone, scrubbed her face, and wiped mashed potatoes from nearly everything in the kitchen. She finished just as the others came back.

Narrator 2: Uncle Fritz patted his stomach,

Uncle Fritz: “I’m hungry,”

Narrator 3: he said.

Grandfather Tappleton: I’m as hungry as an elephant.”

Narrator 4: said Grandfather Tappleton.

Narrator 5: Everyone sat down at the table.

Narrator 6: Mr. Tappleton went to the oven.

Mr. Tappleton: “I’ll carve the turkey now,”

Narrator 1: Mr. Tappleton said.

Narrator 2: He opened the oven door.

Mr. Tappleton: “THE TURKEY IS GONE!”

Narrator 3: Mr. Tappleton searched on the table and under the table and in every kitchen cabinet. He looked in the sink and in the broom closet.

Mr. Tappleton: “I can’t find the turkey anywhere,”

Narrator 4: cried Mr. Tappleton.
Narrator 5: Mrs. Tappleton took a deep breath. She told them how their fine turkey had slipped out the door and down the steps and across the yard and through the gate and down the street and —plop! splash!—into the pond.

Uncle Fritz: "So much for turkey,"

Narrator 6: said Uncle Fritz, and his stomach rumbled a little louder.

Aunt Hetta: “Never mind, we'll fill up on the trimmings.”

Narrator 1: said Aunt Hetta, good naturedly.

Jenny: “I'll get the salad,”

Narrator 2: Jenny announced. Jenny set the bowl on the table and peeled off the aluminum foil.

Narrator 3: Everyone stared at the salad that was not there.

Kenny: “I fed it to the rabbits at school,”

Narrator 4: Confessed Kenny.

Narrator 5: Uncle Fritz looked downright gloomy.

Uncle Fritz:” So much for salad,”

Narrator 6: said Uncle Fritz, and his stomach rumbled again.

Grandfather Tappleton: I’m as hungry as three elephants.”

Narrator 1: sighed Grandfather.

Narrator 2: Kenny jumped up and said,

Kenny: “We’ll have Jenny’s mashed potatoes.”

Narrator 3: He brought the pot from the kitchen and lifted the lid.

Jenny: “I was on the phone and the mixer went wild.”

Narrator 4: Jenny said meekly.

Uncle Fritz:” So much for the potatoes,”

Narrator 5: said Uncle Fritz, and his stomach rumbled even more.

Grandfather Tappleton: I’m as hungry as four elephants.”

Narrator 6: declared Grandfather.
Mrs. Tappleton: “The pies! I'll get the pies!”

Narrator 1: cried Mrs. Tappleton.

Narrator 2: Mrs. Tappleton brought in the boxes, set them down, and untied the string.

Mrs. Tappleton: “You brought home two empty boxes!”

Narrator 3: Mrs. Tappleton glared at Mr. Tappleton as he covered his ears.

Grandfather: “Five elephants.”

Narrator 4: groaned grandfather.

Narrator 5: The dining room was quiet. Everyone looked down at the empty table. Uncle Fritz muttered something, but it could not be heard above the rumble of his stomach. A tear ran down Jenny’s cheek.

Jenny: “No Thanksgiving dinner,”

Narrator 6: she sniffled.

Kenny: “Nothing to be thankful for,”

Narrator 1: sighed Kenny.

Narrator 2: Grandmother smiled and said,

Grandmother: Of course there is something to be thankful for. There is more to Thanksgiving than a turkey and trimmings. Turkeys come and turkeys go, and trimmings can be lost, we know. But we’re together, that’s what matters- not what’s served upon the platters.

Narrator 3: Mrs. Tappleton jumped up and said,

Mrs. Tappleton: “We have ham and cheese in the refrigerator.”

Mr. Tappleton: “I'll help fix the sandwiches,”

Narrator 4: offered Mr. Tappleton.

Narrator 5: Jenny wiped away a tear and said,

Jenny: “I’ll get the pickles.”

Narrator 6: Kenny laughed and said,
Kenny: “I’ll open a jar of applesauce for desert!”

Narrator 1: And so, the Tappletons had their Thanksgiving dinner after all. Uncle Fritz’s stomach stopped rumbling, and Grandfather Tappleton ate enough ham and cheese sandwiches to feed six elephants.

Narrator 2: In fact, everyone had plenty to eat. But most of all, they had each other.