

Something special

Written by Jacqui Lange | Illustrated by Julie Smith-Belton

“Coo-coo-coo, come in, my beauties!”

Every evening, Jasmien’s grandmother called her chickens in to roost, and closed them inside to keep them safe from hungry animals.

And every morning, Jasmien let the chickens out again and collected the eggs they laid. It was her favourite part of the day.

Grandmother’s chickens came in all shapes and sizes, but Jasmien liked one best of all. Lady was a speckled hen. She had a curly comb and a fanned-out tail. When Jasmien gave scraps to the chickens, she always made sure Lady got first choice.





“Lady, you are my special,” Jasmien crooned.

“You shouldn’t have favourites,” Gran scolded.

“Every chicken is special in its own way.”

But Jasmien couldn’t help it. She loved Lady best.

One day, Lady disappeared.

Jasmien looked everywhere, but Lady was gone.

“Maybe a buzzard ate her,” Eddie said.

“Or a mongoose?”

Jasmien didn’t want to think about that.



Three long weeks passed without Lady. Until the morning Jasmien went to let the chickens out. She heard a cheep-cheep sound.

It was Lady, with six fluffy chicks following her!

“Coo-coo-coo,” Gran said. “Clever Lady, hiding away to hatch your eggs!”

Now Jasmien had even **more** specials.



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Ideas to talk about

Lady was special to Jasmien. What or who is special to you?

How are you special? Do you sometimes feel special and sometimes not? Why?



Visual

Look closely at the picture on the first two pages of the story. How many of the following can you find:

★ chickens

★ baskets

★ doors

★ eggs

★ windows

★ chimneys



Reading

Do a wordsearch! Find each of these words in the story and then find what each of them describes: clever, curly, fluffy, hungry, long, speckled.



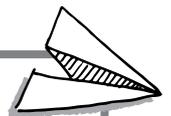
Writing

Draw a picture of Lady and her six chicks. Give each chick a name. Write each name under each chick's picture or ask someone to write it for you.



Craft

Draw an egg shape on some white cardboard or paper, then cut it out. (Ask an adult for help you if necessary.) Decorate your egg by drawing different patterns on it or painting it.



Performance

How many ways can you say the sound words in the story, coo-coo-coo and cheep-cheep? Can you say them like an adult chicken and then like a chick? Read the story aloud saying these words in ways that fit with the events in the story. Or, ask someone to read the story to you, then join in when they say these sound words.

