

# Otto's Tales



*Today is*

**THANKSGIVING**

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# Otto's Tales

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## Ruff Ruff!

I'm Otto. My best friend, Dennis, and I smelled something yummy cooking in the kitchen. Dennis's mom was making a big dinner for the whole family. There was turkey, stuffing, gravy, cranberry sauce, green bean casserole, and pumpkin pie.

"It must be Thanksgiving!" I barked.

We grabbed some spatulas and hopped into the laundry basket.

“This is our canoe,” said Dennis, “and these are our oars.”

“Can this be our time machine?” I asked.

“Sure thing, Otto. We can use it to go back in time and learn about the first Thanksgiving.”

“Row, row, row!” I barked. “We’re going on another big adventure!”







**ZOOM...**off to 1620, we found ourselves at sea.

A ship called the **Mayflower** was on a perilous journey.

From **Holland**, 102 **Pilgrims** set sail on that ship.

The voyage lasted 66 days and was a very dangerous trip.

The Pilgrims gave up comfort and went to sea to roam.

They headed for the **New World** in hopes of finding a new home.

Instead, they landed near a place now called **Plymouth Rock**.

This unplanned destination gave them quite a shock.

They found a deserted village with water and stored food.  
They hoped to trade with the villagers, not wanting to be rude.  
But disease had plagued this village, and all the natives died.  
So, the Pilgrims settled there and cared for the land with pride.



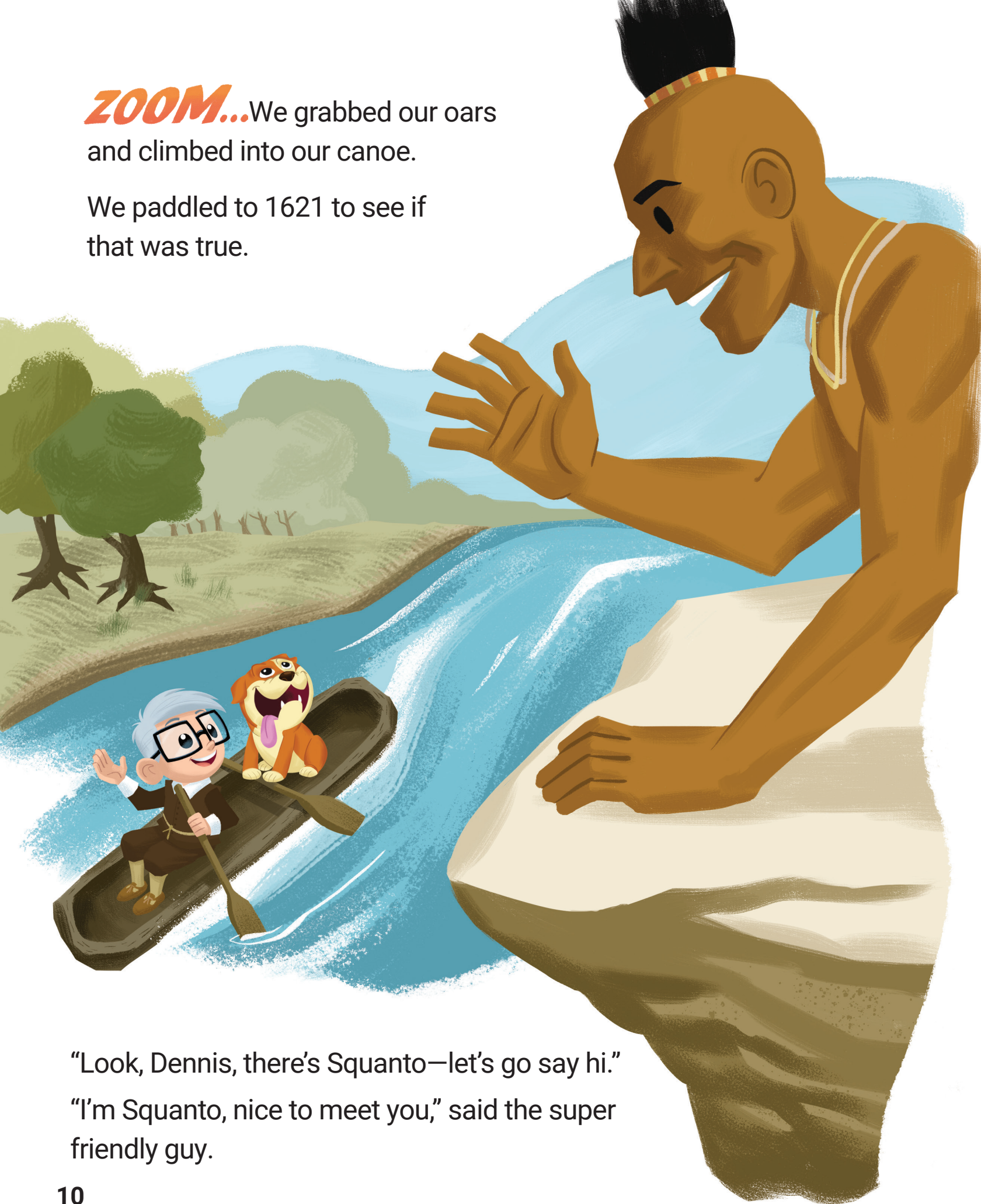


“Dennis, how will the Pilgrims survive the heat and cold?”

“A native named **Squanto** helped them; that’s what I’ve been told.”

**ZOOM...** We grabbed our oars and climbed into our canoe.

We paddled to 1621 to see if that was true.



“Look, Dennis, there’s Squanto—let’s go say hi.”

“I’m Squanto, nice to meet you,” said the super friendly guy.

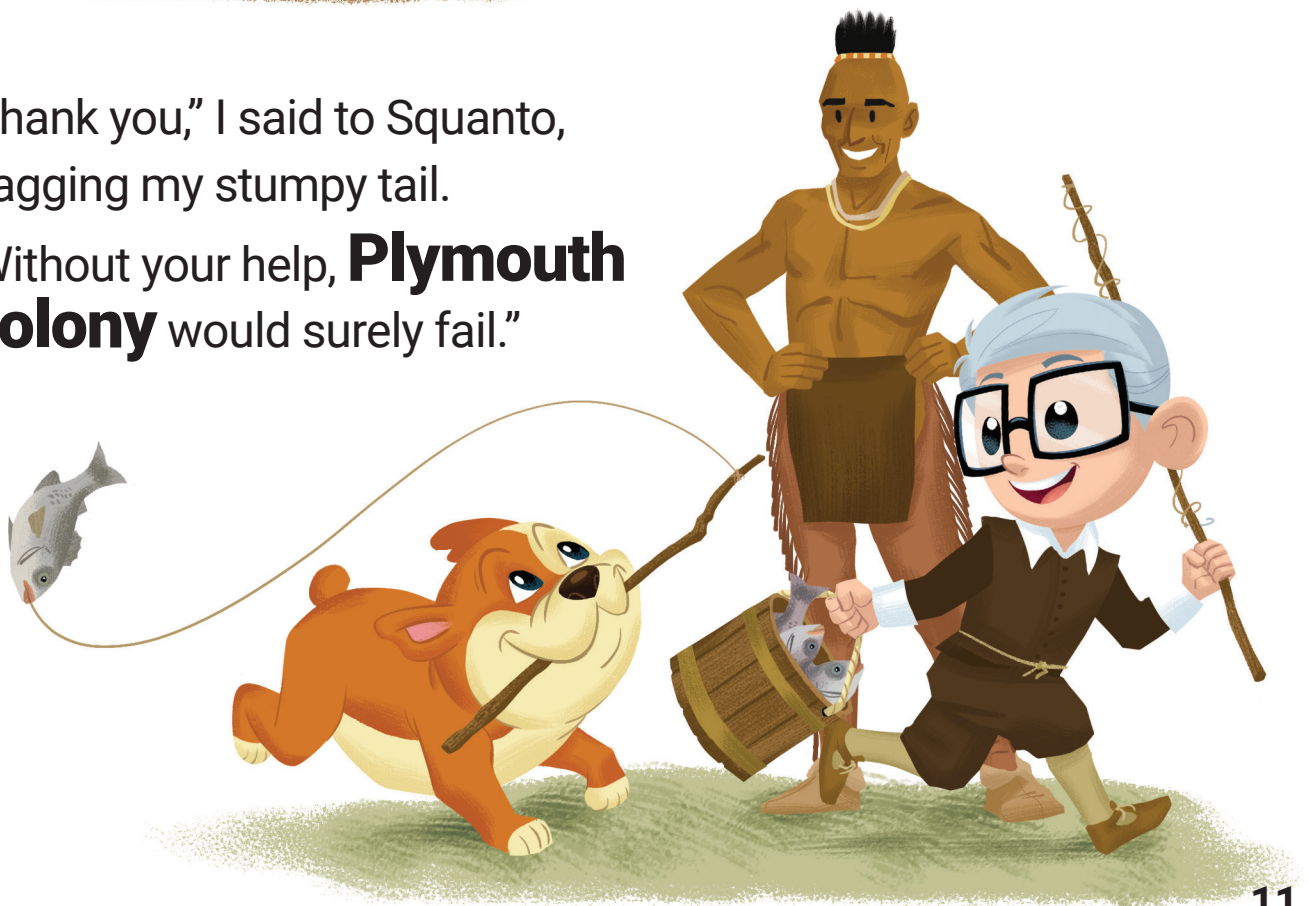
He showed us how to fish and plant a crop called **maize**.

He helped the Pilgrims and taught them many native ways.



“Thank you,” I said to Squanto, wagging my stumpy tail.

“Without your help, **Plymouth Colony** would surely fail.”



“Who’s that?” I asked Dennis, pointing at a man.

“That’s **Massasoit**,” Dennis said, “he’s the chief of the natives’ clan.”

Dennis continued, “The colony is under **William Bradford’s** supervision.

He believed Squanto was heaven-sent and evidence of God’s provision.”





With Squanto, the Pilgrims and natives established good relations. He interpreted for both sides and helped negotiations.

The natives and Pilgrims signed a treaty of peace. Success and happiness for everyone increased.



There was a big harvest  
that year and crops aplenty.  
Everyone had food to eat  
and no bellies were left empty.

The Pilgrims and natives held a big celebration.  
Squanto was there and helped them with translation.

What we call “The First Thanksgiving” took place that year.  
Massasoit and 90 natives brought gifts of hunted deer.

A good time was had by everyone who was there.  
“God provided,” said Bradford. “There is so much  
bounty to share.”

“Dennis,” I said, “I can’t wait to put this food inside my tummy. Meat, turkey, fish, and corn all look so yummy!”

“Thank you,” said Dennis, “for being so kind.”

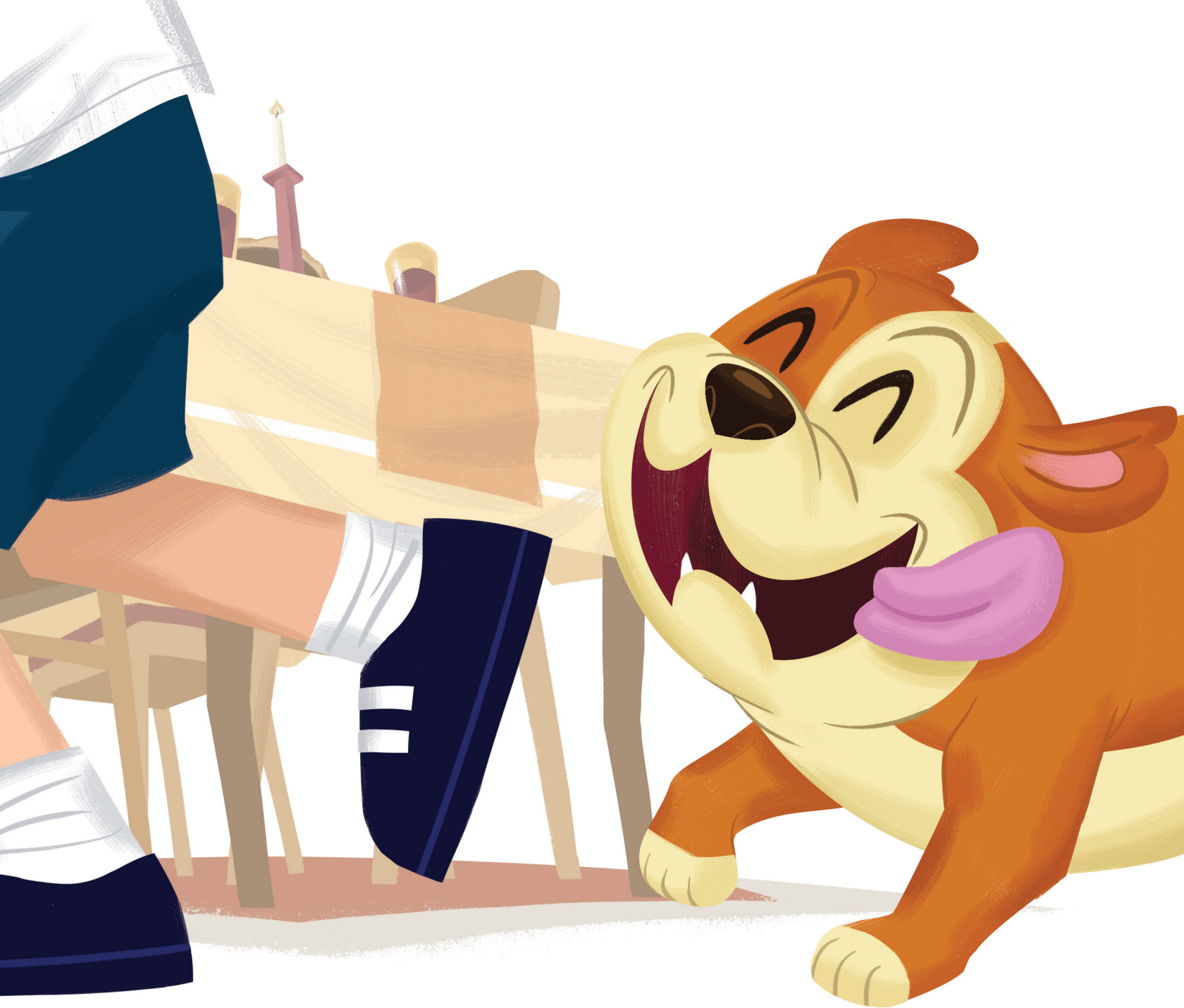
“You’re welcome,” they said, “enjoy your journey through time.”





We waved goodbye, got into our canoe, and ***ZOOM...***  
rowed, rowed, rowed back to Dennis's room.

"Dennis and Otto, it's time for dinner," called Dennis's mother.  
"I'll race you to the table!" shouted Dennis's big brother.



We ran to the room from which their mom was calling,  
and saw a spread on the table that was absolutely sprawling.  
Everyone was dressed up because it was Thanksgiving night.  
The candles and decorations were such a lovely sight.

The table was covered with yummy food—  
I couldn't believe my eyes.

There was turkey and stuffing,  
and pecan and pumpkin pies.



Dennis's dad said to everyone, "Let's all  
take our seats."

"Mom!" gasped Dennis. "Did you make  
all these tasty treats?"



“She did!” said Dennis’s dad. “Your mom really is the best.”

“To be with you on Thanksgiving,” she said, “I truly feel blessed.”



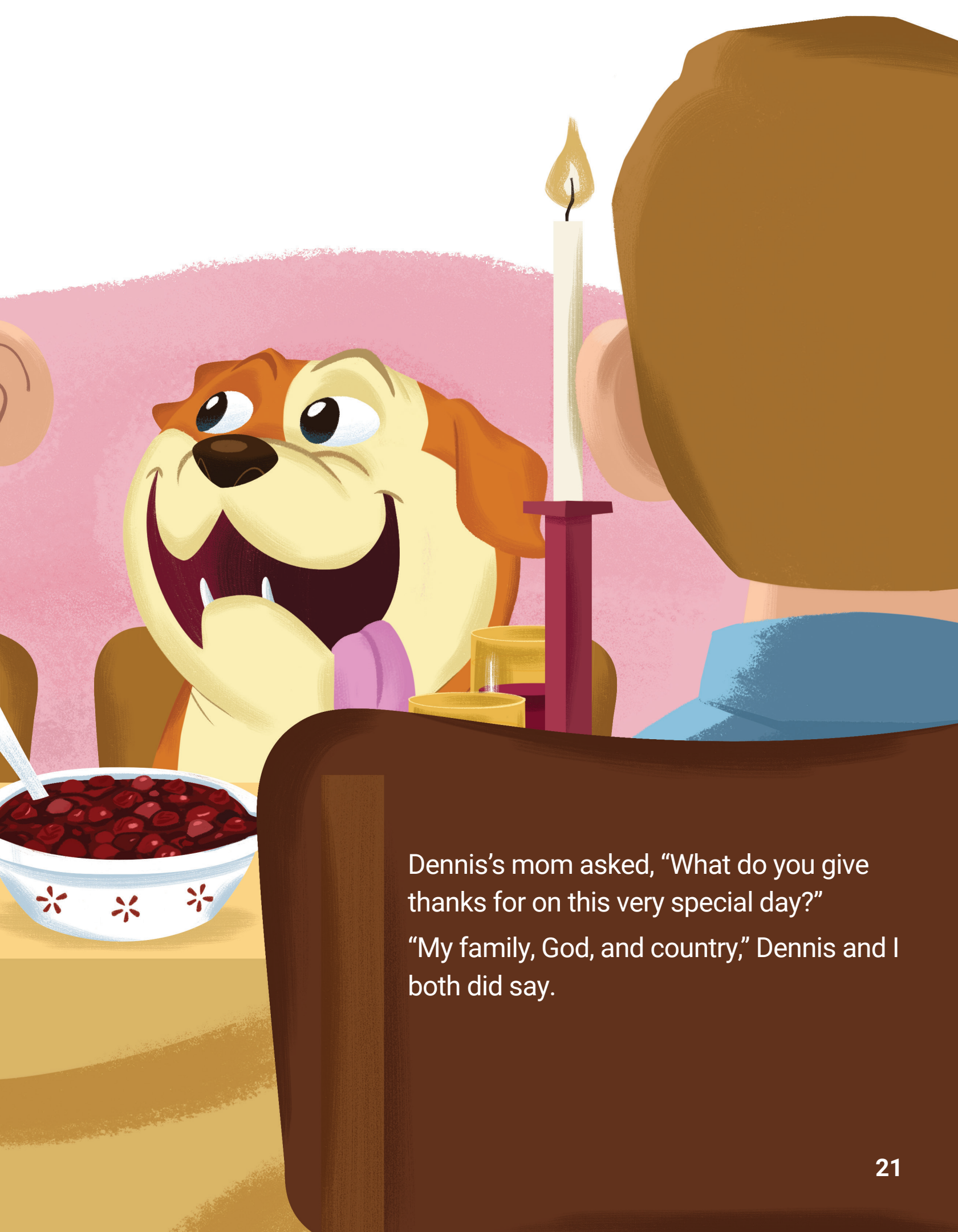
Dennis said, “We just came from ‘The First Thanksgiving’ in 1621.”

Dennis’s dad smiled, “With Pilgrims and natives? Oh, that must have been fun!”



“Each year,” Dennis said, “I love Thanksgiving more and more.

Let’s go around the table and say what we’re grateful for.”



Dennis's mom asked, "What do you give thanks for on this very special day?"

"My family, God, and country," Dennis and I both did say.

After stuffing our faces, Dennis's mom and dad tucked us all in bed. They kissed Dennis on his cheek and patted me on my head.





“Goodnight, boys,” said Mom and Dad  
as they shut the door.

We closed our eyes and smiled, thinking  
of all we’re grateful for.

“That was my favorite adventure yet!” I whispered to Dennis.

“You say that every time, Otto.”

“Well, I never knew about The First Thanksgiving and how special this holiday is.”

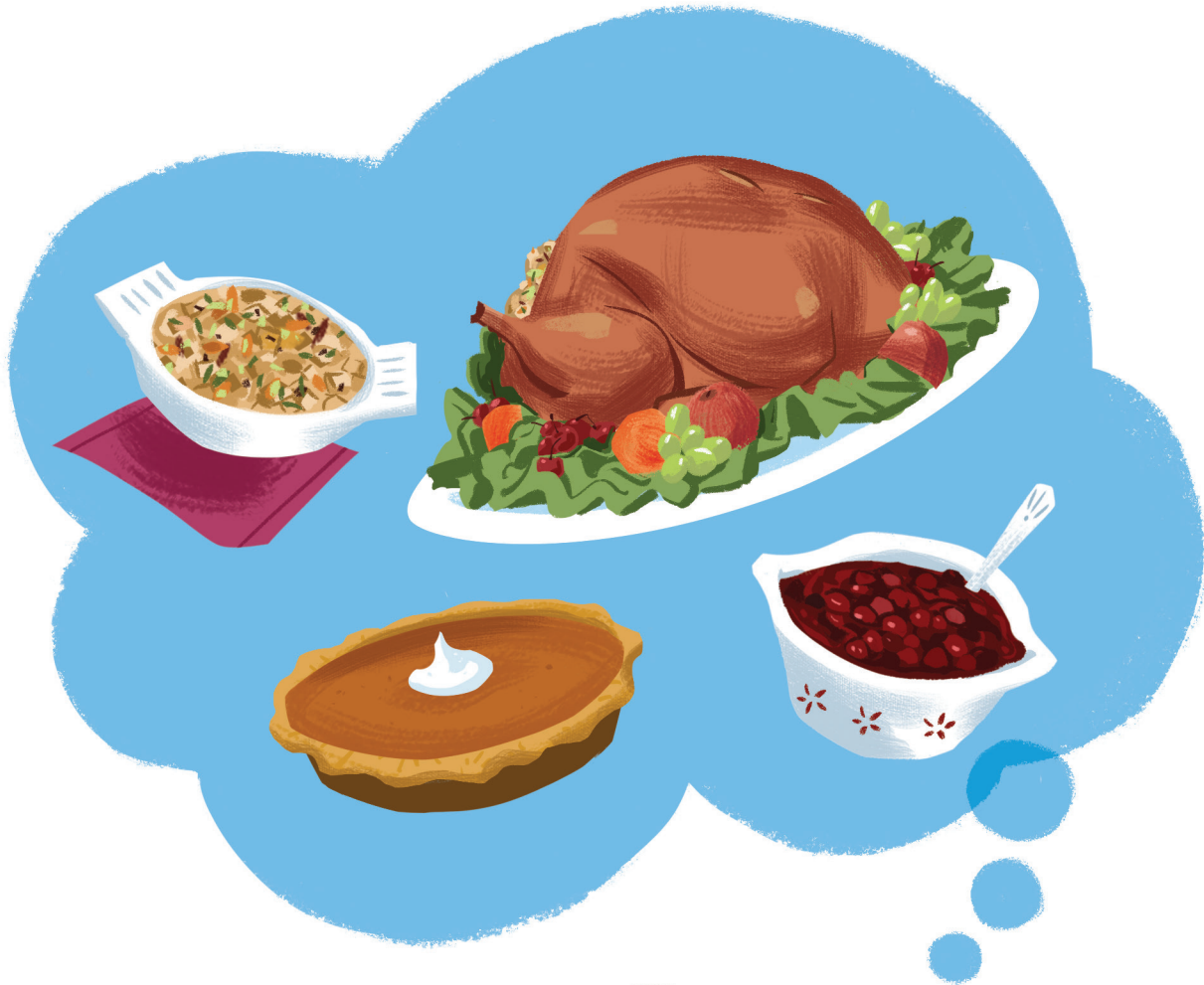
Dennis said, “Giving thanks for all our blessings is an important part of the American tradition.”



“Plus, there’s lots of yummy food to eat.”

“Yes, Otto, the turkey, stuffing, and pumpkin pie really are delicious.”

“Don’t forget the cranberry sauce!”





“But Thanksgiving is about more than tasty food,” said Dennis. “It’s a special day set aside to give thanks and remember everything we’re grateful for—especially for being American.”

“I’m grateful for you, Dennis,” I said, “our family, and America.”

“Me too, Otto. Happy Thanksgiving!”

“Happy Thanksgiving! **Ruff Ruff!**”





# We Love Our History

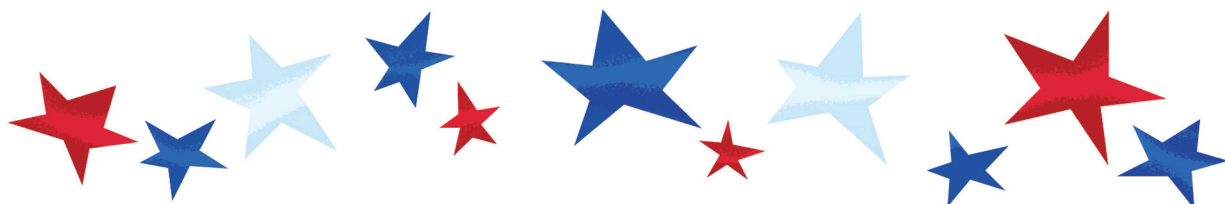
**Mayflower:** The ship that carried the Pilgrims across the Atlantic Ocean from England to Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1620.

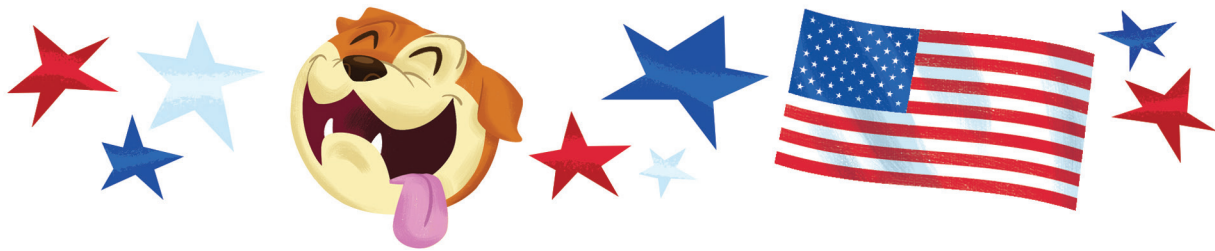
**Holland:** A region of the Netherlands in western Europe. The Pilgrims had been living there for over a decade prior to their journey to America in 1620, as it was Europe's most tolerant nation at the time and a haven for religious dissenters.

**Pilgrims:** The people who settled Plymouth Colony (in modern day Massachusetts) in 1620 as the first permanent colony in New England. Many of them were Puritans (people who thought the Church of England had retained too many Catholic beliefs and practices), and temporarily fled to Holland to escape religious persecution in England.

**New World:** North and South America, which were considered "new" to the Europeans when they arrived in the late 1400s. Christopher Columbus's voyages began a new era of European settlement in the New World. The Pilgrims came to the New World to practice their faith, free from English persecution and the temptation of Holland's materialistic culture.

**Plymouth Rock:** A granite slab upon which some believe the Pilgrims first stepped after disembarking from the Mayflower on December 26, 1620. Although historians believe this is a myth, many Americans consider the rock a symbol of the creation of their country.





**Squanto:** A Native American who befriended the Pilgrims, taught them how to grow crops, and fostered peace between them and other natives.

**Maize:** Corn. Squanto taught the Pilgrims the Native American way of growing maize.

**Plymouth Colony:** The first permanent colony in New England, established at Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1620 by the Pilgrims.

**Massasoit:** The chief of the Wampanoag tribe, which occupied parts of modern-day Massachusetts and Rhode Island. In 1621, he traveled to Plymouth Colony to establish friendly relations with the Pilgrims. Throughout his life, there were peaceful and thriving trade relationships between his tribe and the Pilgrims.

**William Bradford:** The first governor of the Plymouth Colony. He served in that role for 30 years, and helped shape its institutions and laws, which had an enormous influence on the development of democracy in America.



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**See you in  
our *next* adventure!**

- Dennis and Otto

**ABOUT**

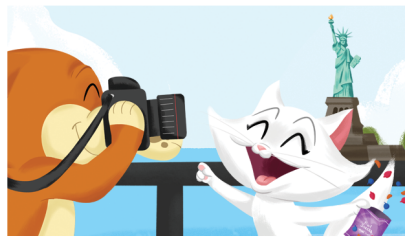
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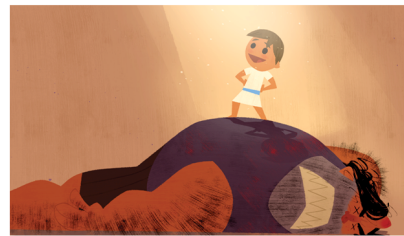
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