

# PARROT

## Fashion

**Einstein  
at the sink**

### Marcia's feathered friend made a big impression...

**T**ucking in to my roast turkey, a screeching sound tore through the air.

'What on earth's that?' I choked, staring at my husband, Jeff, 42.

It sounded like the gobbling noise a turkey would make...

Dropping my knife and fork, I half expected my dinner to leap off the table and run out of the door!

Then my brother, Mark, 46,

started laughing and pointed at my pet parrot, who was sitting on her perch in the kitchen.

'Is Einstein pretending to be a turkey?' I asked.

Doubled over in fits of giggles, the rest of my family nodded.

'Hooray!' I grinned. 'She's finally living up to her name!'

I'd had Einstein, a Congo African grey parrot, for 18 months. A housewife with no kids, I spoiled Einstein with homemade muffins.

Whenever I was in the kitchen whipping up a batch, with Einstein on her perch, I'd try to get her to chat.



'What sound does a turkey make?' I'd ask her.

When she stared at me blankly, I'd say, 'Gobble, gobble,' and feed her some muffin.

I was desperate for her to talk, but I didn't think my one-sided chatter had sunk in.

Now, though, in November 1998, it seemed Einstein had caught on.

'I wonder what other animal impressions I could teach her?' I mused that night.

Reading up on the subject, I discovered that parrots liked to mimic humans. So, I bombarded Jeff with questions about animal noises and, soon, Einstein was mimicking his answers.

Every time she got one right, I'd feed her some muffin as a reward.

After that, Einstein impersonated everything from a chicken to a dog. She also learned everyday phrases – and surprised us by using them...

'Good morning,' she said, when

I woke up. 'Lunch!' she screeched at midday. Putting her in a travel cage, she told me, 'Gonna go outside, gonna go on a car ride.' When I sneezed, she said, 'Bless you!'

Her chatter made me chuckle.

She loved to sing *Who Let The Dogs Out?* by Baha Men, and when she saw a couple kissing on telly, she'd demand, 'Gimme a kiss!'

One time, when Einstein was babbling away, I asked, 'Can you just be quiet for 10 minutes?' But on hearing the word '10', she started counting! It was hard to stay cross with her!

Like any proud parent, I showed off my brainy bird when friends and family visited.

'Bye, bye, sweetie,' she'd squawk when they left.

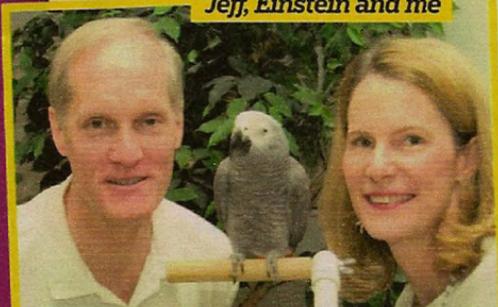
Now 13, Einstein has a huge repertoire of impressions and a 250-word vocabulary – the same as a three-year-old child.

I'm so proud. No one can call my parrot a bird brain. She's a genius by name – and by nature!

**Marcia Kwarsick, 53,  
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● To see Einstein's impressions, visit [www.einsteinparrot.com](http://www.einsteinparrot.com)

**Jeff, Einstein and me**



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for more pet shenanigans!**