

## “Mister Bird’s Story”

Text and illustrations by **Piret Raud**

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*Picturebook, fiction*

Age: 3+

Rights sold: French, German, Lithuanian, Spanish

Mister Bird lives in a big forest along with his hardworking friends, who are all happy and content with building their nests and singing in the choir. However, Mister Bird finds this kind of life too boring and ordinary, so he leaves the forest to experience something different. He tries being a pillow, a hedgehog, a snowman, a carrot, and a fox, but in the end, he finds that a bird’s life isn’t that bad, after all!

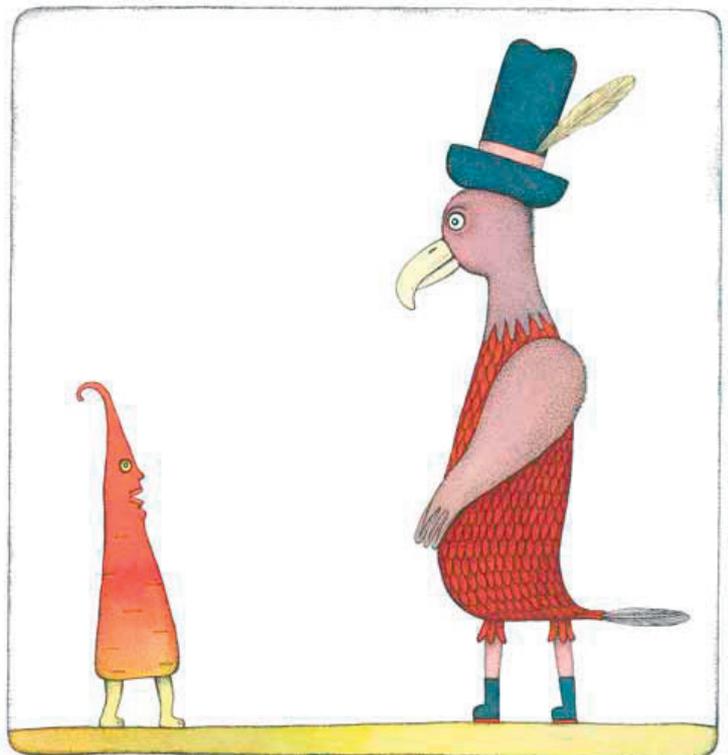
Awards:

2010 The White Ravens

2009 Estonian Children’s Literature Centre Raisin of the Year Award

2009 5 Best-Designed Estonian Children’s Books, special prize ‘Golden Book’ of the National Library of Estonia

2009 25 Best-Designed Estonian Books



## Reading sample

In a large forest there lived Mister Bird along with all the other birds.

His friends were happy with their lives.

They were all extremely hardworking and had fancy nests that they were continually making even fancier.

In their spare time they came together to sing in the choir, and rehearse for the Great Song Festival.

But Mister Bird didn't care about nest building, and he didn't care about singing, and he didn't even like song festivals. It was all so boring and ordinary.

"I wish things were somehow different," he told his friends. "I want to see the world and experience life. If I want to know what it feels like to be something else, such as a tiny pink pillow, I should be able to try it." Mister Bird's friends laughed at his idea, and between themselves, they thought that Mister Bird was a bit crazy.

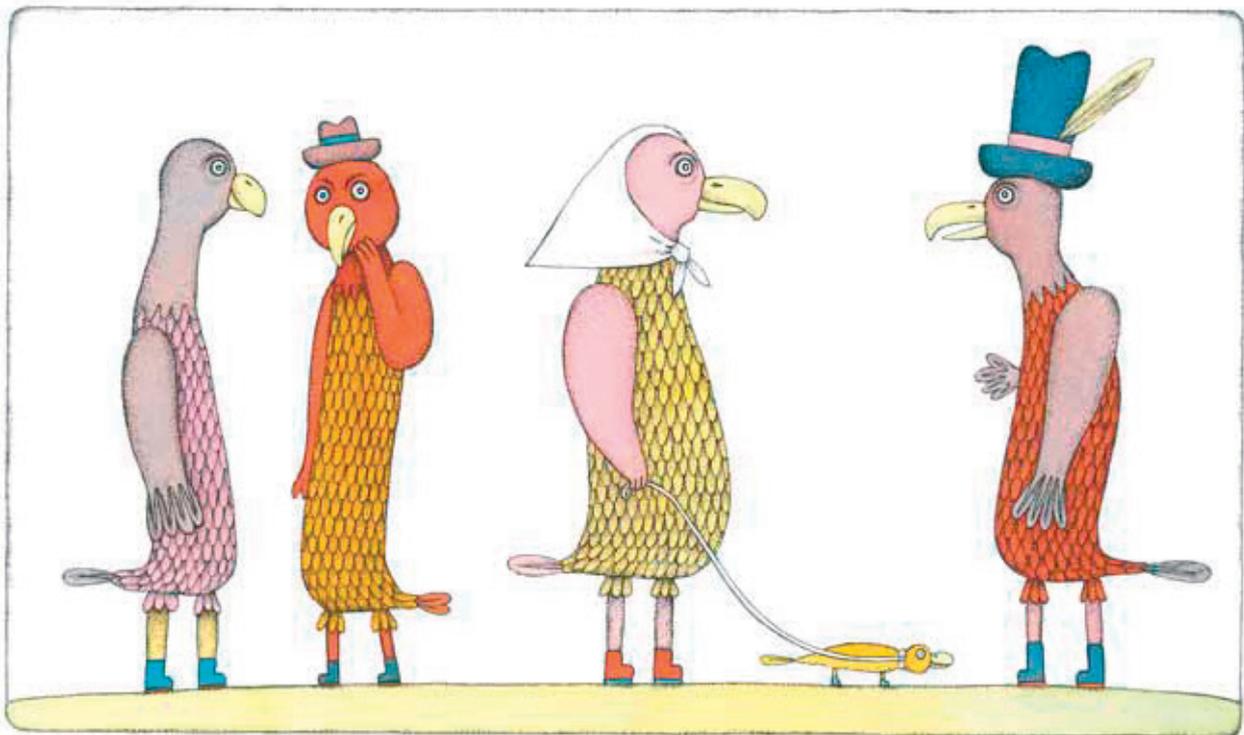
Mister Bird, however, took no heed of his friends' laughter. He walked into the field and lay down just like a pillow. It felt comfortable being a pillow. Pillows don't need to be busy or build nests; they can live a lazy peaceful life.

But then Cow came and sat on him.

"Ouch!" Mister Bird screamed and Cow jumped up. "I'm so sorry," Cow said. "I didn't want to hurt you. Feathery things like you just seem to be made for sitting on."

Mister Bird realized that the life of the soft pillow was not so pleasant after all. He made his feathers sharp and bristled them up and turned into a hedgehog.

It was fun being a hedgehog. Nobody sits on hedgehogs, and they are not expected to attend choir rehearsals. Hedgehogs, you see, don't sing at all, they only snuffle. Mister Bird also snuffled and made some new friends.



All was well until the winter came and Mister Bird's hedgehog friends went to hibernate. Mister Bird was the only one who couldn't fall asleep. "I am too nervous," he said. "Perhaps a walk in the fresh air would help?"

Mister Bird went for a walk on a snowy heath. There he saw a Snowman.

"Snowman's life is cool," he thought and stood next to him. Mister Bird liked being a Snowman. Snowmen are calm and they don't let themselves be disturbed by anything. They don't even snuffle like hedgehogs and they don't sing in choirs. They don't make any sound at all!

But when spring arrived Mister Bird's silent neighbour melted away. Only his nose was left behind, which on closer inspection turned out to be Mister Carrot.

It appeared that Mister Carrot and Mister Bird had much in common. Mister Carrot had also left his home. He wanted to experience something different too. "It wasn't so bad being the Snowman's nose," he told Mister Bird. "But to grow in the soil like an ordinary carrot is still better."

Mister Bird at once became interested in being a carrot, and he followed his new friend to his home in the garden. Mister Carrot's life appealed to Mister Bird. His only concern was to stay in the ground with his head down and be nice and orange.

Until the moment when Hare came along. Then the whole row of carrots went into a panic. The carrots were all terrified that Hare was going to eat them up.

"It's not so great to live in fear of being eaten," Mister Bird thought. "What if I tried being someone that frightens everyone else? Someone like Fox!" He extended his tail and made a Fox's voice and Hare made a hasty escape.

"I feel proud to be a Fox!" Mister Bird thought and decided to live as a Fox henceforth. The other animals feared and honoured him and Mister Bird liked it that way.

He liked it until he met the charming Miss Birdie.

