

Ludwig the Snowman's Lucky Day



By [Leelo Tungal](#)

Illustrated by [Regina Lukk-Toompere](#)

Tammerraamat 2016, 24 pp

ISBN 9789949565467

Age: 6+

Rights sold: German, Latvian

Ludwig the snowman has everything he needs to make him happy: a sparkling head, a sturdy body, and a handsome orange nose that can constantly smell carrot. The snowman has no complaints about where he lives, either: he stands at the edge of a little clump of trees next to a house. There, he can chat with the forest animals and keep an eye on the kids who live in the house. Yet when a few chickadees tell Ludwig about a Christmas tree that the children are staring at in wonder inside, the snowman realizes that he wants to see it for himself. This longing eats away at the snowman more and more every day, and won't let him find peace. Can Ludwig's Christmas wish come true?

Leelo Tungal's simple and heartfelt Christmas story is complemented by Regina Lukk-Toompere's mild and wintry, nuance-filled pictures.

Awards:

2016 5 Best Designed Estonian Children's Books, Certificate of Merit and Special Prize of the Estonian Children's Literature Centre

2016 Good Children's Book

Reading sample

Translated by Adam Cullen

Ludwig the snowman had everything he needed to be happy: a sparkling head, a sturdy body that stood up to the wind and freezing temperatures, and a nice, long nose that always picked up the pleasant smell of carrot. On his head, the snowman wore a stylish bucket-hat, decked out with little holes so his thoughts would have room to breathe.

The snowman's home was also wonderful. Ludwig lived in a little clump of trees next to a nice little house, where he could chat with the birds and deer while he kept an eye on the children, whom he loved dearly.

Ludwig the snowman could have been as happy as a snow-clam with his life, had a secret wish not gnawed away inside of him: one that grew bigger and fierier with every day. Burning desires are certainly fine for human children to have, but snowmen must stay cold-blooded in every situation if they want to get anywhere in life.

Ludwig's secret wish sprouted when the chickadees told him about Christmas.

"Henry and Jake have always been generous kids," Tina the chickadee chirped, "but now, around Christmastime, they pile our feeder so high with sunflower seeds that it makes you want to sing!"

"Look at my little nightingale here!" Tony the chickadee chuckled. "But I must say: it really is a great feeling to stuff your belly with tasty food. It's an absolute joy to peek in through the window and see the kids staring at the Christmas tree in wonder!"

"Huh? *What's* there to stare at?" Ludwig asked. "Does a Christmas tree have more pinecones than regular pine trees do?"

"Oh, you can't imagine how the Christmas tree glistens and glows!" Tina gushed. "It's lit by colorful electric lights and decorated with all kinds of ornaments: glass balls and tinsel, silver nuts and little angels!"

"Yep, and the tree stands proudly in the middle of the room like a Great Wonder of the World!" Tony chirruped along in praise.

"A pine tree—a regular old pine tree—brought inside!" Ludwig marveled.

If pine trees, which are generally quite modest, are allowed to be indoors with the kids, then why can't I go, too? the snowman wondered.

When the children came outside again, Ludwig the snowman strained to communicate his dearest wish to them. He couldn't speak like humans do, so instead, he leaned his body forward to show the children where he wanted to go.

Little Henry was the first to notice, and called out to his brother: "Jake—look what's happened to our snowman!"

"Oh, no: it looks like he's going to fall over soon!" Jake exclaimed. "Come on, let's make Ludwig nice and straight again!"

So, the children pulled and prodded the snowman until it stood up as straight as a rod, just like it had before. Ludwig certainly enjoyed the way the kids patted him, but was saddened by the fact that no one could understand that he wanted to go inside.

That night, he tried to undertake the journey all on his own. After much struggling and straining, the snowman had just reached the front steps, when he heard Henry and Jake's mother scolding them in the foyer:

"Who came inside wearing their snowy boots again? There's melted snow everywhere—just look at this mess! You kids had better make sure it's the last time this happens!"

"What a shame!" Ludwig the snowman thought. "If they get into trouble just for snowy boots, then what'll she say about me, who's made of snow from head to toe?!"

Inch by inch, the snowman shuffled back to his old place, dreaming and feeling sad the whole way there...

One day, Tina the chickadee asked him: "Hey, what's wrong? Tony and I can see you're looking a little strange: you've got a face as long as a deer's leg!"

The snowman shared his troubles with the chickadees, even though he knew there was scarcely a chance the little birds could help him.

But as they say: a worry you share is half a worry less. Ludwig heard in amazement that the chickadees were good friends with the head elf Patrick, who worked magic on top of all his other skills.

Patrick listened as the snowman told him his problem, thought for a few moments, and then asked: "Would you be alright with spending just one evening inside, if you could?"

"Of course I would!" Ludwig blurted out. "I'd be fine with even just half an hour!"

Patrick the head elf produced a magic wand from his pocket, touched the tip to the snowman, and said: "Diddle-riddle-fiddle, make our Ludwig little!"

Ludwig felt a chill shoot through his body, and his bucket-hat clanged loudly. All of a sudden, the snowman had turned into a tiny glittering Christmas ornament with a little ribbon attached to his bucket-hat.

Patrick carried little Ludwig to the steps in front of the house, where Henry and Jake's mother soon found him and brought him inside. The boys were overjoyed: their new Christmas ornament looked just like their good old snowman, Ludwig!

The family hung Ludwig up next to the angel at the top of the tree.

Since it happened to be Christmas Eve, Ludwig got to enjoy the smell of freshly-baked gingerbread and saw the children's excitement over Santa's arrival.

Ludwig was so happy that he beamed even brighter than all the Christmas lights put together!

When Patrick took Ludwig back outside just before dawn, and cast a spell to return him to his former height, the snowman thanked him with a smile that stretched across his whole face.

That smile stayed with Ludwig the whole winter long.