

The birds all gathered together in the forest. "We need a king." Owl Told them. "All the other animals have kings, so, we should have a king, too."



All the birds started tweeting and flapping their wings at once. "But who shall it be?"

Little Brown Wren chirped, and sang a sweet song.



"A wise and clever bird ." Owl said.

"A beautiful bird."

Peacock stretched his feathers.

"A talking bird." Parrot joined in.





"A sweet singing bird."
Nightingale sang as a little song.
"A pecking bird."
Woodpecker pecked.

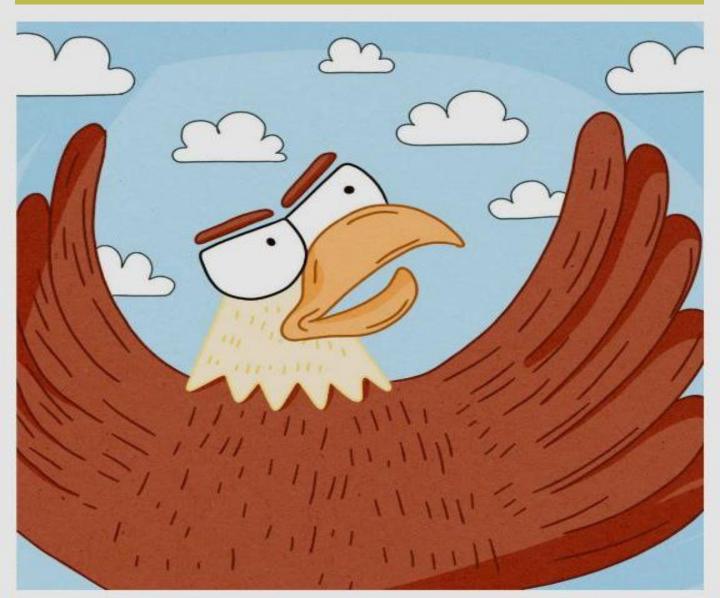
"A bird with black feathers."
Raven ruffled his feathers.
"A bird with white feathers."
Dove ruffled her feathers.



"But the most important thing is flying high..."

Eagle stretched up and looked around

with his bright golden eyes.



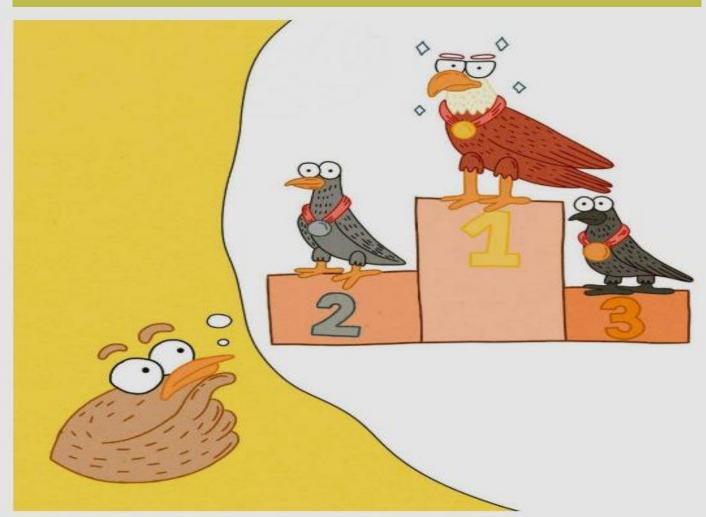
"We shall have a race, and the bird who flies the highest shall be the King of all Birds..." Eagle flapped his wings.

And, after a lot of tweeting, it was agreed that the race would be the very next day.



Little Wren was thinking. "We are all good flyers, we are all good singers, but we all know that eagle is so big and strong that he will win"

But little Wren wasn't quite so sure that biggest is always best.



The next day, all the birds gathered together for the BIG RACE.

There was a lot of tweeting, hooting and crowing.

And Little Wren sang a sad little song Quietly to himself.



All the birds lined up on the branch of the biggest tree in the forest.

Owl got ready to be the starter. "When I say HOOT, you must all fly up as high as you can."



"One, two – HOOT!"
Owl screeched.
And up they all flew!



They all flew up; as high as high as high.

Up past the tallest tree tops.

Up near to the fluffy clouds....

But one by one, they all stopped flying.



"Too high," Dove squawked. "I'm out." Raven crowed.



Then only Eagle was left...still flying high.



But Eagle hadn't noticed his tiny little passenger, hiding tightly in his feathers – Little Wren clung on tight.



When, at last, Eagle was tired and stopped flying higher, he shouted out loud "I am the highest flyer! I am the winner!" Little Wren then flew out from his hiding place and flew up even higher...



Many of the birds called out "Little Wren flew higher!" "Little Wren is the winner!" "Little Wren is the king!"



But Eagle and the bigger birds were very angry and Screeching.

"Eagle is big and strong and flew the highest.

Little Wren tricked him..."

Owl tried to stop the shouting and squawking. "What is better? Winning because you are bigger? Or winning because you are cleverer?

None of the birds knew the answer to that.

