

# Two Turtle Doves

**T**here were once two turtle doves who were brother and sister. They lived together in a pretty little dovecote on a farm.

The brother, who was called Soft Feather, loved nothing more than to cosy up at home, but his sister Fleet Wing was restless and longed to see the world.

One frosty morning, Fleet Wing said to Soft Feather, “This place is cold and miserable. Don’t you long to see faraway places? Don’t you dream of warm, sunny days and new adventures?”

“No, I don’t, sister,” said Soft Feather. “We have a good life here. We have this lovely dovecote to ourselves with all the home comforts we could possibly need. We get fed every day. The countryside is beautiful and we have many good friends. I’m happy right where I am.”



“But we’ve been here all our lives. Is this where you want to stay?” cooed his sister with frustration.

“The world can be a dangerous place for birds like us. There are men with traps, and other bigger birds who prey on us. And winter isn’t a good time to travel. Maybe we could go exploring together in spring?” suggested the brother.

“I can’t wait that long,” said Fleet Wing. “I’ve made up my mind. I’m leaving today!”

A tear rolled down Soft Feather’s velvety cheek. “But I’ll miss you and worry about you so much,” he said. “Maybe we should plan your journey first.”

But Fleet Wing wasn’t interested. “Don’t worry about me, brother,” she said. “I’ll be just fine.” And they hugged each other goodbye and away Fleet Wing flew. Soft Feather watched her disappear across the fields and over the trees.



Fleet Wing hadn’t gone far when there was a thunderous rumble and a bright flash of lightning in the sky. Moments later it began to rain heavily. Fleet Wing was over open fields, so she had to dart to the nearest tree for shelter. ➡



## IMAGINE IT!

Imagine you are going on an adventure to see the world, just like Fleet Wing. What do you need to take with you? Do you have a map? Write a kit list and draw a map for your imaginary journey.



Unfortunately, it was barely more than a sapling, so she was soon soaked.

When the storm cleared, Fleet Wing shook her bedraggled feathers and took flight. As she soared through the sky, she spotted some tasty-looking grain at the edge of a wood.

“That’s just what I need to get my energy back,” thought Fleet Wing, and she swooped down for a feast, but flew straight into a net.

Luckily, there was no farmer around to catch her and, though she was very tangled, she managed to peck

and wriggle her way out of the trap. However, she had hurt her foot. As she limped away feeling quite sorry for herself, Fleet Wing heard threatening squawks in the sky.

She looked up and saw a big hawk circling above her with its talons outstretched. Fleet Wing hobbled over to a bush to hide, but her progress was slow and, when the hawk was in striking distance, Fleet Wing covered beneath her wing, believing her life was over. Suddenly, an eagle dived down and snatched the hawk in its sharp talons. Fleet Wing was saved!

“Phew, that was a narrow escape,” she thought, trembling. She fluttered up to a nearby wall to sit and recover for a while, but a farm worker came by and, seeing a plump turtle dove, pulled out a sling and took aim at her. Fleet Wing dodged the hurtling stone just in time.

“Soft Feather was right. The world can be dangerous,” she thought. “Perhaps I’ll begin my adventure another time...”

So, tired, hungry, cold, injured and scared, Fleet Wing flew home again.

The dovecote looked cosier and more inviting than ever before – and she had only been gone for a few hours.

When Soft Feather saw his sister, he was worried but overjoyed. “Was the world all you imagined?” he asked.

“Not quite,” said Fleet Wing. “But it is what you imagined.” So that’s how Fleet Wing learnt that, sometimes, there’s no place like home. Especially when it’s a cosy one! 🌀

