

# The Gull and the Crow

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*“The cure for boredom is curiosity. There is no cure for curiosity.”*

*Ellen Parr*

# The Gull and the Crow

## The glide



It was a nice sunny day. There were a few white fluffy clouds high in the sky. There were other white things in the sky. Birds, lots of them. These birds are sea gulls. They live by the sea, there are many different kinds of sea gulls. If you look closely you will see how they are different sizes and have different markings. Young birds are often a different colour to their

parents. This changes with age, just like people's hair, birds feathers also change colour.

One gull was watching a very different bird. It was a big black bird, with a black beak. The young gull was loosing his young grey plumage and turning mostly white.



The gull watched the crow trying to glide on the updraughts from the cliff. “You're doing well ,” he said, then he saw the crow

falter, “ Steady!”

As the young crow nearly lost the rising air, he decided to rest so he went and perched on the branch of a tree.

“Come and sit with me and chat,” said the crow.

The gull looked at the branch, “You make it look so easy, but with my web feet.”

“Its safer up here”, said the crow.

“Oh I know, I often land on things that float in the sea, that's safe too. Why not fly to one with me now?”

“What with all that water you must be joking.” The crow thought of his feet slipping on those flat surfaces, which the gull enjoyed so much.

“Shall we sit on the ground near the cliff edge?” Proposed the gull. So with this compromise they sat and talked. The crow had never experienced flying out to sea, so he was very keen to hear all the gulls tales.

“Well,” said the gull, “Let me tell you about my first flight. My parents had selected a very scenic spot near the top of a rock stack. From this pillar of rock we had good

views and being so high up we did not get so much of the garbage from above.”



“Isn't it rather noisy? It seems awfully crowded.”

“Oh you get used to it.” The gull rather enjoyed hearing all the other gulls chattering away, he had learnt a lot by listening.

“So where did your parents bring you up?” The gull was quite curious.

“In a tree.” Replied the crow, remembering how he had jumped around in the branches, playing as he took his first short flights.

“In a tree,” squawked the gull, “But its all spindly didn't you fall out? We have rock under us.” The gull could not imagine why anyone would want to live in a tree.

“My parents built a nest.” The crow remembered how he had snuggled down in the nice warm nest, waiting for his mum and dad to come home. When they did they brought him a nice meal.

“What's a nest?” The gull had never seen a crow's home.

“Its a collection of bits of tree called twigs

and other stuff all woven together.”

“That sounds complicated to make,” said the gull.

“Oh my parents are very clever.” The crow was proud of his mum and dad.

## The colony

Later that day the gull returned to the congregation of gulls. He flew from the cliff where he had talked to the crow. His flight took him out to sea, across some very deep water to some big tall rocks. These rocks stood up like people queuing for a bus, all higgledy piggledy.



Each rock had gulls sitting on it. Some sat on top, some sat on small ledges around the sides. None sat right at the bottom,



here the sea splashed up at the rock.  
Splish splosh the water slapped the big  
rocks.

When he arrived back his mum and dad  
were pleased to see him.

“Where have you been?” His mother was  
always concerned.

“Talking to the young crow over on the  
cliff.” Squawked the young gull. His father  
was pleased that he was making friends.

“Did you learn from the crow?” He asked,  
taking an interest in his son. The young gull  
told his dad all about the crows nest.

Remember the gulls all live together like  
people in a town, and other gulls would  
listen. A rather old gull heard what the  
young gull said. He was very set in his  
ways.

“Foolish youth, going off with that silly  
crow. This will only anger the Great Sky  
Gull. It is why we have so few fish, you  
youngsters have annoyed him.”

The elder gull glared at the young gull,

“You should stay with us and pray he sends fish. You will never find any fish inland and what water there is tastes all funny, no fish could live in it.”

The old gull's feathers were quite ruffled. He had not finished speaking. He was the gull's grandfather, and had lived a long time. When you have lived many years you can learn a lot, and he had his own ideas. “You must stay with your parents and the other gulls you will be safe with us.”

The grandfather was very wise, he was worried about his grandson staying safe. His parents felt awkward, they were sure the crow was a nice bird and glad that their son had a friend from whom he could learn things that the gulls could not teach him. However they also knew that their son was young and had little knowledge of the dangerous world in which he lived.

“I'm going,” the young gull said defiantly. He liked the crow, the crow was different. “Look I'm nearly an adult,” he said, stretching his wings out wide, flapping

them for all to see his adult plumage. His feathers were very handsome.

Grandfather gull grumbled and muttered many things, he was very upset with the gulls parents as he did not think they had done a good job teaching their child. Why else would a gull want to learn from a crow. “What use is a crow's knowledge to us?” He said in a very grumpy tone. The old gull watched as the youth flew off to join his friend the crow.

## The hungry gull

The crow was perched on top of a fence, he looked to the sky and saw a white bird approaching.

“Nice to see you back,” said the crow, as his friend settled down on the top of a fence post. “You look hungry.”



“There aren't so many fish in the sea, we are all hungry.” The gull was feeling rather

glum.

“Fish?” asked the crow, “What are fish?”

“Creatures that live in the water, they are long slippery things.” Explained the gull.

“Oh, like worms,” said the crow, imagining a worm crawling through turned earth.

“What are worms?” asked an equally puzzled gull. It was hard to imagine food you have never eaten.

“They are long thin, round things that crawl under the land, I'll show you.” The crow flew down, after some time pecking around at the ground, he pulled and pulled and up came a long wriggly thing. Keeping a firm hold in his beak, he flew back to sit on the fence beside his friend. “Here, try one,” he mumbled, passing the wriggling worm to the gull.

The gull gently pulled the worm from the crows beak, trying hard to swallow this strange creature. Gulp and he finally got it down.

“Hmm, tasty,” he said, “You make finding them look so easy.”

“It is!” The crow was rather, chuffed with

this compliment, pleased with his abilities. "I could teach you and your friend's to do it."

"Fish you can see, but these worms," the gull sighed, "How can we find what we cannot see? You have a pointy beak, much better for digging down in the ground." The gull's beak was not so pointed, long with a slight hook on the end. He had a lovely red spot on the end of his bill.

"Look my friend, don't be so despondent." The crow thought for a moment, "I know, this ground is hard and covered in grass, but there is somewhere we can see the worms."

"Where?" said the gull. He was eager to try another worm. He could imagine grandfather saying, "You don't want to eat crow's food it will make you ill." He looked at his friend, who tried to describe something he had never seen.



“There are big patches of land, fields. Farmers dig them up and when they do you can see worms in the soil.”

“Farmers?” asked the gull.

“Humans, who put seeds in the ground. Then later dig up plants that have grown from the seeds.”

“Plants?” asked the gull.

“Like those over there he said pointing to some vegetables in a garden.”

“Oh,” said the gull. “Why do they do that?”

“I don't know,” said the crow.

"I'm not sure about going far inland," said the gull. He was worried by what the old gull had said.

"Don't worry," said the crow, "We will be ok." The crow was brave, quite fearless.

The two birds flew from their perches and made good progress.

"Look down there," squawked the crow.

"There are a lot of big black birds on that that wide brown patch." The gull thought it was like a small brown sea, when the sea has been rough and the water gets all merky.

"It's a field and they are rooks." Replied the crow, his mouth watering as he anticipated a nice meal.

"Will they mind?" asked the gull feeling rather afraid because he was so white, and there were so many of the big black rooks. He knew how nasty arguments could get between gulls in his colony.

"No, no, they are my relatives, more like you lot really." Reassured the crow.

"Why do you say that?" The gull was



curious. He could not understand how these black rooks could be like white gulls. “You know how your parents had a home with all the other gulls on that rock,” said the crow.

“Yes,” said the gull.

“Well, they all live together in a rookery,” replied the crow.

“A what?” The gull did not understand all the words used by the crow so being wise he asked when he did not know the meaning.

“It's a big tree where they all nest together.” The crow was a good teacher and the gull understood.

The crow started to fly lower and lower. The gull, now following his friend's descent down to the field. The gull tried to count the rooks, “One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven,” as he counted twelve they were so low over the field he could not see all the rooks. He lost count.

## The rooks



When they landed some of the rooks stopped to watch the white bird.

“Look at those funny feet.” One rook chuckled to another, who replied, “Not a very elegant landing, shall we see who it is?”

“Yes lets.”

It was a big flock of rooks but there were not as many birds as in the gull's colony.

Some of the rooks wandered over to investigate the newcomers to the feast. The field had been freshly ploughed and there were plenty of worms.

“That one is a crow,” said one rook,  
“What's that funny white bird?”

Another rook determined to find out edged closer, “Hello Mr Crow, who's this then?” The rook had a fine grey white beak. His feathers were black like the crow's.

“Hello, this is my friend, he's a sea gull.”

“Herring gull actually,” chipped in the gull.

“Welcome to the party,” said another rook.  
“Party?” asked the gull.

“This field is full of worms, eat my friends, eat,” said a very jovial rook with a full crop. The crow did a splendid job of showing the herring gull how to eat worms, and both of them were very happy.

“Those rooks are a nice lot,” said the happy gull.

“Very sociable, told you not to worry.”

It was getting late in the day, the crow noticed the sun was lower in the sky. He knew they must fly back to the coast, some

birds could fly at night but he thought he and his friend had better get back in daylight. When the gull arrived back home that evening he was very tired but he was not hungry.



## The garden



The following day the two of them again flew off in search of food. They did not go so far inland. Near to the cliff was a small town. In the town were lots of houses. As they flew over a large building, the crow saw some birds feeding on a very big lawn. The grass was short and green. The crow landed on the grass and approached a blackbird. Its bright yellow bill contrasting with its dark plumage.

“Excuse me Mr blackbird I'm trying to help

my friend find food.”

“You could try the ground near the giant beakless birds nests they leave things to eat the like of which you never see growing. Still quite tasty stuff my wife thought it came from inside their nests. I saw one get it from those smaller nests that move over the grey dry rivers.”

“Beakless?” asked the Gull, “Are they tailless with skinny wings and absurdly long tree trunk legs?”

“Yes,” replied the blackbird.

“Ah!, we call them featherless birds, all pink with strange markings.” The gull had seen lots of people on the beach.

“Yes when its sunny we see them like that.” The blackbird remembered a family of humans running around on the green. The three of them chuckled, at the thought of these strange creatures.

The crow and gull thanked the blackbird and flew in search of one of these creatures nests. Sure enough as they had been told, there was lots of food lying on

the ground.

“This looks promising,” said the gull.

All of a sudden they heard a commotion, one of the strange featherless birds came flapping towards them.

“Do you think it is trying to fly?” said the gull.

“You have to be joking replied the crow, no I think it only likes the little birds eating its food we had better go.”

“Maybe it can't see the little birds, else why would it let them eat and not us? That makes no sense,” said the gull.



The two birds flew up high to the top of a chimney. A little Robin flew by, he had been chatting to the blackbird. Settling down on the roof, he asked them, “How do you know they are birds these beakless ones? I've never seen them fly!”

“Ah!” said the Gull, “If you come down by the great water you see them jump off the cliffs with wings attached.”



“I've been meaning to ask you, what is that thing on one of your legs?” said the crow.

“Oh that, I can't get it off, one of those featherless birds caught me and put it on.”

“What for?” The crow was puzzled by the ring on the gulls leg.

“Who knows it seems they are a bit odd,” remarked the gull.

“Strange, perhaps we should call them mad birds! Perhaps they are related to pheasants they always seem scared of flying.”



“Pheasants?” The gull had never seen such a bird.

“Big brown birds that wander around on the

ground where there are many trees.”

Replied the crow.

The gulls lived for many years and some relatives would fly from lands that were too cold in winter. These birds would tell tales and the gull recounted one. “In some lands the featherless birds wear some of our feathers.”

“How do you know they are birds?” Asked the little robin.

“Its obvious they walk on two legs mammals have four. Also we see them put on wings and fly,” said the gull.

“They have nests too,” said the crow, with yet another reason.

They then told the Robin how they were trying to find food. It was very hard for the little bird who lived mostly on his own to understand why so many birds would live together.

“It's no wonder you are hungry, there are too many of you all together, why don't you live like a robin? Then you would have enough food.” He said in his chirpy voice.

The gull tried to explain his society, “The elders tell us that there is a great gull who fills the sea with fish.”

“Ours say when the sky is black it is the mighty crow come to water the earth and make it fruitful.” Remarked the crow.

“No you are both wrong, when the great robin appears in the sky he makes red berries grow on the plants.” The little bird chuckled, “Nice meeting you, I must be off.” With that he flew off and left the two friends to wonder what to do next.

The two birds had not had such a good day, but the crow is a clever bird. When he saw some birds fly overhead, he tried to see who they were.

“Look some rooks, lets ask them,” the crow leaped into the air and his gull friend followed.

“Hello, come to join us?” asked a rook seeing the crow approach.

“No,” said the polite crow, “Sorry to bother you but my friend's family and relatives are short of food, do you have any ideas?”

The rook, gave him a few tips. He also gave a friendly greeting to the gull. Then the two friends thanked the rook, and departed.

“No, bother, good luck my friends,” shouted the rook.

From what the rook had told them it would be a long flight so they set off back for home. They would have a good sleep and fly off early in the morning.

## A long way to go



It was a very sunny start, the sky was blue. The gull and the crow took to the air. A warm updraught from the cliff got them high in the sky. The gull gave his friend some tips, and although the crow knew he would not be as skilled as the gull he tried hard and got the knack of soaring on the winds that blew up from the cliff.

“Very good, if you keep at it and practice

enough you will become very skilled. It will save you a lot of effort in the long run, because you won't have to flap your wings so much," said the gull, encouraging his pal.

The sun was warming the land, the two birds made good progress because they were now able to ride the warm winds that rose up from the ground. The crow watched the sky ahead, with his skills he looked for birds that also road the thermals. Yet he was very wary, some of them could be very dangerous. Those with hooked beaks were hunters, he and the gull were big and strong so he thought they would be ok, but he still felt uneasy.

Ahead two big black birds were mobbing another, it was a hook beak. The buzzard was a master of the air, it ducked and dived as the two big birds came for it. Then the buzzard caught sight of two more birds coming his way and decided to leave. The two crows looked at one another.

“What's he doing with that white bird flying through our territory?” Asked one, rather annoyed bird.

“We'd better ask him,” said his wife, grumpy at the thought of yet more birds disturbing their morning together.

The crows flew up and around them challenging them.

The young crow explained, “I'm taking my friend the gull to the place where humans leave food. There is a shortage of food in the sea.”

The crows scowled. “Sea what is the sea?” said the husband.

“Its a big place full of water,” answered the gull.

“Like a river?” said the crow's wife.

“Yes but much much bigger,” replied the gull.

“So if it's so big why can't he get food?” said the male crow, with a pointed question to the gulls friend.

“Because he is a lazy bird,” said the female crow, sarcastically.



“No we think humans put things in the sea that make the fish go away.” The gull was very upset at being called lazy.

“Likely story!” said the male crow.

“Go on scrounger go back to that sea of yours,” said his wife.

“The gull squawked my gull friends are dying and you have plenty don't be selfish. I don't like the land and will go back to the sea when the fish come back but for now all I ask is to share a bit of your food this winter.”

The crows were having none of this but the



gull and his friend the crow kept their nerve. Undeterred by the intimidation they flew on. Eventually before them was a vast strange smelling place. They flew down and joined many other birds pecking over the rubbish to find suitable morsels.

## **A place to stay**

It had been a long flight for them both. It was late in the afternoon, and the gull was worried. He wondered where they would stay because the sea was so far away.

“It's too far back tonight,” said the gull, “Where shall we stay I can't perch in a tree like you,” he said.

“Could you manage a very big round top?” Asked the crow.

“Yes,” he replied.

The crow lead him over a small town.

Along a street were a line of strange looking trees. Bits of green grew from their sides but the tops were all stumpy. The two of them found a suitable one to sit on for the night. As they sat the gull turned and thanked his friend.

“You know I could not take you to sea if you needed food like you have taken me to the land.”

“I know,” said the crow.

“What is that river below with the white worms?” The gull looked down with some

curiosity.

“It's a human thing it's solid and you can't eat those worms. I think they are dead.”

The crow did not understand that the white worms were just paint on a road. He did not know about cars.

“Why are they all in that line?” The gull had so many questions, there was so much he wanted to know.

“I expect to try and avoid the coloured lumps like that one.” The crow sometimes found it hard to answer all he was asked.

“It's huge,” said the gull, watching the strange box move along the grey dry river.

“Yes they often squash animals who try to cross between the banks. If you are careful sometimes you can get a bite to eat but it's very risky.” The crow yawned.

“Are you tired?” squawked the gull.

“You always want to know so much. You always ask so many questions,” said the crow with another yawn.

“The elders tell us many things, but I don't think they always know the answers, I think sometimes they make up answers. So I

want to know more so I can help the other gulls learn.”

Now the crow was curious. “How will that help?”

“I think gulls are sometimes frightened because they have the wrong information. They are so afraid to come inland because of what the elders say, they would rather starve.” The young gull was very smart, he knew the crow was a very clever bird.

“Sometimes there are good reasons for not doing things,” said the crow.

“Yes,” said the gull, trying to think, “You can not come to the sea with me because you have funny feet.”

“Funny feet!” said the crow with a grin, “Nothing wrong with my feet.”

The gull laughed, as only gulls can. “You don't have skin between your toes.”

The crow shook his head, the gull was right, he did not have webbed feet, and this would make it hard to push off from the water and fly, or to paddle in the water. He closed his eyes and went to sleep.

## The wanderer returns



It took them the whole of the next day to fly back. They flew across many fields, stopping to feed on worms where a field had been ploughed. Then they would take to the air again, travelling over big towns, and little villages. In some fields they could see little white animals. The sheep did often make quite a racket. The noise they make is horrible, thought the gull. He was even more surprised when he heard some big black and white animals. The cows

were mooing very loudly. The farmer was taking them towards a big building. It was a milking shed, they would go inside to be milked.



In another field were lots of little huts, the field was small and muddy. The crow could not see any rooks but he thought they might both find some food.

The two birds settled down on the earth to feed. No sooner had they started pulling up worms, and there was a terrible squeal.

Suddenly four little pink animals came running towards them, it sounded like they were laughing. The birds flew up and sat on the roof of a little hut. Both curious as to what had startled them.

The four little pigs looked up. The piglets chattered to each other, two of them touched their snouts together. Mummy pig came out from the little hut, sniffing she looked up, catching sight of the two birds looking down from the roof of her hut.



The crow was fearless but when he saw

the size of the mummy pig he decided it was time to move on. The gull agreed, up they flew high into the sky. The little piglets looked up, so curious were these animals. They had never seen a white bird before, and asked their mummy to explain why the bird was white. They wanted to know why there was a big black bird with a big white bird. Mummy pig grunted and grumbled, so many questions, "Always you want to know why?" She looked up at the birds, they were very small now as they had flown away quickly. She looked back at her piglets. "Sometimes, mummy and daddy don't know the answer to a piglet's question, sometimes you must think about it and work out the answer for yourselves." "Perhaps the white bird came from far away and was lost and the black bird is helping him home. Like when I got lost and Snuggles came and found me and brought me back through the hole in the fence?" said the piglet who had been touching snouts with his friend.





“Yes,” said the mother pig, “That might be why they stopped.”

“To eat mummy?” asked Snuggles.

“Yes, I expect they were both hungry,” she said with a smile.

The two birds looked back, they saw the family of pigs looking up at them.

“That was a surprise,” said the gull.

“For them or us?” The crow was thinking about what the pigs might have thought of them. “I bet they've never seen a bird like you before.”

The gull laughed. What a laugh. The crow joined in.



## Migration

That evening the gull rejoined his family. He explained where he had been with the crow and how they had eaten very well. Some of the elders were not amused, they did not like the idea of a gull going off with a crow and were even less happy about travelling so far inland. However the hungry gulls overruled them and the following morning asked to meet the crow.

Later there was an amazing sight as all the gulls gathered in the air. The like of which the crow had not seen before. He tried to count them, "One, two, three!" They were all moving, he started again, "One, two, three, four, five!" With so many wings flapping he could not count them all. There were many more in this colony than in the rook's rookery. What a noise he thought, they do chatter so, these gulls. He knew his friend but he thought how the rest all looked so alike.

"How do you know who are your parents?"

asked the crow. As his friend flew alongside.

“Easy,” he said, “Follow me.” The gull thought this a most strange remark, all the gulls look different! Then he realised that crows and rooks all look the same to him. “Meet my mum and dad,” he said introducing them to his friend.

As they flew along towards the rubbish tip, the crow chatted to the gull's parents. They found him hard to understand at first because crows and gulls speak different languages, but with help from their son they began to understand. Even grumpy granddad gull took a shine to the youngster.

“Oh, I can tell you a tale or two,” said granddad gull to the crow. It was a long flight, but he would not be bored, because the crow was interested to learn about the gulls. He wanted to learn about them so he could understand their society. Granddad gull loved to chatter, taking the young crow

under his wing. They flew on and on over fields, hedges, woods, trees, forests, towns and villages until finally ahead they saw the big rubbish tip.

Over one side birds were feeding, on the other a giant monster was rumbling. The gulls were at first frightened.

“What if we get eaten by the monster?” said one.

“Look at the other birds, they are not getting eaten,” said the young gull. He had learnt well from his friend the crow.



The other birds on the rubbish tip looked up as they saw this mass of birds landing. There were some rooks, and they were very nice, helping the gulls to find the food.

It was evening, the gulls had eaten well, it was grandfather gull who being old and wise made an observation.

“Young lad,” he said to the young gull, “Where did you say you and your friend stayed the night?”

“On top of a funny tree, with a knobbly top.” Replied the gull.

“Big enough for all of us?” Grandfather, said in a stern voice.

“Well there are quite a few like it down the same street.” The young gull realised they had not thought ahead. They had only thought about food, they had not planned what to do after eating.

“Enough trees for all of us?” Granddad gull shook his head.

One of the old rooks saw that the poor youngster was in trouble, he had met the

gull and the crow the first time they came. He was pleased to see different birds being sociable.

“If you work together to solve problems it's better than being cross and arguing.”

Chipped in the old rook, “Why not speak to the crow he's very clever.” There was a pause, “For a youngster that is.” This made granddad gull laugh.

“You have webbed feet, noticed the old rook.

“Yes, said granddad gull.

“Like ducks feet. There's a big watery place not far from here, ducks use it so can you,” said the old rook. “I'll tell the crow how to get there, no offence, but your language is harder to understand than his.”

The old rook wandered over to the crow who was trying to pull open a bag that smelt very tasty.

“Excuse me lad,” said the old rook, “Your friend was being told off by his granddad because he did not know where you would

all sleep tonight.”

“Oh,” said the crow. His mind raced, “Ah, well, er, hmm.”

“Don't worry lad, you are a very fine fellow helping those hungry gulls.” The old rook was truly pleased to see such kindness. He told the crow about the nearby reservoir. It had a small island in the middle with a few trees so he could perch there and the gulls could sit in the water with the ducks.

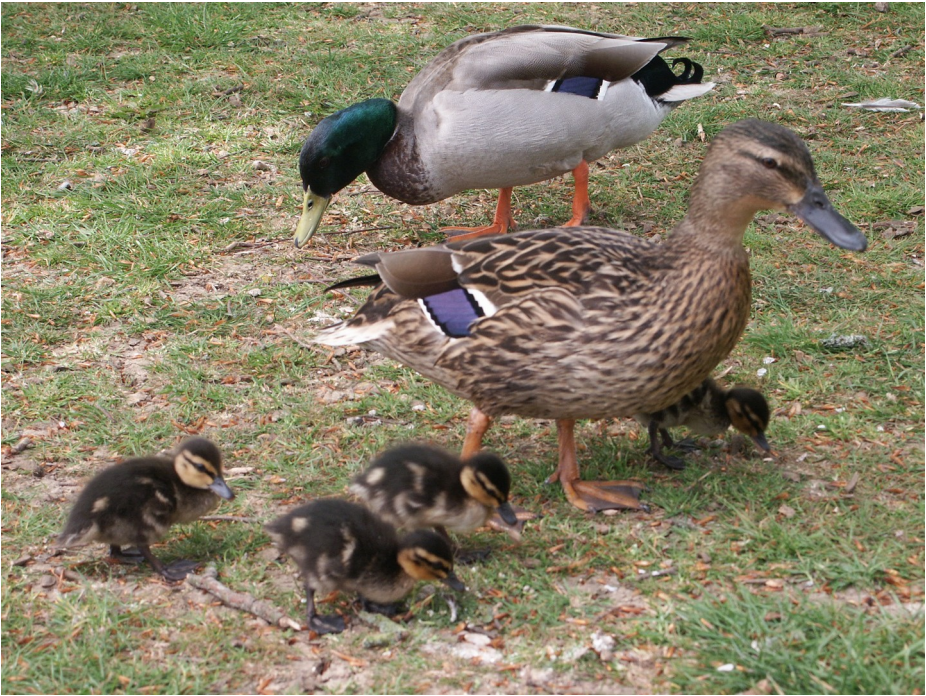
“Will the ducks mind?”

“What do gulls eat?” Asked the old rook.

“Fish,” replied the crow, “Like worms that live in water.”

“Oh, well you should be alright. The only thing I've seen a duck eat is green, same as those funny white animals that live in the green patches.” The old rook had seen sheep eating grass and ducks eating weed from the bottom of the reservoir. The gull wandered over to see his friend and listen to the rook. The crow and the gull were both very grateful to the old rook for his help.





“Thank you very much for your help,” said the crow.

“Yes, thank you,” said the gull.

This pleased the very sociable rook, he always liked polite youngsters. He could see they were working together to help others and that made him very happy. He never liked to see birds squabbling, it achieved nothing, these two young birds had achieved a lot.

That evening the crow set off with all the

gulls flying behind him, he was worried. Can you imagine if you had to take hundreds of people to some place you had never been. He hoped he would find the place. He need not have worried, what he forgot his friend remembered. The gull had also been listening to the rook, he had paid attention to what was being said.



They lead the gulls to the reservoir, where they settled down for the night. The crow found the trees on a small island in the centre of the reservoir just as the old rook

had said. There was a big old tree right in the centre, he snuggled up between some branches and slept very well.

## A home for the winter



The following morning the crow flew down to the edge of the island. He stood on the bank by the water, his friend paddled to the shore to meet him. The young gull stepped up out of the water, walked on the dry ground to sit by his friend.

“You look a bit worried?” said the crow.

“We'll it's the others, they want to stay here for the winter.” The gull was thinking that his friend might want to go back to be with his parents.

The crow thought for a moment, “You will stay with them?”

“Well, I'm not keen on being on my own,” he said.

The crow at first thought, you won't be on your own, you will be with me and my family, and felt hurt.

The gull realised that he had not spoken wisely, “Sorry, I know I would be with you but they want to stay for many sunrises.”

The young gull knew they would stay for many days. To be away from your own kind for a long time can be hard. He was young and close to his parents.

The crow was clever, he realised how the gulls loved to be together in a big group. Just like those humans who love to be in big towns, while some other humans like to live in little villages.

“I would fly and see you,” said the gull, he hesitated, “But over land.”

“I know,” said the crow, “I'll come and visit you, I know the route, I best get back though or my parents will be worried.”

“On your own!” said the gull.

“He won't be on his own son,” said the gull's father, “Your mum and I, along with granddad gull will fly back with him. You can come too, we'll fly back later and join the others.” The young gull's parents were very proud of their son's friend.

“Your friend here has save our colony son,” said the gull's father.

“We would have starved this winter, many gulls would have died,” said mummy gull.

“Mr Crow, I have spoken with the other elders and we would like to honour your help to us.” Granddad gull paused, as all the other gulls swam to be near to the small island. They wanted to listen to what he had to say. News does not take long to spread through a flock of gulls. “You are the wisest, kindest black herring gull we have ever met, we would all like to thank you.” All of the gulls squawked as they laughed at granddad calling the crow a black herring gull. Then they all cheered.

It was a long way back so the four gulls

and the crow set off for the tree near the cliff where the crow's family lived.

## There's no place like a tree



It was a long flight and all were tired when they arrived in the evening. The great robin was filling the sky with his redbreast.

Mother and father crow were glad to see their son home safe. They flew down from the tree near the cliff, and landed by him. “Welcome home said his mother, as only mothers can.

“Where are all the other gulls?” asked his father, thoughtful that he had seen so



many leave the day before.

As the young crow was about to speak, each of the gulls wanted to explain, they were so pleased with the help they had been given.

“They are all safe,” said a tired but cheerful mummy gull.

“He found us a nice place with plenty of food, we won't go hungry this winter,” said granddad gull.

“Father crow, I am very proud of your son, and I think my son is very lucky to have such a good friend.”

Mother and father crow were very happy, they had such a good boy. That night mother and father crow were out late, they gave their son and his friends a real feast of lovely juicy worms. The gulls flew back to the rock stack just as the last of the sun was fading.

The young crow snuggled up with his mum and dad in the tree near the cliff. Everyone

was tired, because they had all been so busy.

So that is why you see gulls in fields and on rubbish dumps. It was a kind crow that helped gulls short of fish, to find food. This would not have happened though if the gull had not been kind to the crow, even though the crow was different.

