

# ROBYN AND THE



# THREE SECRETS

## Chapter 1

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Robyn was out for her daily flight when she flew into a cloud of worry.



"Oh not again," she said to herself, as she tightened her goggles.

Keeping her wingspan straight, she acrobatically stretched her foot upwards, wiped the gunk off the green goggles and looked down to see where it had come from.

He wasn't hard to spot. A little boy no more than eight years was old sitting on the step leaning against a blue front door. She swooped down landing on a fence post and watched him. Sitting there hugging his knees a stream of thought clouds spluttered and fizzed out of his head.

"Ah chick, what's the matter?" she said to the boy.

Dylan looked up, trying to work out where the voice had come from.

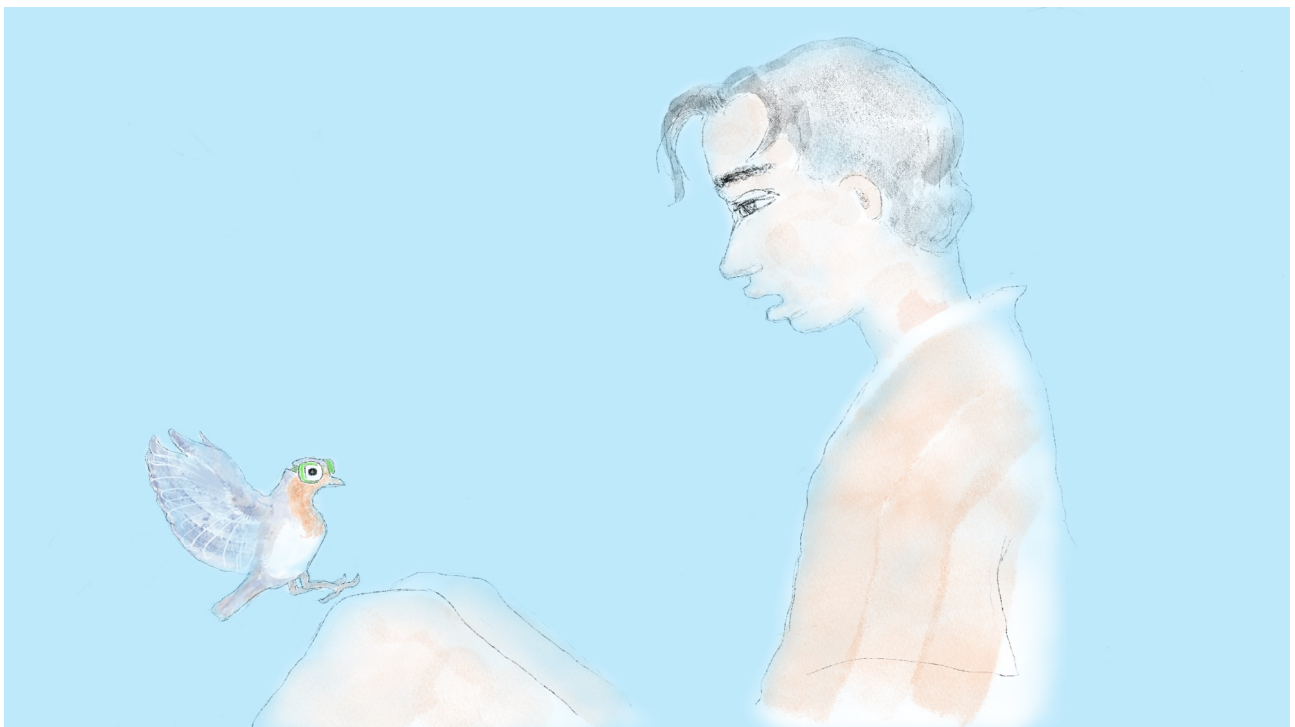
"Over here," said Robyn waving her wing back and forth.

Dylan stared at the bird. His thought clouds stopped fizzing, his mouth opened and closed. But no words came out till he spluttered, "You can speak!"



"Yes, but give me song any day," she said. "Conversations are not all they're cracked up to be." And with that she put her head back, puffed out her red chest and broke into song.

"That's better," she said. Then effortlessly launching herself off the post, she glided down to the boy's knee. Stunned, Dylan looked at Robyn perched in front of him.



Tilting her head to one side she said kindly, "I can tell there's a lot going on in your head."

He nodded silently.

"It's a really strange time for us all, birds and animals too. Have you told anyone how you feel?" she asked.

He shrugged his shoulders. "They're all worried as well. And anyway I can't put it into words."

"It's horrible when you feel like that. A messy head is the worst thing, it makes you feel awful all over," said Robyn.

"Flying really fast helps me," she said. "You humans like running, don't you? I see them doing it all the time."

Dylan pulled a face. He did like running fast, especially playing tag. He just didn't fancy doing it right now.

"I've heard it helps to write down how you feel," she continued.

Dylan's face grew longer.

"How about trying to draw it?"

The boy sighed deeply and looked away.

"Well maybe it's flying after all," she said with a smile.

Dylan's head swung back so fast his dark hair swished across his face blocking Robyn from view. He brushed his hair out of his eyes.

Dylan loved watching birds, especially seeing them fly. He liked imagining soaring over tree tops and gliding on the wind.

"I wish I could teach you to fly," she said "but it's not possible. You have arms, I have wings, you have skin, I have feathers. That's just the way it is".

Seeing a flicker of disappointment she continued, "I can't show you how to fly. But I can do the next best thing. I can take you with me, to see what I see. But to do that you need to know The First Secret."

He leant forward, straining to hear what she said next.

"How do you think it's possible for us birds to fly?" she asked him.

Dylan shrugged, "I thought you just flapped your wings."

Robyn smiled, "That's true but The First Secret for all birds is to stay as light as a feather and that's to do with the thoughts in your head.

So I need to show you how to rise above your thoughts, good, bad, happy, sad so you can have a break from all of them," said Robyn.

"Ready? Okay, I need you to relax."

Dylan immediately stiffened up.

"You're meant to relax, Dylan," said Robyn kindly.

"I don't know how," he said.

"Okay, just sit comfortably and close your eyes," she said.

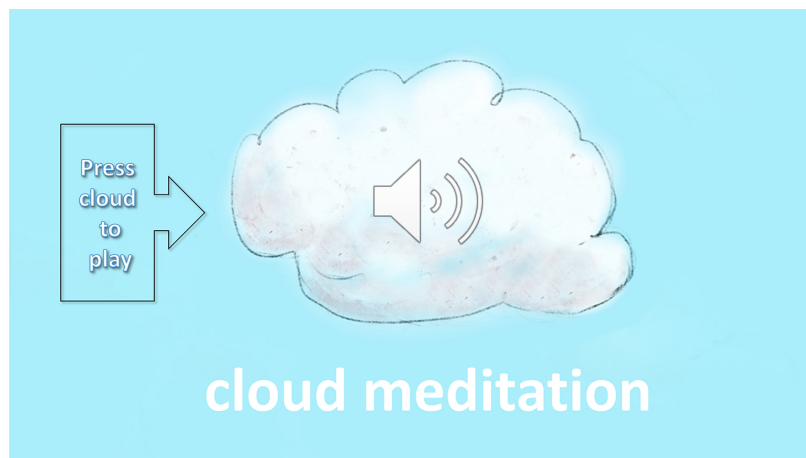
He shifted a little on the step.

"Is that better"? she asked.

"A bit," he replied.

Robyn took a deep breath and stared into the distance. Her voice was quiet and still...

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The bird stopped speaking and gazed at the boy. Dylan opened his eyes and looked at Robyn sitting on his knee. He stared at her. "You look different," he said feeling puzzled "Your red feathers, I can see a pattern that wasn't there before".

"It was there," she said softly. "You just couldn't see it because of all those thoughts in your head." She puffed herself up so he could see it more clearly.

"It's beautiful," he said.

"Thank you," she said proudly, "it's my signature. No two robins have the same pattern."

He continued to stare at her, then realising he was being a bit rude, he started to turn away when he heard something that he'd never heard before.

Spinning round he said, "What's that?"

Robyn looked up, "It's the wind in the oak tree rustling the leaves," she said.

"I haven't heard wind sound like that," said Dylan.

Robyn smiled, "You hear things differently when your mind is quiet."

Pausing for a few moments, she continued, "It probably feels like everything's changed, but it hasn't. All those thoughts were clogging up your head. Stopping you from seeing, hearing and knowing what to do."

"I do feel different," he said. "But won't all those thoughts come back?"

"Well, you have been thinking them and rethinking them a lot. But if you practise rising above those thought clouds, like we've just done, you'll be fine," she said reassuringly. "And there's much more I have to show you."

"More secrets?" said Dylan excitedly.

"Yes, two more," said Robin with a glint in her eye. "But first let me take you up with me, to see what I see from the air..."

Robyn's voice dropped to a whisper, "I'm not just going to take you up, I need to take you back. We need to fly back through time. There are some things you need to see from a few weeks ago. Then you'll understand."

For the second time this morning, Dylan's mouth opened, but no words came out.

"Are you ready for lift off?"

Dylan had a million questions tumbling into his mind, "Can you fly into the future too?" he whispered.

"First thing first," she said. "You have to get that peaceful feeling back. Whatever thought clouds come into your mind, rise above them and go into that sunny feeling. Flying in your mind is something you need to get the hang of. I can only take you with me if you are as light as a feather. Close your eyes and do it now."

Dylan closed his eyes.

Robyn gave him a moment and then said. "Now all you need to do is sit here, keep your eyes closed and I'll do the rest."

"Okay, ready," she said pulling her goggles firmly down. In the blink of an eye, she flew upwards. Higher and higher she rose.

As Dylan sat there, leaning against the blue front door he felt his heart soar, fresh air filling his head and Robyn's voice in his mind, "Are you with me?"

He could see everything Robyn could see.

"Are you with me?" she asked again.

Breathlessly Dylan said, "I'm flying! I can see everything. The treetops, roofs, cars. Everything looks tiny down there."

"Okay, now we're going to fly back a few weeks," she said.

There was a loud whoosh, everything become blurred for a few seconds. He blinked and then a new scene came into focus. The streets below were now empty and quiet.

Robyn flew down and landed on a wall. "There's Hannah, she was so upset when the library closed so she asked everyone for books. See, she's putting them in the old phone box".

"What for?" Dylan asked.

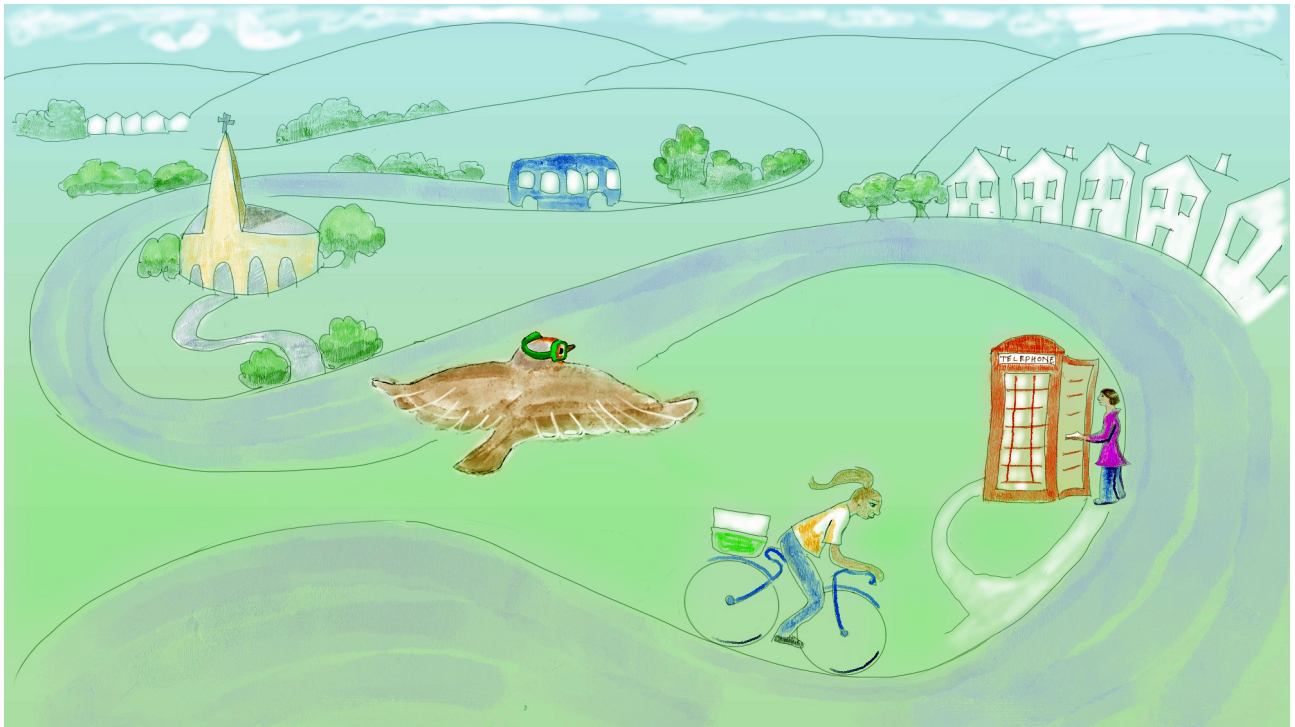


"She thought it would be a good place to use as a book swap."

"It's stuffed with so many books," said Dylan.

"Yes and look how many people are using it," said Robyn.

Taking off from the wall she flew faster till everything became blurred again. Then gliding down she came close to a girl cycling along a narrow lane, carrying a heavy bag of newspapers over her shoulder.



"That's Sophie, on her morning paper round," said Robyn.

Dylan watched as Sophie got off her bike and walked up to a cottage. She pushed a newspaper through the letter box. Then from deep inside her bag she pulled out a chocolate bar wrapped in a hand written note, and posted that too.

"See the sign in the window," said Robyn.

Dylan could see a sign, written on card, 'SORRY I CAN'T ANSWER THE DOOR OR LEAVE THE HOUSE'.

"Sophie wanted the lady to feel that someone cared," said Robyn.

"I'm sure she will," said Dylan. "If someone put a chocolate bar through my door, it would definitely cheer me up!"

The robin smiled, "It's the kindness that really helps."

"Ready to see more"? Robyn took off again.

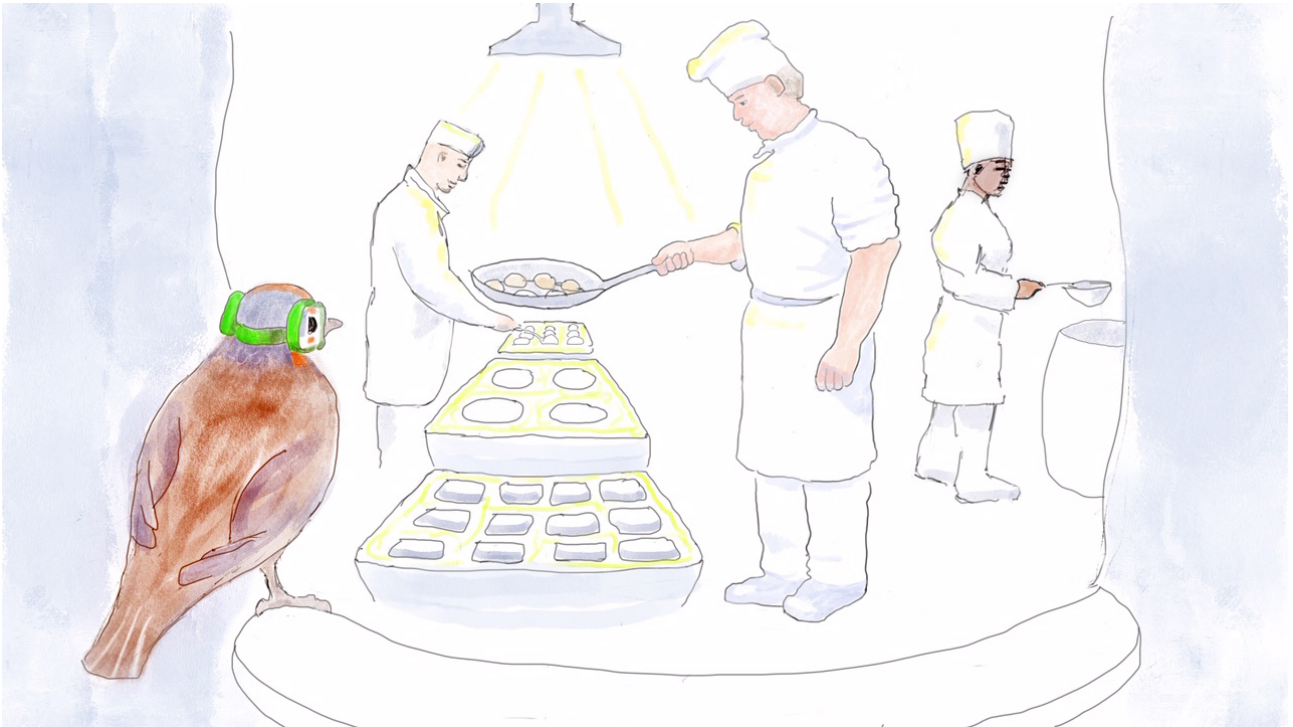
Dylan was stunned by the speed the bird was travelling. "How fast are you flying?" he asked in amazement.

"I've borrowed the speed of the swift, so I can fly up to 100 miles per hour. That's fast enough for me," she answered.

Slowing down a little, she glided towards a large building and cruised past a sign, 'WELCOME TO ALEXANDRA PALACE'.

They swooped round to the back of the building and landed on a window ledge.

Dylan looked down into the biggest kitchen he had ever seen. It was heaving with people in aprons and white caps, chopping vegetables and leaning over huge steaming pans.



Robyn started to explain, "Chefs from far and wide have come to cook thousands of meals for people who need them the most. And they're doing it for free! They can't bear to think of anyone going hungry."

"It smells good," said Dylan, his tummy rumbled.

Leaving the palace, Robyn flew up high again. Within minutes she was over a hospital. Swooping down, she hovered outside one window, then another. Dylan could see the doctors and nurses tenderly caring for people hooked up to blinking, beeping machines.

"The nurses look really tired," said Dylan

"Yes and the doctors are exhausted too," said Robyn. "They care so much about their patients. They work late and are back early the next morning. And even when they go home they can't stop thinking of new ways to help them get better. Every day they pull off miracles."



Robyn flew on. "Look," she said. "See those cars down there." In the distance Dylan could make out a line of red cars, one by one speeding off in different directions. "They're taxi's making free trips taking food and things to people who need help."

"I didn't know all this was happening," he said.

"Oh this is just a tiny amount of good things that are happening," replied Robyn. "In every street, in every village, in every town, people are doing things like this for one another. There are enough stories like this to fill a thousand newspapers. In quiet moments, behind closed doors, the world has been changing. Whenever horrible things happen, more kindness comes into the world. All you need is the eyes to see it."

Like a rocket, Robyn flew back to Dylan's house, gliding down landing gently on his foot. Only Dylan's mind had travelled with her. If anyone had looked over the rickety gate, all they would have seen was Dylan sitting on the step, leaning back gazing at the sky.

Robyn watched as Dylan tuned back into to his surroundings.

"You see, Dylan, despite all that's been happening, heartle has been growing."

"Heartle?" said Dylan. "What's that?"

"It's the Second Secret," she said and was about to continue when they both heard a noise on the other side of the door.

"I'll explain tomorrow," she said as the door opened and she flew from his foot.

Dylan losing his balance fell back slightly.

His mum stood in the door way. "Tea time Dylan," she said.

Standing up, he looked round for Robyn. All he could just see a flash of red in the oak tree.