

The Kite Who Was Afraid To Fly

"Come on, Blue. Let's go!"

"No thanks. You guys go on ahead."

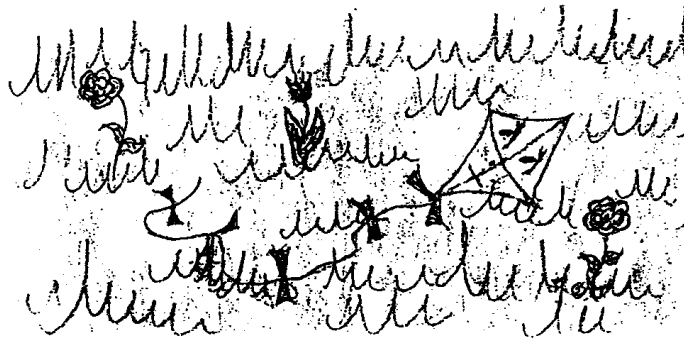
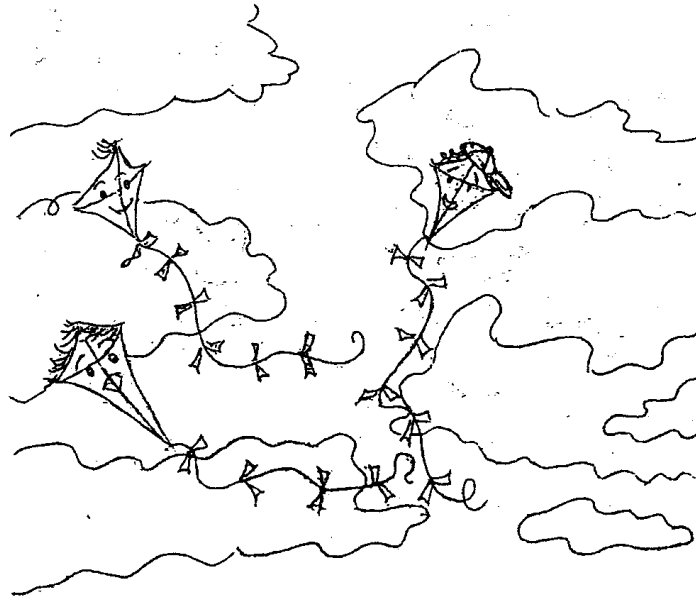
"Aw come on Blue, please try!"

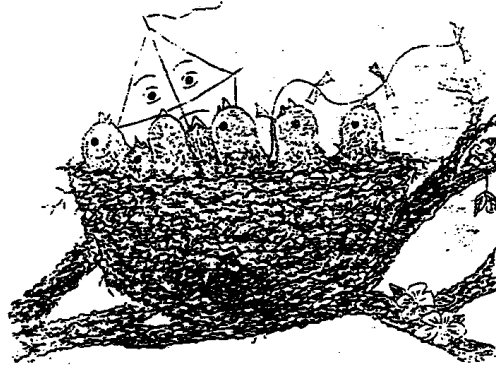
"No," Blue answered, "and that's final!" So the other kites gave up and took off into the Spring-blue sky.

What a relief, Blue sighed to himself. I don't have to try again today.

But all of a sudden a strong wind came along and snatched him off the ground. "No! Let go!" he cried.

However, the wind was so loud it did not hear him. It carried him up higher and higher. He was taken up into a treetop, where the wind suddenly let go, and he fell into a bowl made of twigs. The light was rather dim, because his landing had raised dust, and so he could not see where he was. He heard high, piercing sounds that were so loud, he had to cover his ears.





In a few minutes, the dust settled and he saw little baby birds, their heads raised and beaks open wide, continuing to chirp loudly. After a few more minutes of this bedlam, Mother Bluebird flew to the nest with two big worms in her beak.

She divided the treat among her babies and then came to Blue Kite. She hadn't had her eyes checked for some time and needed glasses desperately.

"Well now, did I miscount you dears? Hmm, well here's a bit left for *you!*"

"No, please, I don't eat worms!" Blue pleaded. She did not understand kite language, and so she pushed it toward him. But he pushed it back to one of the baby bluebirds, who gladly gobbled it up.

Soon it was dark and the mother bird settled in the nest, covering all her babies with her wings, including the family's newest addition. Then she sang a lullaby, and they all fell asleep. The next morning as the sun rose, Mrs. Bluebird woke her family with a cheery song and a cherry and blackberry breakfast, which Blue Kite enjoyed much more than yesterday's supper.

After breakfast, Mother Bluebird announced, "Now children, today is the day I have been telling you about. You will go on your *first* flight this morning! You've practiced flapping your wings for some time, and now you will learn to fly!" One at a time, she coaxed her children up to the edge of the nest and gave them a gentle nudge. Each one soared off into the air, flapping and chirping with glee.

When all the fledglings were in the air, Mrs. Bluebird bumped into Blue Kite. "Oh, my goodness, I forgot about *you* dear! Now get up on the edge of the nest," she instructed.

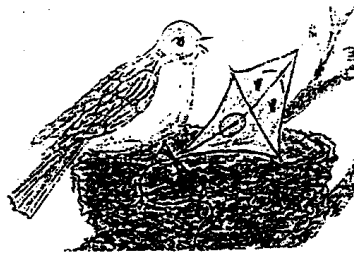
"No! I don't want to fly!" Blue cried. But she still could not understand him. So she nudged him as he yelled,

"HE-

ELP! . . .

OH! -

Oh! - Oh. . .



ohhh ahh . . .

a-a-a-h-h!

aahh . . .

"*Hey!* This is *great!* WOW! I never knew this would be so wonderful!

"I *love* to fly! I LOVE it!"

"LOOK!! There's Blue! - He's *flying!*"

"Come on guys," Blue called. "Let's race!"