



The Raven's Story

Noah and the Flood

Craa. I always have a croaky voice. It's not the best for storytelling, but as you're here, I'll do my best. I always think my story gets overlooked.

It's in the Bible, you know – part of the story of the flood. I saw it all.

I saw just how wicked people had become. They were wicked to me too, you know: throwing stones and hurling insults whenever I came near their fields. I don't do any harm, but I think my looks count against me. And my voice, of course. Craa.

Anyway, God was displeased with every act of wickedness. Washing the whole lot of them away in a great torrent didn't seem a bad idea to me. Drastic, of course, but those crooks would probably have destroyed themselves if God hadn't done something.

In fact, I think God wanted to give goodness a chance. That's why he chose Noah to build a huge ark on which every life form



would survive. It's a miracle to me how Noah and his family ever finished it. But they did. And they welcomed two of every living creature on board.

I was so glad to be one of the pair of ravens. I felt glad to be under a roof as the rain came hissing down. I know what it's like to be out in a downpour, sitting there hunched and bedraggled.

But it wasn't all plain sailing on the ark. It was so crowded. Hot. Smelly. Smellier by the day, and you can guess what it smelled of. Some animals stayed slumped in their pens while others plodded up and down, up and down, up and down.

I can't say that the all the birds were entirely fault free. Many sang their pretty songs but not enough of them knew when to stop. They never know when to stop anyway, but in the great outdoors you can usually escape the racket.



And next door to me were the doves. I know this sounds petty but they are quite annoying neighbours. "Ooh," they kept saying. "Ooh, ooh." They kept it up long after the flood held any surprises. Craa.

Well, when the flood had washed away everything except the ark, we waited. And waited. Then the rain stopped and we waited some more. One day, without warning...

Crunnnch. The ark had hit something. A mountain top, as it turned out. But at the moment of hitting it we were all simply knocked off our perches.

Naturally, there was great excitement. But after we'd all picked ourselves up and dusted ourselves down, there was not much new to talk about. All we could see was water... as before.

Weeks later, a distant speck. A mountain top, Noah thought. Then more of them... like tiny islands, far away.

When Noah opened a window to take a closer look, I was right there.

"Off you go then," he told me. "See what you can find."

So I went. My wings just seemed to want to carry me through the clear air. I didn't have to flap... I was just drifting and feeling the sun on my feathers.

Then I lost sight of the ark. I agree I could have been more careful... but I so wanted to find some piece of good news to take back. I flew for as long as I could, but in the end, I landed on a lonely rock.

I found out later what happened on the ark. The week after I'd

gone, Noah sent one of the doves out. It could hardly wait to be let back in. Seven days after that, Noah let it fly again and it found an olive twig coming into leaf. When the dove brought it back, Noah declared that was the good news they all wanted.

After that, the flood ebbed away and everyone came out of the ark. God put a rainbow in the sky as a sign of his promise never to flood the world again.

All of that was good news for me and I try not to dwell on the fact that it wasn't me who brought the olive twig. My mate came and found me, told me what I'd missed, and said that God wanted everyone to make some babies.

So we did. We're doing what God wants just as much as that dove is, and God makes sure we can always find enough to eat.

The world needs ravens. Craa.



The Whale's Story

Jonah

Are you a land creature? Then it's very likely you can run.

But even if you can run faster than the waves race to shore... you can't always hide.

That's what Jonah found out. He was a prophet. He was meant to be always listening out for messages from God and ready to share that wisdom with others. Indeed, one day he did hear a message from God, and there was no mistaking it.

"Go to Nineveh," God told him. "Warn the people that I have seen their wickedness. Tell them that they will feel my wrath if they do not mend their ways."

Jonah heard... and Jonah ran. He ran down the road as far from Nineveh as he could get. He ran down to a seaport and asked the sailors which boats were going where. He paid to travel on a ship that was bound for Tarshish – as far from Nineveh as a ship could take him.