

1. WHAT THE STORK SAW



In the wide field stood a farmhouse. The people live in the front part. The back part is a very large barn.

A chimney with a large flat cowl was on the roof. On that cowl lay a wagon wheel. Two storks had built a nest with branches and straw on it.

Father and mother stork had three children. Those young storks already had long legs. But their beak was still a lot shorter than those of their parents. And they can't fly either.

Mother stork stood on the edge of the nest. She watched the children. And she looked around.

If you are so high, you can see lots over the green pasture.

In the distance father stork walked through the grass. Close by is a ditch. He looked around to see if he could spot a mouse. Or a frog. Or a few worms. The young storks were always

hungry. Father and mother were busy the whole day to gather food.

Mother stork saw a lot more. On the yard of the farm stood Willem, the hired man of farmer Zonneveld. He harnessed Bles before the wagon.

Bles was the farmer's horse. A large, brown horse with a white spot on the front of his head.

Then the farmer came out of the barn. He carried a few milk cans. He set them on the wagon.

The stork was not afraid of the horse. Neither for the people. He saw them every day. They didn't hurt her nor her children. The farmer himself had put the wagon wheel on the chimney. For the storks. Then they could build their nest on it.

Look, somebody else came outside. That is Aaltje, the maid. She also carried a few milk cans. They went on the wagon as well.

The girl that walked after her is Nina, the farmer's daughter. But there is also a boy. He doesn't belong here. The stork saw him today for the first time. And with that boy is a dog.

A white dog with brown ears and a brown spot of his head.

It is a young animal. It jumped in circles trying to catch his own tail. He failed. But the dog still was jubilant. He barked of pleasure!

That dog was strange also. The large bird thinks: What are you doing here, noisemakers? Do you want to hurt my children? But you can't get on the roof! And if you came, I would peck you with my sharp beak! And I'll hit you with my strong wings. Watch out!

Who were they, that boy and the dog?

The stork didn't know.

Do you?