

## The Tin Forest

There was once a place in the middle of nowhere filled with all the things that no one wanted. Right in the middle was a small house, with small windows, that looked out onto huge piles of other people's rubbish.

In the house lived an old man. Every day he tried to tidy the rubbish and every night the old man dreamed. He dreamed he lived in a jungle full of wild animals. There were colourful birds, tropical trees, exotic flowers, toucans, tree frogs and tigers. But when he awoke, his world outside was still the same.

One day the old man decided to make something of all this rubbish. He started to build a forest out of tin. Feeding on the rubbish, it grew leaves and branches. It grew bigger and bigger. He was making a forest out of rubbish. A forest made of tin. It was not the forest of his dreams, but it was a forest just the same.

Then one day the wind swept in a small bird. The old man spilled crumbs from his sandwiches onto the ground. The bird ate the crumbs and perched to sing in the branches of a tin tree. But the next morning the visitor was gone. All day the old man walked through the silence and thought about a tin forest that was full of life.

That night, by moonlight, he made a wish...

In the morning the old man woke to the sound of birdsong. The visitor has returned and, with him, his mate. The birds dropped seeds from their beaks. Soon, green shoots broke through the earth and plants started to grow! Time passed. The song of birds mingled with the buzzing of insects and the rustle of leaves. Small creatures appeared, creeping amongst the jungle of trees. Wild animals slipped through the green shadows.

There was once a place, near nowhere and close to forgotten, that was filled with all the beautiful things that everyone wanted.

And in the middle was a small house and an old man who had toucans, tree frogs and tigers in his garden.