

# *The Green Bird*

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Once, a small green bird, as green as a leaf, lived in a forest. He had a long tail that bobbed up and down when he sang, a crest on his head that stood up like a fan when he was alarmed, and a short brown beak. He wasn't much bigger than a sparrow, but far more slender and delicate. In the morning when the sun came up, he sang: "Tee-weet-a-bit! Tee-weet-a-bit! Hello! Hello!" And in the evening when the sun went down, he sang: "Tee-weet-a-bit! Tee-weet-a-bit! So-long! So-long!" He sang his songs over and over, and never grew tired of singing the same thing.

In springtime, when the forest trees burst into bloom, the little green bird sang to his loved one: "Tee-weet-a-bit! Tee-weet-a-bit! Come-here! Come here!" And his lady came and they built a nest at the end of the slimmest of branches. She laid two green, speckled eggs, not very big, and sat and sat for days until, tap-tap, tap-tap, the chicks cracked their eggs and popped out. The first thing they said was: "Tee-weet-a-bit! Tee-weet-a-bit! In-here! In here!" and they opened their mouths wide to be fed. The green bird and his lady fed their chicks till they were old enough to fly. Then off into the forest they flew, calling: "Tee-weet-a-bit! Tee-weet-a-bit! So-long! So-long!"

One spring, the little green bird called his lady: "Tee-weet-a-bit! Tee-weet-a-bit! Come-here! Come-here!"

But his lady did not come.

He called again: "Tee-weet-a-bit! Tee-weet-a-bit! Come-here! Come-here!"

And still she did not come.

So he flew to the tallest tree in the forest and sang a third time: "Tee-weet-a-bit! Tee-weet-a-bit! Come-here! Come-here!" ... and still she did not reply.

Then he knew she would never come again. So the little green bird flew into the air—higher and higher he soared into the blue sky, singing and singing to his loved one: "So-long! So-long! So-long!"