

The Little Penguin's Map



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On a windy island far out at sea, the waves splash and the grass bends low. A little penguin lives there with his mother. He is small and round, with a black back, a white belly, and soft grey fluff on his head. His bright eyes miss nothing. Every rock, every path, every cozy corner—he knows them all by heart.



The little penguin wears a red knitted scarf that flaps in the wind. Tucked under one flipper is a rolled paper map he likes to carry. He waddles along the shore, calling out to the waves, "I know this island best!" His mother smiles. "You watch closely," she says, "and that is a fine thing to know."



One morning, the wind brings a new sound: wings whooshing and seabirds calling. A flock of grey-and-white birds lands on the island. Their leader has a yellow beak, a green band on one leg, and sharp amber eyes. Behind her, a fluffy chick with big dark eyes peeps over the crowd. They have flown a long way to find a safe place to nest.



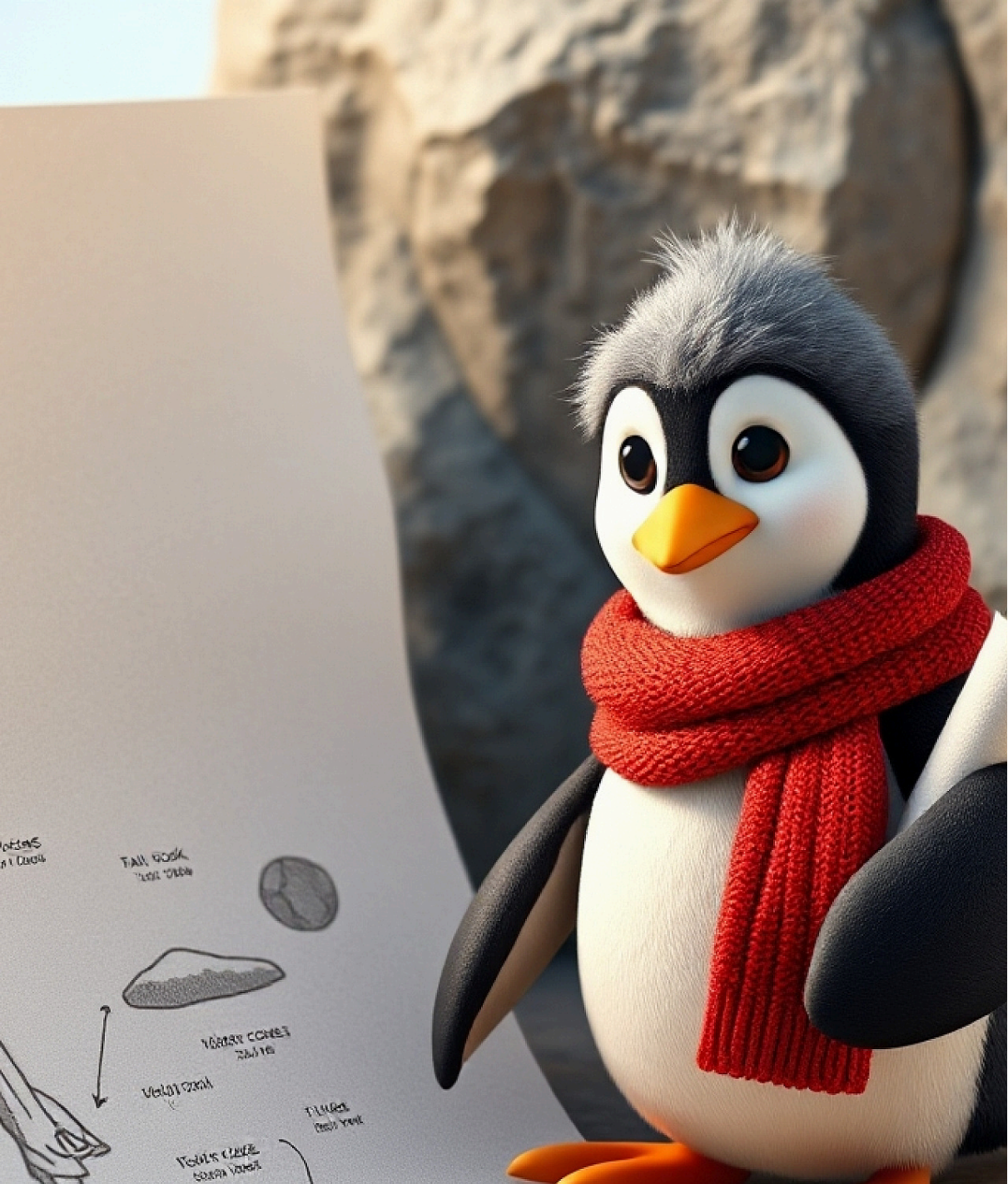
The seabirds walk up and down the island, but every spot seems wrong. Some places are too close to the crashing waves. Others are too open to the wind. The leader seabird looks worried. "We need a place that is safe and warm," she says. The little seabird chick shivers. "I'm scared we won't find one," it cheeps. The little penguin watches them search and feels a tug in his heart.



The little penguin waddles over to the leader seabird. "I know this island," he says. "I can help you find good spots." The leader looks at him with hopeful eyes. "Can you?" she asks. "We don't know where to start." The little penguin nods. "Wait here," he says. "I have an idea."



He hurries to his mother. "The seabirds need help," he says. "I want to draw a map of the island to show them the best places." His mother's eyes shine. "That is a wonderful idea," she says. "You know every rock and path. Your map will be a great help." She spreads a big piece of paper on a flat rock, and the little penguin takes out a small stick of charcoal.



He starts to draw. First the big rock where the wind is soft. Then the tall grass near the cliff where the waves cannot reach. He marks the sunny ledges and the hidden coves. His flippers move carefully. He draws a little star for each safe nesting place. "Here," he says, "and here, and here."



When the map is done, the little penguin rolls it up and tucks it under his flipper. He waddles back to the seabirds. "I have made a map for you," he says. He unrolls the paper and shows them the stars. "These are the best places to build your nests," he explains. "They are safe from the wind and the waves."



The leader seabird studies the map. "This is just what we need!" she calls to her flock. "Look! The penguin has shown us where to go." The seabirds gather around. The little chick jumps up and down. "We can have a cozy home!" it chirps. The leader turns to the little penguin. "Thank you," she says. "You have saved us a lot of worry."



The seabirds follow the map. They fly to the soft rock and the tall grass. They pick the sunny ledges and the hidden coves. They gather twigs and soft moss. They build their nests just where the little penguin marked. The little chick helps too, carrying tiny sticks. Soon, fluffy chicks peep from every cozy spot.



The little penguin watches from below. His heart feels warm and big. He sees the seabird chick tucked safely in its nest, high on a sunny ledge. The leader seabird swoops down and lands beside him. “You shared what you knew,” she says, “and it made all the difference. We will stay safe because of your map.”



The little penguin smiles so wide that his beak almost touches his eyes. "I'm glad I could help," he says. He looks at his map again. It is not just paper and charcoal. It is all the places he loves, shared with new friends. His mother waddles over and wraps a flipper around him. "You used your knowledge to help others," she says softly. "That is a wonderful thing."



From that day on, the seabirds and the penguins are neighbors. The little penguin often visits the nesting places. He brings the seabird chick tiny pebbles to play with. The chick shows him how to hop from stone to stone. The leader seabird brings him shiny shells from the sea. They share stories and songs on the windy island.



The little penguin still carries his rolled paper map under his flipper. But now it has new marks on it—little stars where his friends live, and a tiny drawing of a seabird chick. He knows that sharing what you know is a wonderful way to help your community. And every time he sees a seabird flying safely home, he feels proud and happy.



One windy evening, the little penguin sits with his mother and watches the sun set over the sea. The seabirds are settling in their nests. "Your map helped so many," his mother says. The little penguin nods. "And I learned something too," he says. "When you share what you know, you make friends and keep them safe."



The island is still windy, but now it feels cozy too. The little penguin knows every rock and path, and now he shares that knowledge with his seabird friends. He knows that helping others is the best feeling of all. And as the stars come out, he snuggles close to his mother, dreaming of maps and friends and the warm, safe homes they built together.