

Hymn -for a- Scarecrow

A celebration of wondering



Keegan Hutson







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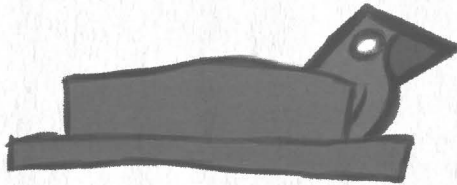
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Illustrations made with love, dreams, construction paper,
and foam boards assembled in Adobe Photoshop.

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Hymn
-for a-
Scarecrow



Keegan
Hutson

Scarecrows are meant to stand in the fields.



They protect the grain.

Their name says the rest:



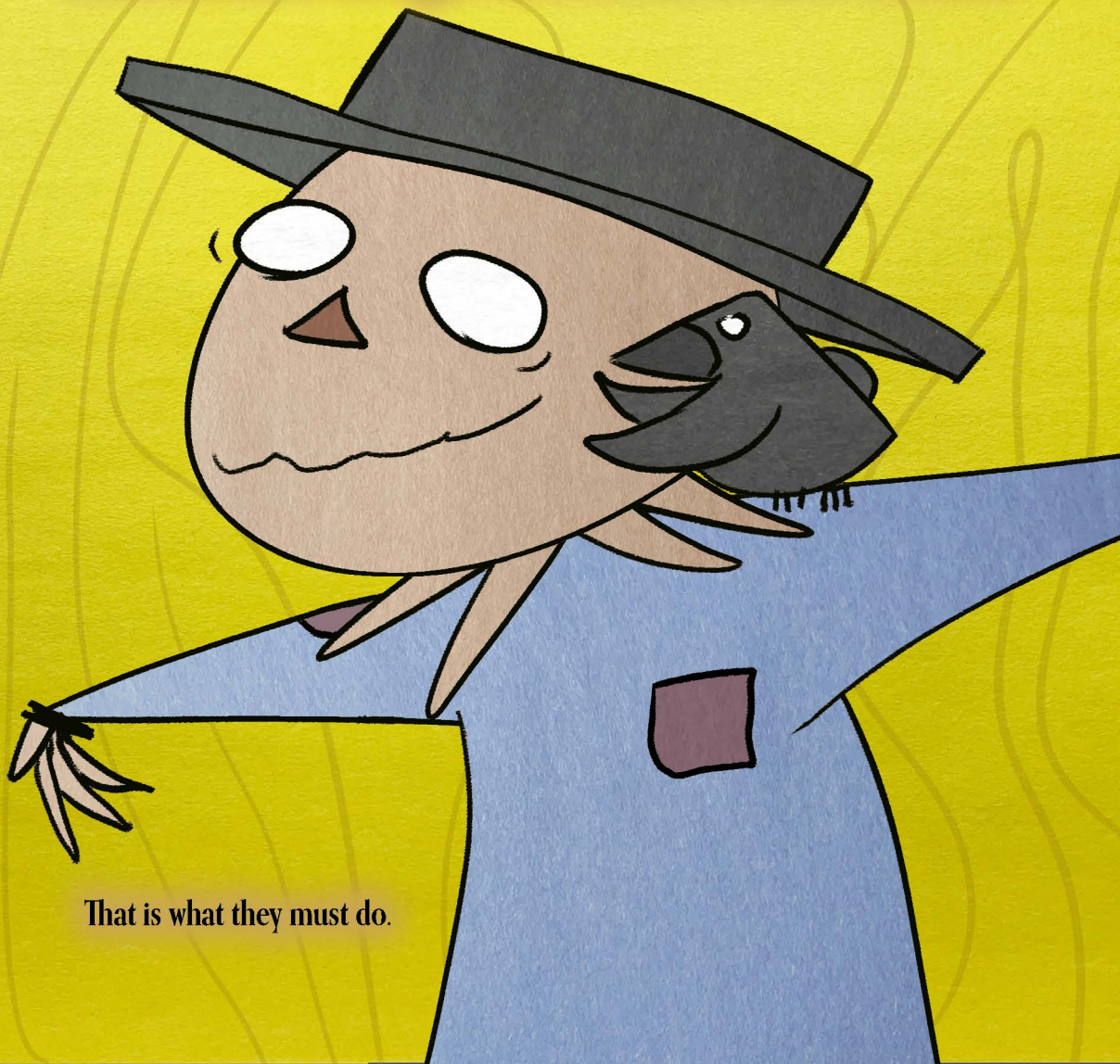
“Scare crows.”



Scarecrows are meant to watch over the crops,

not the city.

Watch the crops and scare the crows.



That is what they must do.



Scarecrows are not meant to dream,



or wonder what else there could be.



A scarecrow is a scarecrow,

and nothing can change that.

Scarecrows are not meant to move.



But sometimes...



When the wind blows just right...

A scarecrow can't stand still.



And they aren't very scary.



They might fall,



but friends will pick them back up.





LARRY'S
GOLF + FISHING

Scarecrows are meant to stand...



But sometimes...

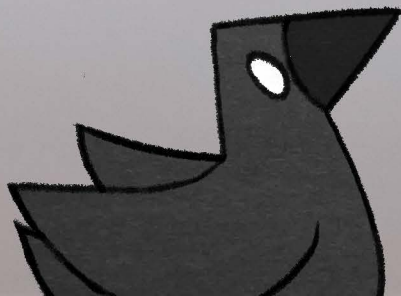


Scarecrows fly!

Dedicated to

Erin, Zach, Mia, Porter,
Larry, Vicki, Jim, Connie,
Missy, Bruce, Claire,
Jenny, Doug, Piper, Ava,
Laura, Maurice, Eric, Tommy, Jack,
Billy, Donald, Jacob, Jack G.,
Kylie, Alex, Carter, Ben,
and Grace.

All of you are *my* crows,
and you taught *me* how to fly.



NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

(for grown-ups and big kids)

I came from a family of tradespeople, meaning they all worked in either nursing or construction. As a result, it was expected that I follow in their footsteps. But as the years went on and I grew up, I realized more and more that I was less cut out for those jobs. Luckily, my family and friends saw this too. I was fortunate to have a loving and supportive community that wanted to see me succeed in whatever it was I chose to do. The problem was: I didn't really know what I wanted to do. My community pushed me to figure it out, and I like to think that I have now.

The biggest influence on the story outside of my personal life experience is a song by the band Tally Hall which gave the book its imagery and title, "Hymn for a Scarecrow." It's a beautiful song, and it really connected with me when I heard it for the first time. The image of a scarecrow being stuck and unhappy with being a scarecrow has been one that I haven't been able to shake for a long time. On top of that song, other influences for the book included the picture books *It's So Difficult* by Raúl Nieto Guridi, *Red: A Crayon's Story* by Michael Hall, and *After the Fall (How Humpty Dumpty Got Back Up Again)* by Dan Santant. On top of those, a big visual inspiration was the 1960s animated series *Tales of the Wizard of Oz* which I used to watch with my grandmother and grandfather, Vicki and Larry. The way in which I went about actually writing the story is due in large part to a conversation I had with my community partner Ashely Hartman, a professional in psychology, who advised me how best to communicate the topic of identity to children. And finally, I would never have been able to complete this book without the help of Amanda McGuire Rzicznek and her ENG 3430 Picture Book Workshop class at Bowling Green State University.

I feel like, because of the support of my family, on top of all of the things that influenced the book itself, I have been able to make a deeply personal story about learning to love oneself, and being okay with the fact that people are not always meant to be what others think they are. A story that is about learning to try and be different, because being different is okay. I think that's a message that all people, regardless of age, gender, race, religion, or occupation need to understand.

So, this book is for those scared to fly, scared to reach new heights, scared to learn who they are, scared to love themselves and others unconditionally, and scared to wonder of the endless possibilities that life and the world holds for them. If nothing else, I hope this story reaches those people, and they learn that, at the end of the day, there is nothing to be scared of.

References

Bass, Jules, and Arthur Rankin. *Tales of the Wizard of Oz*, Syndicated, 1 Sept. 1961.

Guridi, Raúl Nieto. *It's So Difficult*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2022.

Hall, Michael. *Red: A Crayon's Story*. HarperCollins Children's Books, 2015.

Hartman, Ashley. "Community Partner Interview." 21 Sept. 2023.

Tally Hall. "Hymn for a Scarecrow." *Good & Evil*, 2011.

Santat, Dan. *After the Fall: How Humpty Dumpty Got Back Up Again*. First edition. New York, New York, Roaring Brook Press, 2017.

Resources

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

www.cdc.gov

National Institute of Mental Health:

www.nimh.nih.gov

Recovery Ohio:

www.recoveryohio.gov

Kids' Minds Matter:

www.kidsmindsmatter.com

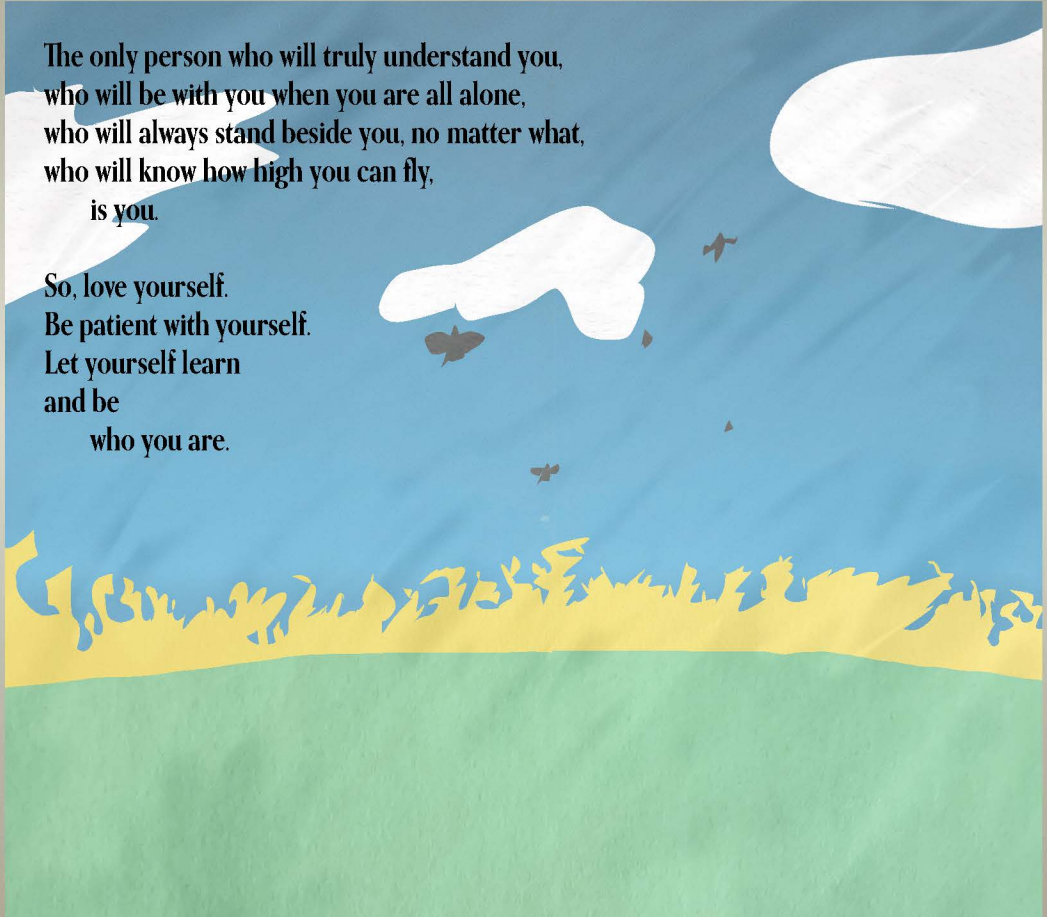


NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

(for everyone)

The only person who will truly understand you,
who will be with you when you are all alone,
who will always stand beside you, no matter what,
who will know how high you can fly,
is you.

So, love yourself.
Be patient with yourself.
Let yourself learn
and be
who you are.







ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Keegan Hutson is a writer from Lima, Ohio.

He currently lives in Bowling Green, Ohio, and is attending Bowling Green State University for film production and creative writing.

Growing up in a rural area with a lot of cornfields, he has a great fondness for scarecrows (in case that wasn't already clear).