

Name _____ Date: _____

Good Luck for the Good Luck Bird

The storks you often see in pictures are white storks. People used to say that they brought new babies. Peter is a white stock. He lives in Germany. He spends his days on a pond there. He is known and loved by the people who live close by. In the north of Europe, storks are the good-luck bird. They build their nests on houses. People think that storks bring good luck to a house where they nest. A town where storks live will have good luck too.

Well, one day Peter had very bad luck for a good-luck bird. He was standing at the edge of his pond. A marten came by. Martens are bigger than a big cat. They have brown fur, sharp noses and sharp teeth. They also have bad tempers. Other animals make them angry. They may be so angry that they'll attack. Storks don't start fights, but no stork likes to be snapped at. It will use its long, sharp beak if it has to.

The marten snapped at Peter. Peter struck at the marten. The marten snapped once more. It bit off half of the top part of Peter's beak. Storks need their breaks. A stork with half a beak can't pick up food. If he could not eat, Peter would die. His human friends were worried. Then one of them had an idea. Why not give Peter a new beak? He asked a man who knew how to stuff animals for help. That man thought about what to do. Then he made Peter a new beak. It was made of light, strong metal. He glued it to what was left of Peter's own beak. He used strong wire to keep it in place.

The new beak worked. Now, Peter can eat as well as he ever could. He won't die. His friends are pleased, and he will go on bringing them good luck. They will go on bringing him good luck, too. Some day the metal beak will wear out. Then they'll get him a new one, and they all have learned not to fight a marten.