



Lindu Queen of the Birds

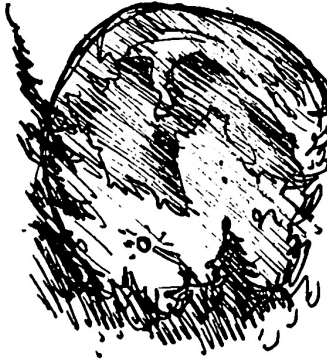
Adaptation by Malcolm Green

Lindu was queen of the birds - daughter of the Sky. She lived far off on an island in the Baltic where she and multitudes of birds laughed, cried and whispered secrets. Each spring she would sing them home, guiding their passage north from the far reaches of the earth. Each autumn she would call them one by one: the cuckoo, the warbler, the petrel and say it is time to go – time to go. The last was always swallow.

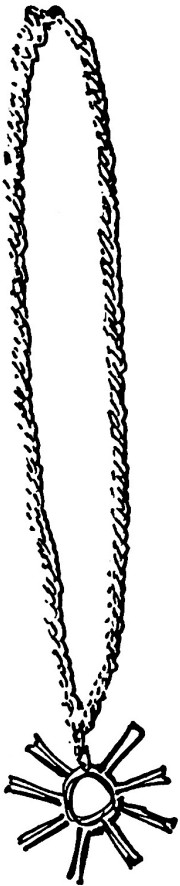
She was sorry when the birds had gone, sitting all alone in her wild beautiful little house on the island. She missed their joy and their deep determination in life ... but Lindu liked also the peace and solitude knowing that they would soon return. Some winter evenings she would go outside and sing to the stars.

It was not difficult to fall in love with the wild Lindu and she didn't go unnoticed by the Pole Star who descended from the sky with an array of the finest jewels as gifts to woo her. He walked down the path to her cottage with the stillness that only the Pole Star knows and knocked softly on her door. 'Come in', she said. He walked in his sureness suddenly shaken by her radiance. 'Pole Star', she said, 'what have I done to deserve the honour of your presence. He

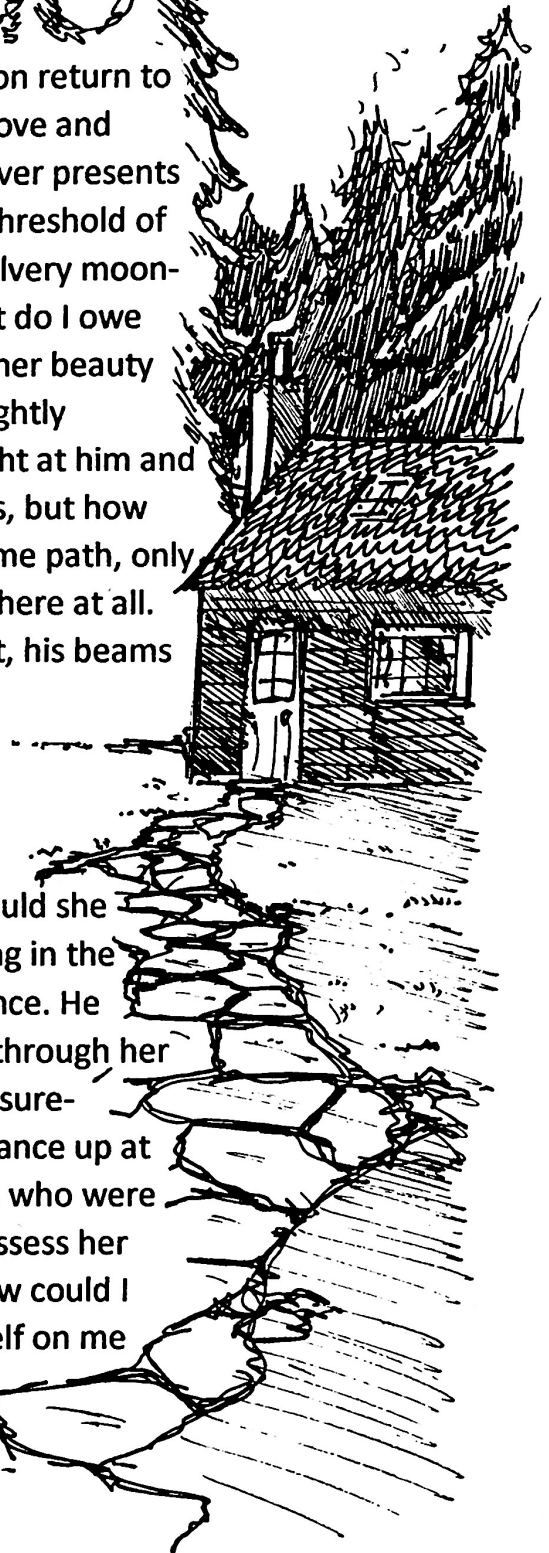
replied quietly, with as much dignity as he could muster, 'Lindu, will you marry me?' She smiled and then shook her head, 'Pole Star', she looked straight at him, 'your steady light is lovely but I cannot marry you – so small and stuck in one place all your life'.

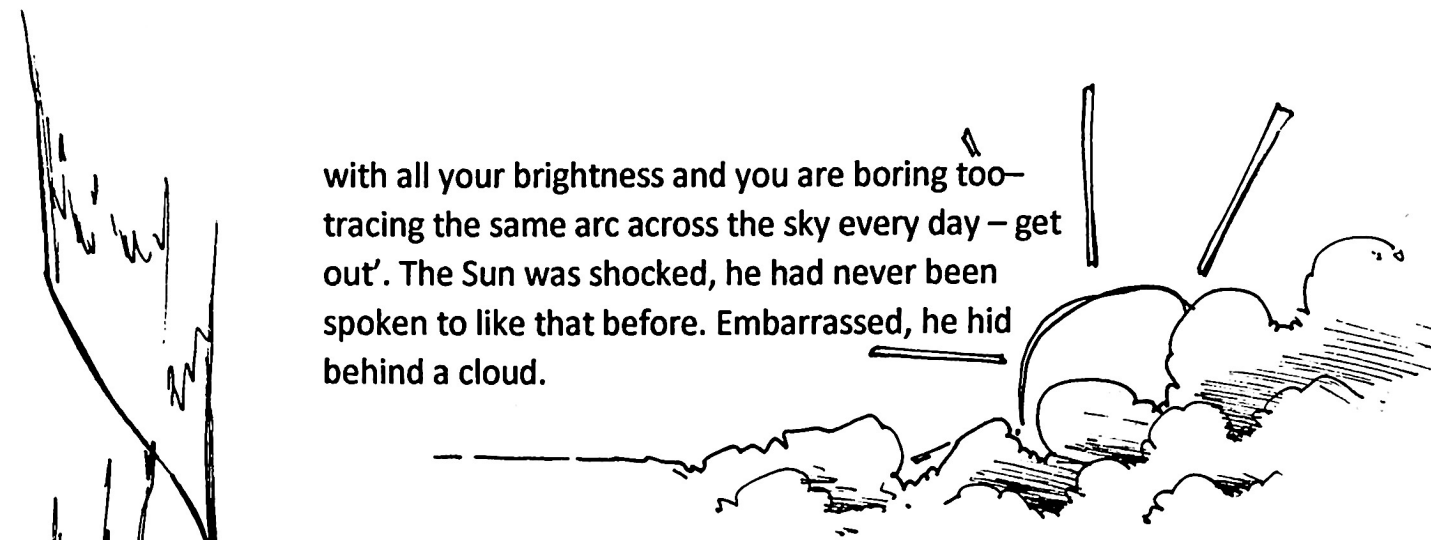


The moon saw his despondent companion return to the sky and thought, 'she'll take me, I move and change and shine bright. He gathered silver presents on a fine locket and he too crossed the threshold of Lindu's house; shining all his confident silvery moonness. 'Moon', she said 'and what to what do I owe this honour?' But he too was shaken by her beauty and it was all he could do to muster a slightly haughty, 'marry me.' Lindu looked straight at him and said, 'Moon, you brighten my dark nights, but how could I marry you – always taking the same path, only sometimes all there and very often not there at all. No moon I will not marry you'. Moon left, his beams barely lighting the earth.



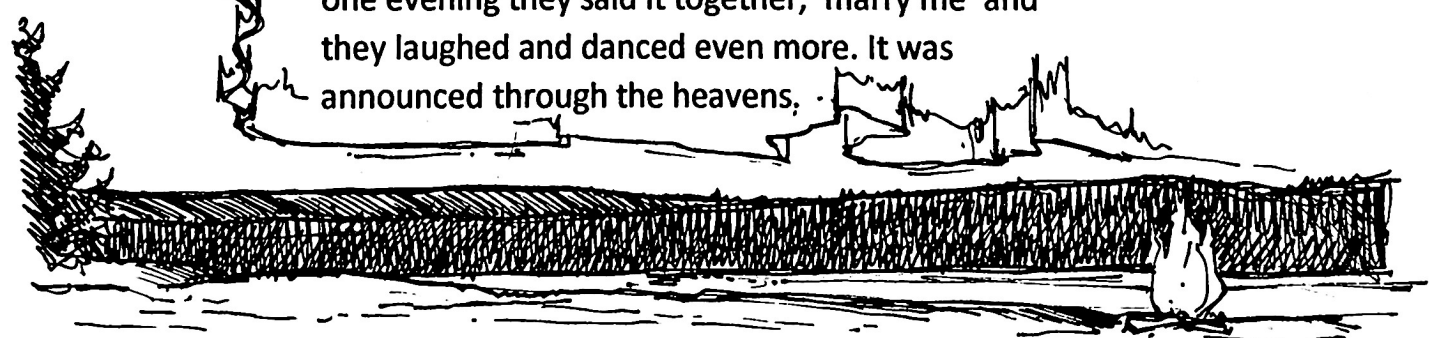
Sun saw all that was happening. 'How could she refuse me he thought- the brightest being in the universe'. I'll not be put-off by her radiance. He gathered a necklace of gold and barged through her door. 'Marry me' he beamed before his sure-footedness could be shaken by even a glance up at her wild presence. Lindu was angry now, who were these beings who thought they could possess her without even knowing who she was, 'How could I marry you', she retorted, 'foisting yourself on me



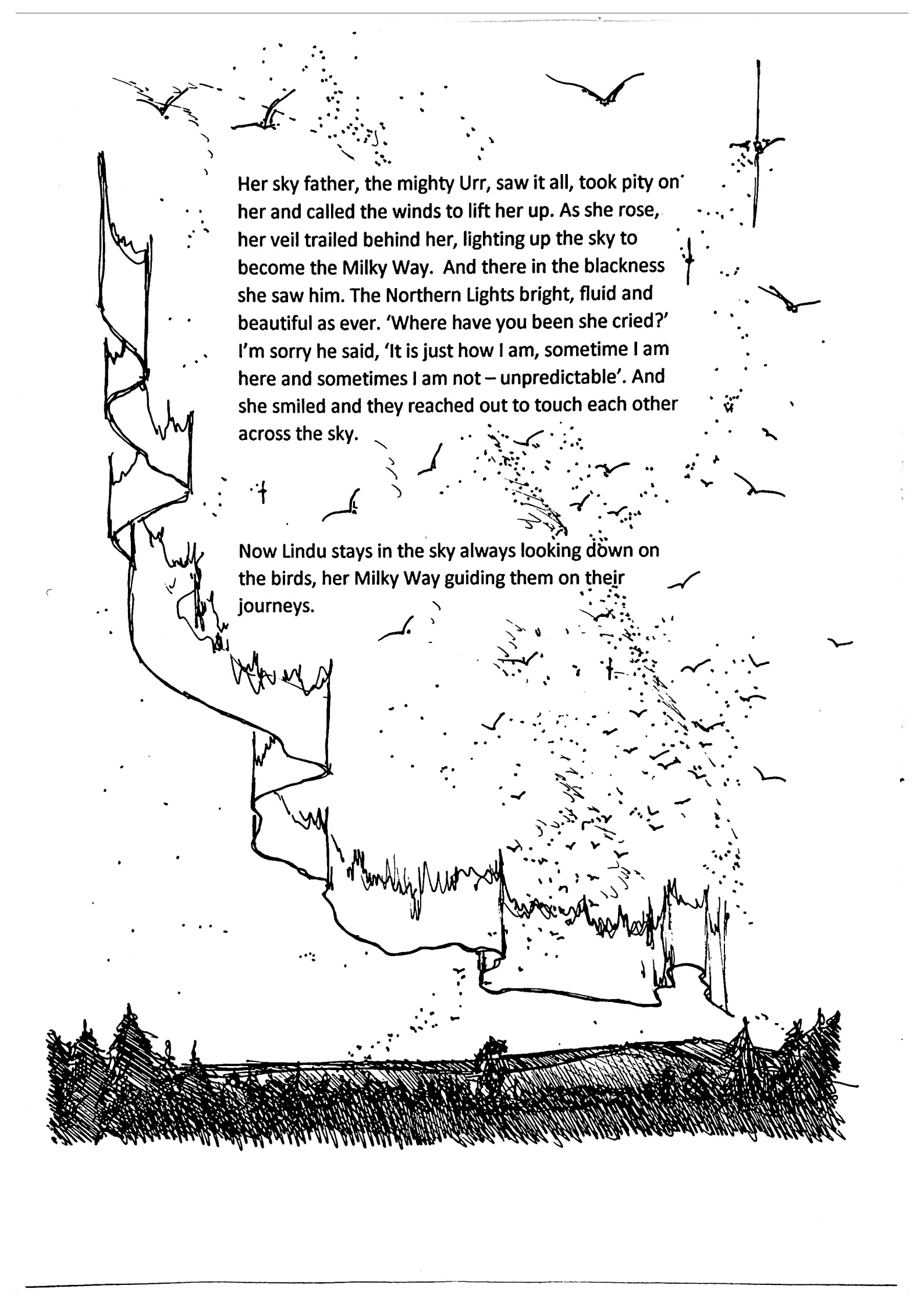


with all your brightness and you are boring too—tracing the same arc across the sky every day—get out'. The Sun was shocked, he had never been spoken to like that before. Embarrassed, he hid behind a cloud.

Lindu returned to sitting by her fire as the winter months passed. Then one dark night she noticed lights of all colours dancing on her wall. She opened the door and outside, there he stood: The Northern Lights, the Aurora Borealis. She stood breathless before saying, 'come in'. He entered with such grace she almost forgot herself. They talked and laughed and sang and danced till it was almost morning, when he left as quietly as he had come—there was nothing predictable about him, like the others. But nevertheless, he came back the next night and the next and Lindu wanted him more than anything. Then one evening they said it together, 'marry me' and they laughed and danced even more. It was announced through the heavens.



The birds made her a dress of the brightest feathers and the mountains gave a veil of a torrent of sparkling water. She was happy, so happy ... but then he didn't come back. She waited outside looking up into the sky but there was no sign of him. The birds returned and tried to cheer her but she hardly noticed them, tears falling down her face to glisten in her long veil. She wept and wept.



Her sky father, the mighty Urr, saw it all, took pity on her and called the winds to lift her up. As she rose, her veil trailed behind her, lighting up the sky to become the Milky Way. And there in the blackness she saw him. The Northern Lights bright, fluid and beautiful as ever. 'Where have you been she cried?' I'm sorry he said, 'It is just how I am, sometime I am here and sometimes I am not – unpredictable'. And she smiled and they reached out to touch each other across the sky.

Now Lindu stays in the sky always looking down on the birds, her Milky Way guiding them on their journeys.