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## Feed the Birds

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# Feed the Birds

By Haley Ellis

The little girl clutched the bag of chips tight in her hands, smiling to herself at her cleverness. She'd effortlessly swiped it from the grocery bag, even though her mother had told her not to snack, and that they would be having dinner soon. But she was hungry, and she snuck onto the front porch looking out across the busy city street, her prize held carefully out of sight.

Her grin widened as she made it out of view of the house and broke the seal of the bag, the pop and puff of salty smelling air giving her a moment's delight. Suddenly, a bird hopped near her, shiny black eyes peering intently at the tasty treasure in her hands. It was a cute little thing, and the girl thought it might be hungry. After all, there couldn't be much food for a bird in the city. Her generosity took over, and she threw a single chip towards the bird, which jumped back startled. After a moment, it grew more bold and hopped forward, pecking at the chip. The girl laughed as she watched it nibbling with its tiny beak, and she sprinkled more chips on the ground near it. A few more birds appeared and joined in the little feast, and the girl felt very happy with the new friends she'd made.

All at once, there was a great rushing sound in the air, and her attention was torn from the little birds at her feet. She looked up and around, but the sound was coming from everywhere at once. Then, she saw it. Her eyes widened in fear as the sky was suddenly darkened with the wings of a great flock of birds of all kinds. Crows, starlings, gulls and pigeons from every corner of the city were swarming in like locusts, hunger burning in their eyes.

The girl screamed and dropped the golden morsels as she ran for cover, struggling to keep her footing as the immense cloud of raucous calls and beating wings threatened to overtake her.

They left nothing behind.