

## *The Copper Bird*

On a very windy morning, Roland GingerBread is walking along the path by Lake Maskinongé, in Saint-Gabriel-de-Brandon, daydreaming as he goes to his friend Claude's, a sculptor by trade.

The two close friends have an appointment with two other artists, Martine and Lise. Together they concoct a great project: a gigantic "Bird" all in copper, reddish brown, on a steel nest, resting on a concrete pedestal ornamented with four bas-reliefs; a real wonder! But what a job!

This work of art s l o w l y takes form. But today, surprise: Claude has succeeded in welding the bird's wings!

Every day the sculpture had become more and more impressive; this time the wings, in spite of their weight, move and emit sounds.

The three visitors are flabbergasted and can't keep their eyes off the heavy metal bird, not understanding how it is able to flap its wings.



- Claude, Martine asks, what are you up to again? Did you put an engine under the wings?

- We know you're a wizard, Roland GingerBread adds with a half smile.

- There's no engine, and I'm no wizard either. It's normal this bird should sing: it's made of copper, and this metal is supple, malléable and, more importantly, ductile.

- DUCTIBLE! What does that mean? Asks Lise, the curious one.

- Well, if a metal is a good conductor of energy, it produces vibrations.

- Yippee! Our bird chirps like all the birds of the earth.

- Yes! Yes! You're right, that's all very well, but I would like something more for our "fowl".

- Explain yourself, Claude! You look worried.



- Not really worried. I make sculptures every day, but I dream of giving this one a mission....

- A MISSION! The three friends exclaim in chorus.

But I don't know what kind of a mission.

- I have an idea! Roland GingerBread goes on quickly. Listen: the other day, I was going to the library when I noticed a beautiful big bell in the grass.

- It's been there a long time, Martine interrupts.

- Maybe, but I had never noticed it before. Anyway, I walk in, choose a book and talk about it to the librarian. She tells me that the library has been set up in the building of the old post office and that our famous bell, now forgotten on the lawn, was used by the postmaster to warn the good people of Saint- Gabriel that the mail had arrived!

- That's quite a story! And what's more, a REAL one!

- So I think our copper bird could take care of it.

- How do you mean, take care of it?

- That's easy: we already intend to perch our bird on top of a big metal nest; we can hide the bell with its eggs and the bird will sit on it and protect it from the bad weather.



- That's AWESOME! A bell watchbird! It's unheard of!

- And, since we install it near the library, we could ring the bell to announce when it opens. What do you say, Claude?

- I say it's a really great idea and I love it!

- Why don't we give a name to our LIBRARY BELL COPPER WATCHBIRD?

A name! A name! Not that easy! And our friends rack their brains....

- I found one! Claude cries out, quite excited. ALPHA WINGS!

and why *alpha wings*?

- It's up to you to find out!



*Mamie d'Épices*

