

BOB

A.R.A. McFarland Campbell

FOR AS LONG AS HE COULD REMEMBER, Bob had wanted a job where he could work with birds. Robins, sparrows, starlings, peregrine falcons, and even penguins. He loved them all. When there was an opening at the local bird sanctuary he applied immediately.

He got an interview. He thought he did well. He was able to answer most of their questions, and he stood upright with his hat in his hands through the whole thing too. Bob was good at standing upright. After his love for birds, it was his greatest skill.

Two days after the interview, he got the rejection letter.

Bob was undaunted. He may have come from an humble background, but he still wanted to get on in life. He needed to know what had gone wrong in the interview, so the next time he could do better.

He phoned the bird sanctuary. They said he should come in and they would explain.

Bob waited in reception. At last, he was called into the office. He asked his question, and nervously scratched his straw-filled jacket in the silence that followed.

“Bob,” said the manager, “you didn’t get the job because you are a scarecrow.”