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Letters to Anyone and Everyone

written by

Toon Tellegen

illustrated by

Jessica Ahlberg

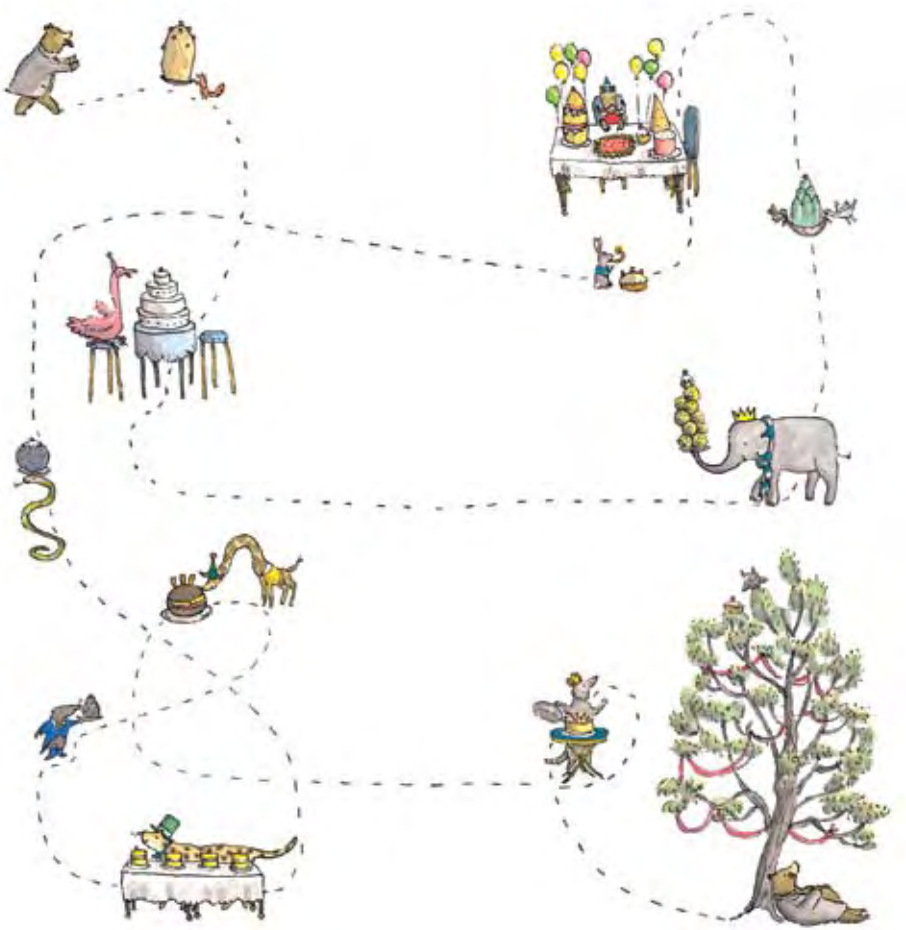
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Letters to Anyone and Everyone

Stories By

Toon Tellegen

Illustrated By

Jessica Ahlberg



Translated By

Martin Cleaver

Boxer Books

Introduction

Toon Tellegen first began to invent animal stories to tell his daughter at bedtime. Then, when his daughter grew older, he decided to write them down. He created a world where there is only one forest, one river, one ocean, and one oak tree; a world of imagination where anything is possible. Toon has been writing stories about the squirrel, the ant, and the other animals in the







forest for over 25 years, and to date more than 300 of them have been published in his native Holland. His work has been translated into many different languages and enjoyed by children all over the world. *Letters to Anyone and Everyone*, and its companion, *The Squirrel's Birthday and Other Parties*, are the first titles in a new series.



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Dear Snail





Dear Snail,

May I invite you to dance with me on top of your house? Just a few steps? That's what I want most of all.

I promise I'll dance very delicately, so we won't fall through your roof.

But of course, you can never be really sure.

The elephant











Dear Elephant,

Thank you for your letter.

I'm certain I'd like to dance with you on my roof one day. I'm almost convinced of that. I think I'm a very good dancer. But unfortunately I don't think it's such a good idea just at the moment.

The snail





One Winter's Day





One winter's day,
the squirrel wrote
a letter to the ant:

Dear Ant,

Ant Ant Ant
Ant Ant Ant
Ant Ant Ant.
Dear Ant
Ant Ant Ant
Ant.
Dear Ant.
Dear Ant.
Ant.
The squirrel

It was a strange letter and the squirrel didn't really know why he'd written it. But he dressed it in a hat and coat because it was chilly, explained which way to go, and opened the door.

The letter stepped outside cautiously, climbed down the beech tree, walked through the snow, and tapped on the ant's window.

"Who's there?" asked the ant.

"The letter," said the letter.

"The letter?" the ant replied, and he opened the door in surprise.





"I'm a letter for you," said the letter. It bowed slightly and took off its hat.

The ant studied the letter from all sides, then opened it cautiously.

"I think I'll read you," he said.

"That's fine," said the letter.

When the ant had finished reading, he rubbed his hands together and said, "Do sit down, letter, sit down. What would you like?"

"Well," said the letter hesitantly, "I don't really know."

"Something sweet?" the ant asked.

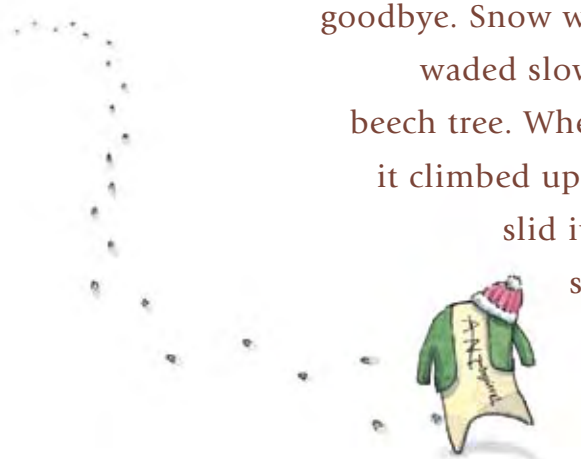
"That's a good idea!" said the letter, rustling with pleasure.

The ant took his pen and wrote *something sweet* at the top of the letter. He stopped and thought before writing *something warm* at the bottom. Then he ate some honey.



The letter and the ant sat together for a long time. Occasionally the ant stood up and wrote something in the letter's margin.

When darkness fell, the letter said goodbye. Snow was falling as it waded slowly toward the beech tree. When it got there, it climbed up the trunk and slid itself under the squirrel's door.



"Well I never," said the squirrel. "You came back."

"Yes," said the letter, and it told the squirrel all about what had happened on its visit to the ant.

"Do you know what the ant thinks about you, Squirrel?" asked the letter.

"What does he think?" said the squirrel.

"Just read me," said the letter.

The squirrel read, and when he'd finished, he asked the letter if he could put it under his pillow.

"Of course," said the letter.

The squirrel's house creaked as the storm raged outside.

The snowflakes
got bigger
and the world
became whiter
and whiter.

But the squirrel
and the letter noticed
nothing of that.
They slept and
dreamed of words
and sweet ink.

