

Flo Wants to Be Pink

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Flo hatched white like all flamingo chicks in the colony. But as the other chicks turned different shades of pink, Flo remained white.

She loved her feathers until she began school.

She was teased.



“Flo, Flo, white as snow,” the girls would chant.

Other times, she was ignored on the playground.

Flo also was not invited to parties.

“I hate being different,” Flo said, while eating dinner.

“Being different makes you special,” Mama said.

“But I don’t want to be different or special! I want to be pink!”

Mama tried to help, “the doctor said as long as you keep eating shrimp, your feathers will turn pink.”

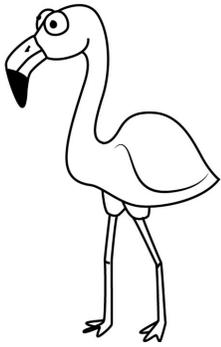
Flo didn’t want to wait.

So, she colored her feathers with a pink marker.

But that didn’t work.

She wore a pink furry jacket she found in Mama’s closet, but that just made her look like a pink llama.





The next day Flo and her mother went shopping. In the mall, she found the answer to her problem...

"Pink hair dye! Please, please," Flo begged.

When they returned home, Flo locked herself in the bathroom.

And when she emerged...

"Tada! I'm pink!"

The next day at school, her classmates were amazed how her feathers changed color overnight. And just as quickly, she was included.

Frankie asked her to play soccer on the playground at recess.

She ate lunch with Franny and the other girls.

And then the coolest of the cool girls, Felicia, invited her to her backyard splash flamingo party. It was the biggest event of the school year.

Flo fluffed her pink feathers getting ready for the party.

Mama dropped her off and gave her a peck on the beak. "Have fun!" she said. "And, be you."

Flo took a deep breath before entering the backyard.

What a party!

Friends were chattering, sipping pink lemonade, and dancing. Making her way through the crowd, she quickly fit in with her classmates.

Flo was so relaxed, she even decided to dip her toe into the pool.

But suddenly, before Flo even knew what was happening...

SPLASH!

Frankie pushed her into the pool!

She fluttered and sputtered.

Then realized the water was turning pink. And her feathers had turned back to WHITE!



Everyone was staring!

Flo was so embarrassed!

She dragged herself out of the pool. Tears ran down her beak. She shook her feathers then took flight.

She didn't know where she was going, but she had to get out of there. She heard voices calling to her, but she ignored them.

She flapped her wings as hard as she could, tears were stinging her eyes.

Suddenly, Flo spied a dark figure flying directly toward her. As it drew nearer, Flo realized it was a Vulture!

She heard screaming below. Flo knew the vulture was drawn to the group's pink colors.

"My white feathers will be helpful now!" Flo thought.



Flo took aim toward the vulture. She gained momentum, flying in an up and down motion.

The vulture was confused and seemed to stop in mid-air.

Flo continued to dart this way and that.

The vulture then turned and flew away.

Flo breathed a sigh of relief and headed back down to the party. As she landed, the group rushed toward her.

“You’re so brave!” shouted Franny.

“Your white feathers saved the day!” Felicia praised.

“I’m sorry I pushed you in the pool,” Frankie said.

“It was mean, Frankie,” Flo said. “But, I shouldn’t have tried to be someone I’m not.”

Everyone gathered around Flo for a group hug.

At home, Flo told mama the whole story. After her bath, she admired her white feathers in the mirror, and she spotted a few flecks of pink. She tried scrubbing the spots off, but realized her feathers were indeed turning pink on their own.

Flo showed Mama.

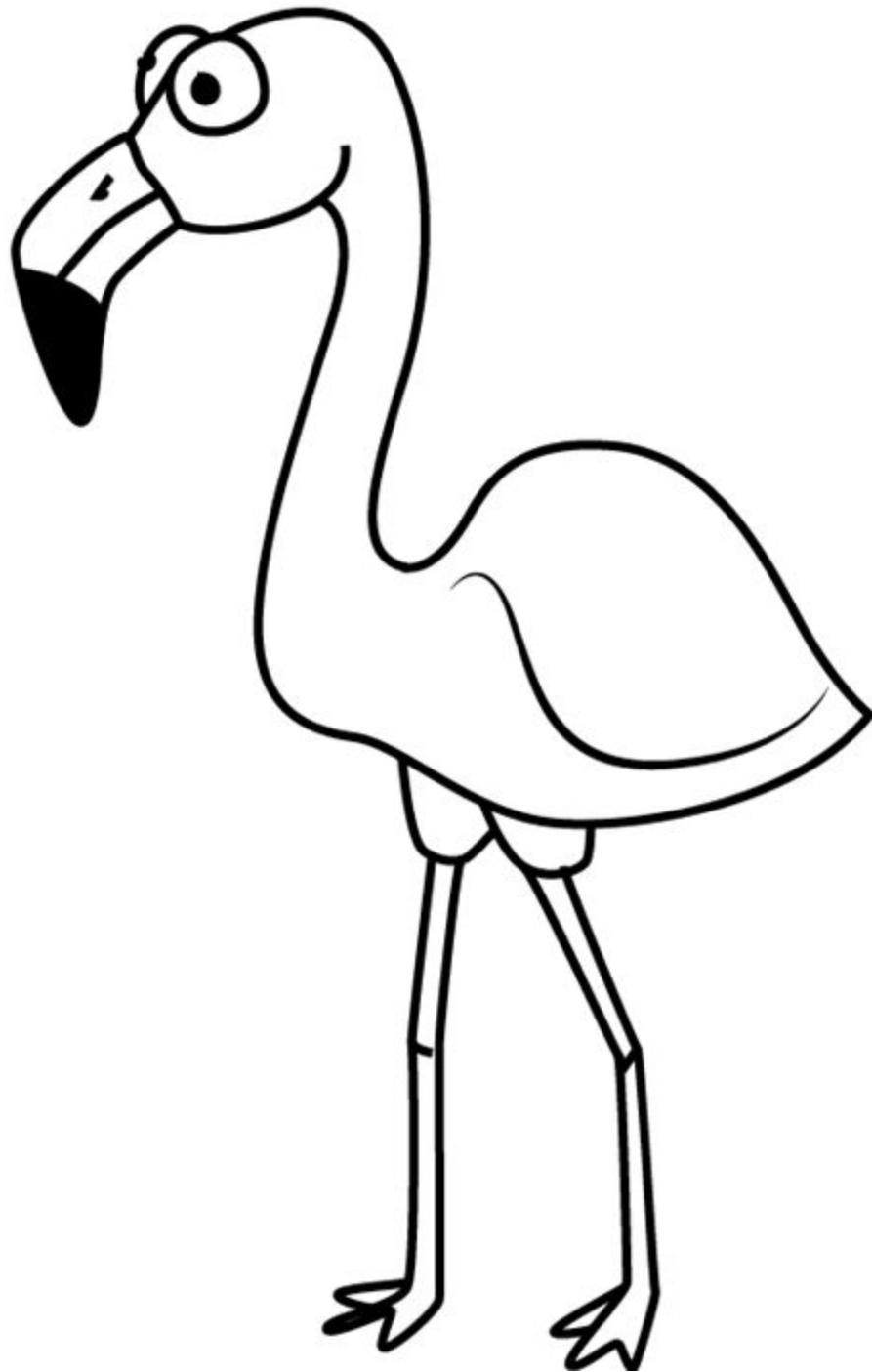
“Why don’t you look happy? She asked.”

“Now I look like everyone else,” Flo sighed.

“But you will always be you.” Mama said, patting her back.

Flo knew Mama was right and suddenly, it didn’t matter if she was pink or white. Whatever her color, Flo was Flo and comfortable in her own feathers.

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Fun Facts About Flamingos

Did You Know?

Adult birds
4.6 feet tall and
3.3 & 9 pounds.



measure 3.3 to
weigh between

The Flamingo's
ranges from 3.3

wingspan
to 5 feet.

Color of their
result of their
in their food
carotenoids) are

feathers is a
diet. Pigments
(called
responsible

for red and pink colors of their feathers. They eat shrimp, algae, and crustaceans.

When they want to rest, flamingos stand on one leg. The visible "knee" of the flamingo is actually an ankle joint. The true knee is close to the body and can't be seen because of the feathers.

During migration, they fly up to 37 miles per hour and travel distance of over 300 miles to reach their new habitat.

Flamingos live between 20 and 30 years.

Flamingo Word Search

A D U F A O Q F L O C K Q R W
W C M J E Q X S A W J M I G M
G U R M M A M F H S S H F J W
U P O U M E T V P R H I T R F
A F T P S K J H H A I N O Q R
S R L T Z T F T E F R M F G I
C S A Y U S A L R R W T P H E
O O C S I A Z C A L S G Y N N
I C M H G N F C E M E L O X D
E H F O O X G Z G A I R C H S
I E K Z O O K Q B B N N F M C
T G U I X X L I I E P S G J O
P G C V U L T U R E V I C O L
C O L O N Y M K D E F J N L O
J L L C K A B P X U G O Z K R

Crustaceans

Flamingo

Shrimp

Color

Feathers

Colony

Party

Bird

Friends

Flying

Pink

Egg

Vulture

School

Flo

How to Draw a Flamingo

