

**Three Cheers for Tacky**

Lester, Helen

There once lived a group of penguins in a nice icy land. One was Goodly, one was Lovely, one was Angel, one was Neatly, one was Perfect. And one was Tacky. Tacky was the odd bird. When they grew old enough, Goodly, Lovely, Angel, Neatly, Perfect, and Tacky went to school. They read book. They wrote their names. They learned their numbers. One day at school the penguins noticed a sign with an exciting announcement: their class had been invited to take part in a great Penguin Cheering Contest. Penguin classes from all over the iceberg would be there and the team with the finest cheer would win shiny blue bow ties. Imagine what they could do with shiny

blue bow ties! Right after school, Goodly, Lovely, Angel, Neatly, and Perfect hurried to practice their cheer. Softly and properly they began: 1, 2, 3, LEFT! 1, 2, 3 RIGHT! Stand up! Sit down! Say "Good night!" They did it beautifully, even the first time through. Then up waddled Tacky, a little late. And a little loud. "What's happening?" he blared. "We're practicing our cheer, that's what's happening," they replied. 1, 2, 3, LEFT! 1, 2, 3, RIGHT! Stand up! Sit down! Say "Good night!" Tacky gave it a try. 1, 2, 3, LEFT! A, B, C, RIGHT! Flop down! Roll over! Say, what's for supper? "Tacky," they said patiently, "we are a team, and if you are on the team you must be exactly like the rest of us. He wanted very much to be on the team, so Tacky tried to cooperate and move with a stiff upper back like

the rest of them. But how could he see where he was going with a stiff upper beak in the way? And directions were not always easy. 1, 2, 3, LEFT! 1, 2, 3, LEFT! 1, 2, 3, LEFT! 1, 2, 3, LEFT! "Where is everybody?" he wondered. Tacky had troubled coming up with the proper costume. And his pompoms were never quite right. Would this team ever have the chance to win the shiny blue bow ties? The penguins practiced and practiced and practiced until finally, the day before the contest, 1, 2, 3, LEFT! 1, 2, 3, RIGHT! Stand up! Sit down! Say "Good night!" TACKY GOT IT RIGHT!

The next morning teams from all over the iceberg gathered for the great Penguin Cheering Contest. Each team waited nervously to perform. But no team was more nervous than Tacky's.

Could he do it right, just one more time? The first team marched on stage PIP, PIP, PIP. PIP, PIP, PIP. PIP, PIP, PIP. Rah. And the judges looked bored. Another team marched forth. 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-Sis-boom-bah, and backed off, 10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1. And the judges yawned. A third team chanted, Wave the pompom, Hold it high, Bow politely, Say "Good-Bye!" And the judges snored. Finally there was only one team left - Tacky's. With quivering beaks they faced the sleeping audience and the snoring judges. This was it. Goodly. Lovely, Angel, Neatly, Perfect and Tacky began. 1, 2, 3, OH FOR CRYING OUT LOUD! The audience gasped, startled by Tacky's loud voice. The odd bird had tripped over the tails of his Hawaiian shirt and crashed belly-down. His horrified teammates carried on, 1, 2, 3, RIGHT!

Poor Tacky, now a bit muddled, pulled his sweater over his head. The sight of a headless penguin got the whole crowd laughing. Stand up! Sit down! Say "Good night!" By now the crowd was on its feet begging for more. "Bravo!" That was great!" "Another cheer!" Tacky poked his head out. Another cheer? Well, if they insisted. He gave them a second cheer. 1, 2, 3, LEFT! A, B, C, RIGHT! Flop down! Roll over! Say, what's for supper? The crowd roared, the judges slapped each other on the back, and even the other penguin team clapped wildly. So Tacky led everyone in a third cheer! 1, 2, 3, YAY! Rooty, toot toot HOORAY! High Flippers! High Flippers! We're okay! Penguins everywhere gave high flippers. There was no question who wore the

shiny blue bow ties home. Tacky was an odd bird,  
but a nice bird to have around.