Lost and Found

Oliver Jeffers
Once there was a boy who found a penguin at his door.
The boy didn’t know where it had come from,

but it began to follow him everywhere.

The penguin looked sad and the boy thought it must be lost.
So the boy decided to help the penguin find its way home.

He asked some birds if they knew where the penguin came from.

He checked in the Lost and Found Office.
But no one was missing a penguin.

But they ignored him.
Some birds are like that.
The boy asked his duck.

But the duck floated away.  
He didn’t know either.

That night, the boy couldn’t sleep for disappointment. He wanted to help the penguin but he wasn’t sure how.
The next morning he discovered that penguins come from the South Pole.
But how could he get there?

He ran down to the harbor and asked a big ship to take them to the South Pole.
But his voice was much too small to be heard over the ship’s horn.
Together, the boy decided, he and the penguin would row to the South Pole.
So the boy took his rowboat out and tested it for size and strength.
He told stories to the penguin to help pass the time.

Then they packed everything they would need . . .

. . . and pushed the rowboat out to sea.
They rowed south for many days...

and many nights.

There was lots of time for stories, and the penguin listened to every one, so the boy would always tell another.
They floated through good weather and bad,
when the waves were as big as mountains.
Until, finally, they came to the South Pole.

The boy was delighted,
but the penguin said nothing.
Suddenly it looked sad again as
the boy helped it out of the boat.
Then the boy said good-bye.

... and floated away. When he looked back, the penguin was still there. But it looked sadder than ever.
It felt strange for the boy to be on his own.

And the more he thought . . .

There was no point telling stories now because there was no one to listen except the wind and the waves.

. . . the more he realized he had made a big mistake.

Instead, he just thought.

The penguin hadn’t been lost. It had just been lonely.
Quickly he turned the boat around and rowed back to the South Pole as fast as he could.

At last he reached the Pole again. . . .

But where was the penguin?

The boy searched and searched, but he was nowhere to be found.
Sadly, the boy set off for home.

But then the boy saw something in the water ahead of him.

Closer and closer he got, until he could see...
... the penguin!
And so the boy and his friend went home together, talking of wonderful things all the way.