

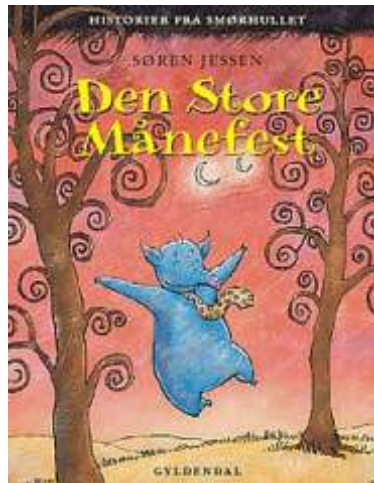


Søren Jessen has written 36 books. Picture Books, Juvenile Fiction, Young Adult Fiction and Adult Fiction.

He started out in the world of books as an illustrator and has illustrated a lot of books by many authors.

Take a look at his website: [www.soerenjessen.com](http://www.soerenjessen.com)

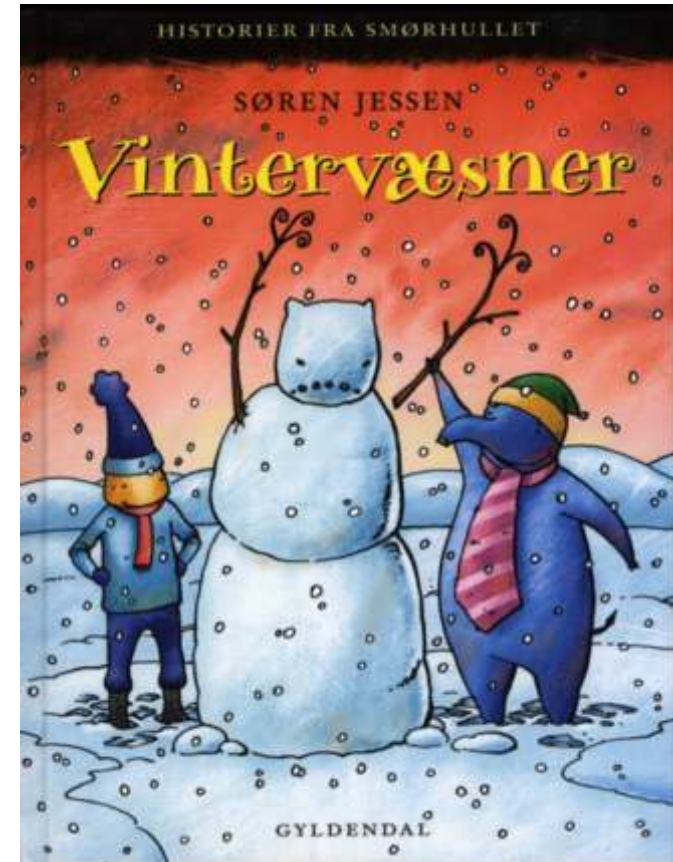
Contact: [mail@soerenjessen.com](mailto:mail@soerenjessen.com)



*The first book about Nuffer and his friends.*

# Winter Creatures

Children's Book, 102 pages, For All Ages





## Preface

Have you ever stood looking up into the sky on a dark night and tried to count the stars? If you have, then you know that there are many, many stars; far too many to count, and even more can be seen through a telescope. But do you know too, that each and every star is a sun, just like our own sun giving us light and warmth every day? And that the earth we live on is just a planet, like the other planets that move around the sun.

I wonder if some of the many stars have planets like ours? If there are other planets, maybe there is also life on them. Maybe there are other people with two arms and two legs just like you, and maybe they also stand and look up to their night sky, wondering if there are other people like them out in the universe. It could be that they don't look too much like people, as we know them. Maybe there is a planet where it is quite normal to have a trunk instead of a nose. Or green skin and orange hair. Or three fingers on each hand, or ... yes, the possibilities are many.

This story takes place on such a planet and is about the friends Nuffer, Bella, Witlesswimp, Cat-yep and Cat-nope, Ma and Pa Raffhill and their son Raff. There are other rather special creatures too, and you will meet them along the way if you follow the story right to the end.

## 1

### Dare - Dare Not

Nuffer and Raff are sitting on the top of Dare-Dare Not Hill. It has a very steep slope on one side and a rather gentle slope on the other. In winter it is a place for tobogganing, and this is the reason for its name. The very steep slope is for

those who dare, while the gentle slope is for those who dare not go down the steep slope.

But what are Nuffer and Raff doing? They are just sitting and looking up at the sky. Nuffer is wearing a hat and one of his winter ties. It is a knitted woollen one, and is so long that it can be wrapped several times around his neck, like a scarf. He doesn't need to wear anything else because trunked pigs are very thick skinned. Raff, on the other hand, is wearing a hat, mittens, long trousers, boots and a thick jumper.

"Can you ... uhm ... see anything?" asks Nuffer

"No. Can you?" Raff replies.

"Absolutely nothing"

"Urrgh!"

Each of them has a toboggan, so you can probably guess what they are waiting for. Yes of course, they are waiting for snow. Every winter Peaceful Hollow is covered with snow and even though it is rather difficult to get around outdoors, it is something that Nuffer and Raff look forward to because they can go tobogganing, skating, and build snowmen, snow dens and such like. But this year, winter is a long time coming.

"Why doesn't it come?" moans Nuffer sadly.

Raff shrugs his shoulders. "Let's go home," he sighs.

So they pull their toboggans home through the yellow grass. It is difficult because toboggans don't glide so well on grass, especially if those pulling the toboggans are a bit sad.



Next day, the two friends meet again on top of the hill.

"I'm sure it's going to snow today," says Nuffer as he watches the clouds move across the sky.

"Are you quite sure?" asks Raff.

Nuffer thinks a bit before he replies. "If I see a snowflake, then I am quite sure, but if I don't, then I'm not so sure."

Raff nods. He knows that feeling too. They sit on their toboggans under the arrow tree on the top of the hill and wait ... and wait ... and wait.

"Oh how boring it is to be bored," mumbles Nuffer.

Raff sighs. "Maybe we should try climbing up into the tree. Then we will be nearer the clouds and the snowflakes ... when they fall that is."

"Yes, we can," says Nuffer and gets up. They climb up as high as they dare. Nuffer stays on the lowest branch, while Raff climbs all the way to the top. It's easy to climb, because the arrow tree lost many of its arrows during the autumn. You must be very careful when standing under arrow trees when this happens. Once an arrow went right through Nuffer's favourite tie.



"What a view", shouts Raff. "It's almost like flying."

"We are ... uhm ... snowflakes!" yells Nuffer enthusiastically. "Here I come falling, and whew! ..." he plonks himself on to a branch, "... there I landed right in a tree."

"Now a new snowflake is coming in to land," Raff shouts, shaking a branch.

"And one ... uhm ... more." Nuffer plonks down again and the whole branch shakes.

"And one more," Raff bellows.

"Gee whiz, I'm really sweating," says Nuffer after a while and he loosens his scarf-tie "Now I know why snowflakes don't wear scarves." Right then they notice something! Just as they finish their game, they both notice it.

"Snow!" yells Nuffer and points.

"A flake!" shrieks Raff clapping his hands with delight.

And right enough. One single – but very large – snowflake floats by them and lands on the grass below. They both clamber down as fast as they can and throw themselves flat out beside the snowflake, which has settled between two blades of grass.

"So that is why ... uhm ... the snowflakes won't fall," chuckles Nuffer. "They are all hanging up in the clouds and no one dares to be the first, but ... uhm ... when we began to play snowflakes, so they dared."

"But only one fell," muttered Raff.

"Yes," agreed Nuffer. "The bravest of them all, but ... uhm ... I believe all its friends will fall soon, then we shall be able to toboggan, and have a snowball fight and ... uhm ... and build snow-dens."

"I'm going to run home and ring the ship's bell," says Raff as he gets up. "The others must also see it."

"Good idea. I'll keep my eye on it in the meantime," says Nuffer without taking his eyes of the snowflake.

Raff hares off home, rings the bell, and soon all the residents of Peaceful Hollow come running up Dare-Dare Not Hill.

Nuffer gets up and shouts: "It's here! Come and look! Winter has arrived!"

"Yippee!" and "Whoopee!" and "Whacko!" they all exclaim as they stand in a circle around the snowflake.

"Now at last it's winter," sighs Nuffer with happiness.

Next morning Peaceful Hollow is covered in a thick, white blanket of snow. Nuffer hurries out. It is still snowing lightly. A white flake lands on Nuffer's trunk and he gets quite cross-eyed looking at it. Bella, Witlesswimp, Cat-yep



and Cat-nope, Pa Raffhill, Ma Raffhill and little Raff stand by their doors and watch the snow falling. Raff runs over to Nuffer with his toboggan. “Let’s get out to the toboggan run,” he yells.

“Uhm! ... yes, but ... shouldn’t we have a big snowball fight first?” asks Nuffer collecting a handful of snow. They usually do when the first snow falls.

“No,” says Raff. “We’ve waited too long ...” But he doesn’t get any more said because a snowball hits him right in the neck. He turns around. “Who did that?” Before he gets a chance to see who it was, another five snowballs hit him, and from then on the big snowball fight is on.

Witlesswimp has built a snowball machine. It was built with the intention of shooting out 537 snowballs per minute, but there is something the matter with it. It shoots out only one per minute, and it’s not snowballs that shoot out but dear little snowmen.

Pa and Ma Raffhill work together. Pa Raffhill makes snowballs and Ma Raffhill throws them. Unfortunately Pa Raffhill is very slow for as soon as he makes a good snowball, he stands and admires it. He thinks it is the best snowball he has ever made, so he can’t bear the thought that it is to be thrown.

Cat-yep and Cat-nope have filled their tummy pouches with snowballs, so they stand and fire away while they purr with delight. They stand back-to-back so no one can creep up to them from behind.

Bella is not throwing snowballs. She thinks it is much more fun to

avoid being hit, so she dances around on her toes in her winter ballet shoes, jumping, ducking, and weaving around the others so that nobody can hit her even though she is as big as she is.

When the fight is over, they all go home to Cat-yep and Cat-nope to eat sniffyslices and drink jiffyjuice. They eat a lot of sniffyslices in Peaceful Hollow in wintertime. You take a sniffycumber, cut it in slices, dip the slices first in milk, then in ground macaroons, then brown sugar, and finally in cinnamon before baking them in the oven. Ooooh! They taste scrumptious. Just the smell can make your mouth water. They come a close second to fluffcakes as the best in the world – according to Nuffer.

When they have eaten, and sat and enjoyed themselves talking about the snowball fight, and how many they all had hit, Raff nudges Nuffer with his elbow.

“Shall we go up to the toboggan hill now?” he whispers.

Nuffer shoves the last bit of sniffyslice in his mouth – he has been keeping it – and nods. “Yep – let’s go.”

They say thank you for the sniffyslices and jiffyjuice and run out into the snow. Their toboggans have been standing ready outside their houses for several days, so they each grab a toboggan and begin to trek through the snow. When they get to the hill, Raff climbs on his toboggan and gets ready for a run down Dare Hill.

“W...wait ... uhm ... wait a bit,” says Nuffer. “Won’t you try ...uhm ... Dare Not Hill first?”

“Of course not,” says Raff. “And you shouldn’t either.”

“Sh... shouldn’t I?”

“No! Can you remember what you said last winter?”

“Uhm...did I say anything at all last winter?”

“Yes. On the last day of snow you said: ‘Next winter I will definitely toboggan down Dare Hill.’ That’s exactly what you said.”

“Did I ... uhm ... did I really?”

“YES!”

Nuffer goes carefully to the edge of Dare Hill. It is very steep. “Well ... uhm ... well I still mean what I said – next winter I will definitely toboggan down Dare Hill.”

With that he gets on his toboggan and whooshes down Dare Not Hill.

