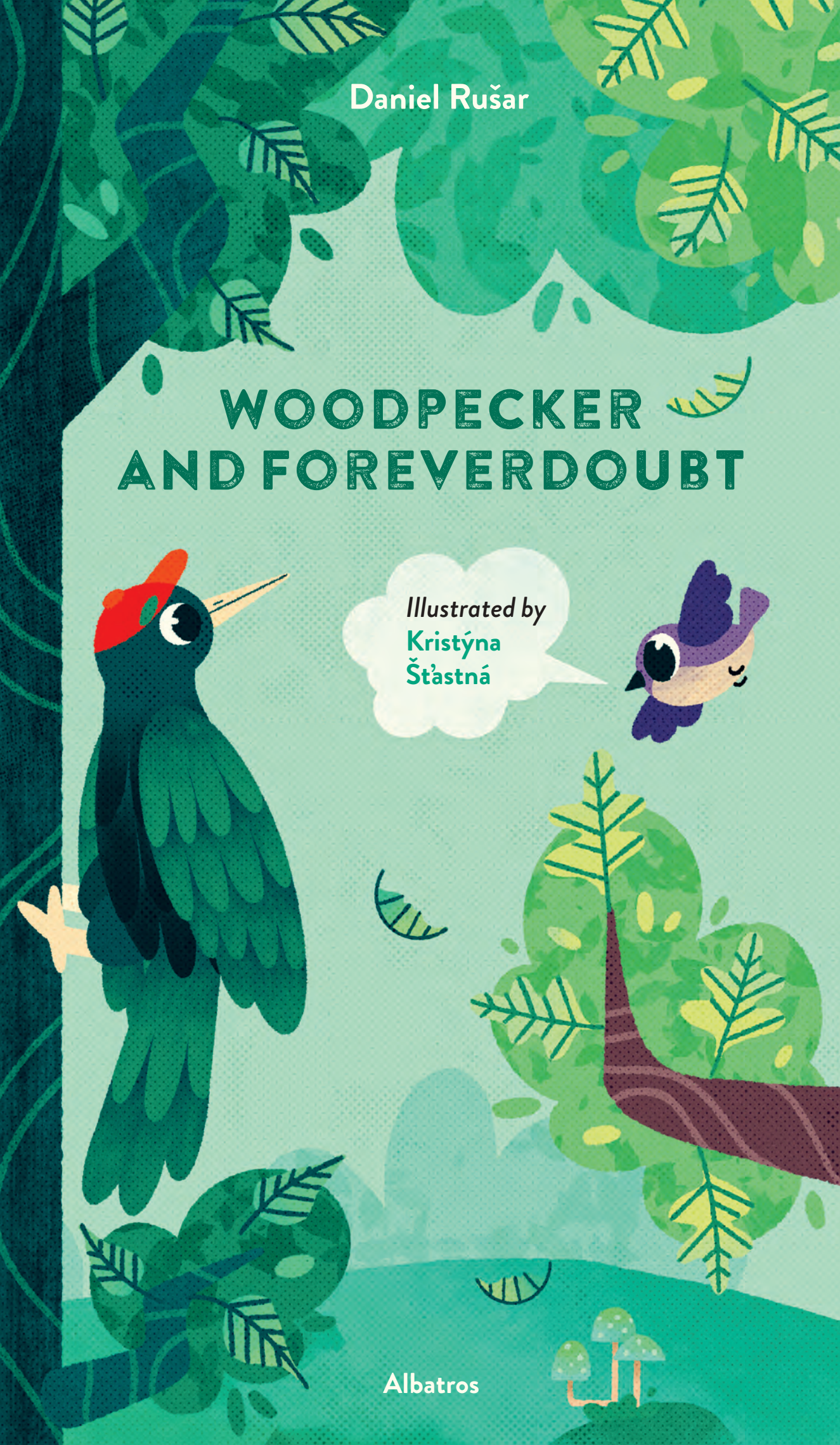


Daniel Rušar

# WOODPECKER AND FOREVERDOUBT

*Illustrated by*  
**Kristýna  
Šťastná**

Albatros





# WOODPECKER AND FOREVERDOUBT

Daniel Rušar  
Kristýna Šťastná



Albatros





For Eliáš, Patrik, František,  
Honzík, Diviš and Nikola,  
and for other kids who  
sometimes hear Foreverdoubt.



© Daniel Rušar, 2021  
Illustrations © Kristýna Šťastná, 2021  
Copyright © Albatros Media, a. s., 2021







The young woodpecker breathed in.

The wood smelled good. It had big, sturdy trees, deciduous and evergreen. It also had dry, fallen trunks, and the sound of flowing water. Woodpecker smiled. This was the place he had always dreamed of. He knew that if he tried, he would find all he needed to live well here, including plenty to eat.

‘This is where I’ll make my nest,’ he decided.







YOU'LL  
NEVER DO IT!  
YOU'LL NEVER  
DO IT!

He found himself a large beech tree, dug his claws in, and started tapping.

Tap, tap, tap, tap. He cut into the wood. Tap, tap, tap, tap. Now and then he pecked out a piece of fungus. Tap, tap, tap, tap. The hollow in the tree got deeper and deeper.

**'YOU'LL NEVER DO IT! YOU'LL NEVER DO IT!'** said a voice from somewhere. Woodpecker froze. Then he sat back on his strong tail.

*That voice – what could it be?*



‘Who are you?’ he said, his own voice  
small and frightened. No one answered.  
Woodpecker looked this way and that.  
Then he clambered all the way around the trunk.  
There was no sign of anyone.

*That voice – what could it be?*


No one made themselves known.







YOU'LL  
NEVER DO IT!  
YOU'LL NEVER  
DO IT!



Woodpecker went back to pecking out his nest.  
'YOU'LL NEVER DO IT! YOU'LL NEVER DO IT!' said a mocking voice.  
'Who's that bothering me?' Woodpecker cried.  
'Is it some rascal inside the tree? I'll see about that...'  
He tugged carefully at the bark with his beak.  
And there they were – grubs! Woodpecker shook out his tail and flexed his legs, as if ready for a fight. He was at war with these scamps, and the trees were full of them!

*Which of them was sneering at him right now?*



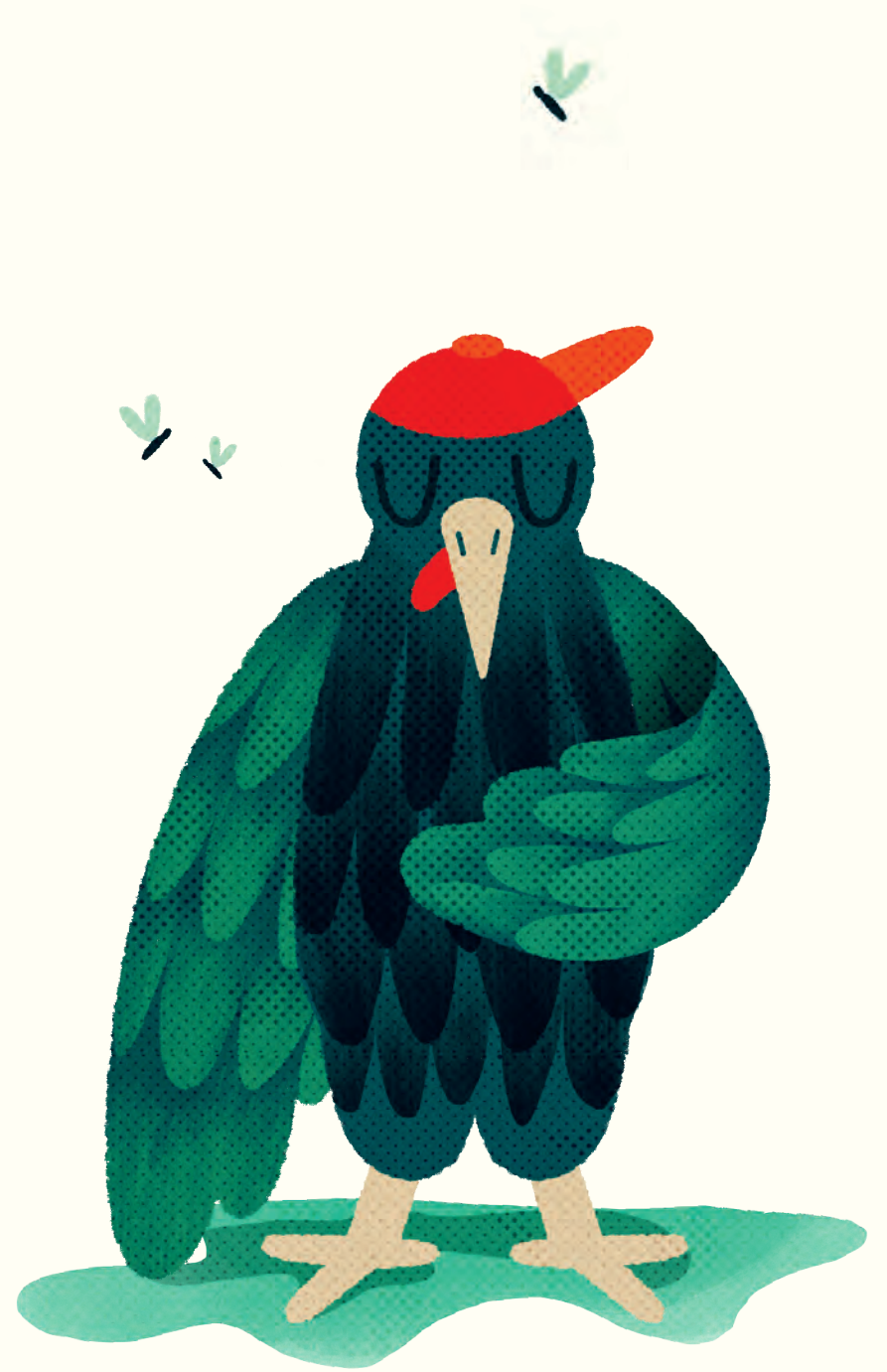


Were they ants, who fight in a large group  
and have a bite as sharp as a snake's?  
Were they longhorn beetles, who scare away birds  
by flapping their wings?  
Were they woodwasps, who cry blue murder  
as they stomp and grimace?  
Were they woodworms, who roar like a football crowd?  
Were they caterpillars, who look all sweetness and light  
but are as wicked and mocking as old crows?

*Which of these was taunting Woodpecker now?*







‘You’ll pay for this!’ Woodpecker cried. Then he opened his beak and thrust out his sticky tongue to pick up all the scoundrels he could find.

‘That’s that, then,’ he said, as he savoured the snack.



**'YOU'LL NEVER DO IT! YOU'LL NEVER DO IT!'** came the voice again, making Woodpecker so angry that the red cap on his head grew.

'Stop that blabber!' he shouted. 'Once I catch you, I'll make mincemeat of you! Where are you? Show yourself!' And he pecked at the tree with such force that he almost knocked it over. 'Come on! Where are you!'

**'YOU'LL NEVER DO IT! YOU'LL NEVER DO IT!'** said the voice once more.

Woodpecker flew to the nearest poplar, but the annoying voice followed him there. By now he was so angry that he opened his mouth to howl. But no sound came out.

**YOU'LL NEVER DO IT!**  
**NEVER DO IT!**







He flew to his uncle, to tell him of his trouble and to ask for his advice.

‘What does the voice sound like?’ the wise relative wanted to know. They were sitting together in a great oak.

‘Like mine. And I hear it everywhere! Everywhere, everywhere, everywhere! Simply everywhere!’

‘It really is a bother, isn’t it?’ said Uncle.

‘Yes. A big bother! The cheek of it!’

Uncle was quiet for a moment. Then he said:

‘It sounds like Foreverdoubt. Your inner voice.’

‘My inner what? Who is he?’ Woodpecker asked.

‘And what’s he doing inside me? I must have swallowed him. But he’s still speaking.’





Daniel Rušar

## WOODPECKER AND FOREVERDOUBT



Illustrated by Kristýna Štátná

Graphic design and typesetting Veronika Kopečková

Translated by Andrew Oakland

Copyright © Albatros Media, a. s., 2021

All rights reserved.









**Tap, tap, tap!** A woodpecker is merrily pecking at a tree, making himself a nest in a hollow. Then he stops. Why? Because a weak voice in his head has told him he'll never finish the job. Will the woodpecker stand up to the voice of Foreverdoubt? A touching story about facing up to uncertainty. Even if we can't get rid of doubt, we can learn to overcome it.

