

Red Pelican

May one story in the future begin with a pelican named Pete. Pete will be an unusual pelican, but he won't know that yet. The other pelicans will. They'll remind him of how unusual he is all the time, but one of his unusual qualities will be never noticing such things. You can tease Pete until you've said everything unfriendly you can think of, sometimes twice, but Pete won't notice. No one will know his other unusual quality, related to this one, because no one will think to try it and find out: you can say the tiniest nice thing to Pete, and his whole body will turn red with warmth and joy. Imagine that, a red Pelican. I'm afraid you'll have to imagine it, because no one has said anything nice to Pete, not once before this story begins, and not so often after. But please keep imagining that red pelican, dear reader. Please.