

Small Things brought Together



It started with just a few twigs. That's all a natural-born designer needs, to begin with.

Having planted them vertically in the ground, he went in search of straw and sticks to continue the job. Bit by bit he built an avenue of two parallel rows consisting of straw, twigs, and sticks, which he then bent over at the top to form a domed tunnel, just wide enough for him to pass through.

When he felt the structure was long enough, he painted its walls with vegetable juices, using a piece of chewed bark as a paintbrush. This section of the construction took about five weeks.

Then came the fun part – decorating the entrance. He set out to search for suitable materials, but didn't stray too far, in case others might come and destroy his handiwork by stealing pieces of it for their own building work. Competition in the area was intense.

After many trips, in several directions, he managed to select the best quality fresh flowers, red berries, white pebbles, silver snail shells, and green ferns, lichens and leaves. He was also very lucky to find one or two iridescent insect skeletons. As a modernist, he didn't feel the need to be a slave to convention or tradition. So, with a daringly contemporary flourish, he added some bright blue bottle tops and pieces of shiny glass.

With great care, he placed each of these items in just the right spot, to produce a magnificent entrance display. Finally, his bachelor pad was complete.

All he had to do now was wait for his ladylove to come and admire his beautiful bower. If she was impressed with his architecture, his courting chirps, and rooster walks, (and surely she would be) they would mate, and she would go off to build her nest and rear the young ones, who would become members of the next generation of bower birds.

As Vincent Van Gogh said: *Great things are done by a series of small things brought together.*

Lorna Flanagan was born in Portadown, grew up in Enniskillen, and is now living in County Armagh again. Some of her flash fiction pieces have appeared in *North Star* and *The Bramley*. She is now working on a novel that's 'a bit wacky, but fun to write.'