

The Girl and the Kookaburra



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Maya lived in a small house with a big garden in Australia. Every morning, she woke up to the sound of birds singing outside her window. She loved to listen to their chirps, whistles, and warbles. Maya had warm brown skin, curly dark hair in two puffy buns, and a bright curious smile. She always wore her yellow t-shirt with a small bird print and carried her green canvas satchel everywhere.



One sunny morning, Maya sat under a gum tree and closed her eyes. She heard a soft tweet-tweet from a little brown bird. Then a loud laugh burst from a tall tree. 'Ha-ha-ha-ha!' It was a kookaburra! Maya giggled. She had heard kookaburras before, but this one sounded especially cheeky. She decided to find out where each bird call came from.



Maya took out her notebook and a pencil from her green satchel. She drew a big circle for the garden and a little house for her home. Then she heard the kookaburra again. 'Ha-ha-ha!' It came from the old gum tree on the left. She drew a small bird and wrote 'kookaburra' next to it. 'This will be my sound map,' she said.



Maya listened carefully. A willie wagtail sang from the fence. Its call was quick and lively: 'Sweet-sweet-sweet!' The little black and white bird wagged its long tail up and down. Maya drew a tiny bird on the fence in her map. She marked it with a wavy line for the wagging tail. The willie wagtail kept singing, as if to say, 'Did you get that?'



Next, Maya heard a magpie caroling from the roof. Its song was rich and bubbly, like water trickling over stones. She drew a magpie on the roof and added musical notes. Then a flock of rainbow lorikeets screeched overhead. Their calls were loud and excited. Maya drew them flying across the top of her map, with bright squiggles for their noisy chatter.



Maya walked slowly around the garden, stopping to listen. Near the flower bushes, she heard a soft 'cheep-cheep' from a tiny wren. She drew a little wren hidden in the flowers. Then a honeyeater called 'chip-chip' from the bottlebrush tree. Maya added its call to her map. Her map was getting full of birds and sounds!



As she listened, Maya noticed something. The birds were not just making noise. They were making music! The kookaburra's laugh was like a drumbeat. The willie wagtail's song was like a fast dance. The magpie's carol was like a lovely tune. 'It's like an orchestra,' Maya whispered. 'But with no instruments!'



Maya sat very still under the gum tree. She wanted to hear every sound. The kookaburra laughed again, and this time Maya laughed too. 'Ha-ha-ha!' she copied. The kookaburra tilted its head and laughed even louder. It seemed to like her. Maya drew a big laughing kookaburra in the middle of her map, with its beak wide open.



Then Maya heard a new sound. It was a soft, low coo from a dove. She looked up and saw the dove sitting on the telephone wire. Its call was gentle and calm. Maya drew the dove and wrote 'coo-coo' next to it. She realized that every bird had its own special voice. Some were loud, some were soft, but all were beautiful.



Maya looked at her sound map. It was covered with drawings of birds and their calls. She had marked where each sound came from. But the map was more than just pictures. It was like a piece of music you could see. 'Nature has its own music,' she said. 'And I can hear it everywhere!'



Just then, Maya's best friend Rosie came over. Rosie had a short black bob and a leaf hair clip. She saw Maya's map and her eyes went wide. 'Wow! What is that?' she asked. Maya explained how she had drawn all the bird calls. 'Can you hear them too?' Maya asked. Rosie listened. 'I hear the kookaburra!' she said with a grin.



Maya and Rosie sat together under the gum tree. They closed their eyes and listened. The kookaburra laughed. The willie wagtail sang. The magpie caroled. The lorikeets screeched. It was a wonderful bird concert! Rosie said, 'It's like the birds are playing just for us.' Maya nodded. 'And we don't need any instruments to join in.'



Maya showed Rosie how to draw her own sound map. Rosie drew a kookaburra on a branch and a willie wagtail on the fence. They laughed as they tried to copy the bird calls. 'Ha-ha-ha!' said Maya. 'Tweet-tweet!' said Rosie. The birds seemed to answer them. It was a game of music and friendship.



Soon, other friends came to see what Maya and Rosie were doing. They all wanted to listen to the bird music. Maya shared her sound map with them. 'You can make your own maps too,' she said. 'Just listen and draw.' The children spread out in the garden, each with a notebook and pencil, listening to the birds.



The garden was filled with the sounds of birds and children. Everyone was smiling. Maya felt happy. She had discovered that nature's music was all around her. And the kookaburra, with its cheeky laugh, had started it all. 'Thank you, kookaburra,' she whispered. The kookaburra laughed again, as if to say, 'You're welcome!'



From that day on, Maya always listened to the birds. She knew that you don't need instruments to make beautiful songs. Nature has its own music, and it is everywhere. She and her friends often sat under the gum tree, enjoying the bird concert. And the kookaburra always laughed the loudest.