

The Girl and the Wallaby



Çınar BİBER

The Girl and the Wallaby

Çınar BİBER



Maya was a curious girl with warm brown skin and curly black hair in two puffy buns. She lived in a cozy house near a grassy hill. Every morning, she packed her green canvas satchel with a notebook and a pencil. She loved to explore and write down everything she saw. One sunny day, she skipped outside, ready for a new adventure.



As Maya walked near the hill, she saw a reddish-brown wallaby with a cream belly and a long tail. The wallaby had gentle dark eyes and small rounded ears. Around its neck was a woven grass collar. Maya stopped and whispered, "Hello, wallaby." The wallaby looked at her calmly and nibbled some grass. Maya sat down quietly to watch.



Suddenly, a tiny head peeked out from the wallaby's pouch. It was a joey! The joey had soft grey-brown fur, big shiny black eyes, and a tiny pink nose. Maya gasped with delight. "Oh! A baby!" she whispered. The joey blinked at her and wiggled its small ears. Maya quickly pulled out her notebook and wrote: "Wallaby has a joey in her pouch."



Maya returned every day to watch the wallaby family. She learned that the joey stayed safe inside the pouch, feeding and sleeping. The mother wallaby was calm and protective. She let Maya watch from a respectful distance. Maya wrote: "The pouch is like a cozy sleeping bag for the baby." She drew a picture of the joey peeking out.



One afternoon, Maya saw the joey climb out of the pouch for the first time. It was no bigger than her hand! The joey wobbled on long thin legs and took a tiny hop. Then it quickly scrambled back into the pouch. Maya giggled and wrote: "The joey is learning to hop." She wondered how long it would stay in the pouch.



Maya decided to learn more about wallaby families. She asked her grandma Ruth, who had round glasses and a kind smile. Grandma Ruth listened carefully as Maya shared her notes. "Did you know the joey stays in the pouch for months?" Maya asked. Grandma Ruth smiled and said, "You are a wonderful observer, Maya." Maya felt proud and wanted to learn even more.



The next day, Maya brought her notebook and a small pair of binoculars. She watched the mother wallaby munch on grass while the joey slept in the pouch. Maya drew a diagram of the pouch and labeled it. She wrote: "The joey drinks milk inside the pouch." She also noticed the mother wallaby cleaning the joey's fur with her tongue.



Maya's friends asked her about the wallaby family. She showed them her drawings and told them how the joey grows. "The joey starts as tiny as a jellybean," she said. "Then it grows bigger and stronger." Her friends were amazed. They wanted to see the wallaby too. Maya promised to take them to the hill after school.



One day, the joey hopped out of the pouch and explored the grass. It sniffed a flower and nibbled a leaf. Maya watched with excitement. She wrote: "The joey is exploring!" The mother wallaby kept a close eye on her baby. When the joey got tired, it hopped back into the pouch. Maya learned that the pouch is always a safe place.



Maya noticed a tiny blue ribbon on the joey's ear one morning. She wondered who put it there. Grandma Ruth said, "Maybe someone is studying the joey, just like you." Maya felt happy that others cared about the wallaby family. She added to her notebook: "The joey has a blue ribbon. It is special."



Maya decided to share her wallaby facts with her whole family. She made a little booklet with drawings and notes. At dinner, she told her parents and Grandma Ruth about the joey's growth. "The joey stays in the pouch until it is big enough to hop outside," she explained. Her family clapped and praised her curiosity.



Grandma Ruth asked Maya, "What is the most amazing thing you learned?" Maya thought for a moment. "That animal families are fascinating," she said. "The mother wallaby takes care of her joey, just like you take care of me." Grandma Ruth hugged her. Maya felt warm inside. She knew she would keep watching and learning.



Maya's friends came to see the wallaby family. They watched quietly as the joey peeked from the pouch. Maya explained how the joey feeds and stays safe. Her friends were surprised and delighted. "You are so lucky to see this every day," they said. Maya smiled and wrote: "Sharing makes learning even better."



As weeks passed, the joey grew bigger and stronger. It hopped around the grass more often and explored further from its mother. Maya wrote: "The joey is growing up!" She felt a little sad but also happy. The mother wallaby still kept the joey close. Maya learned that growing up is a natural and wonderful part of life.



Maya shared her notebook with her class at school. She showed pictures of the joey and told everyone how it lived in the pouch. Her teacher said, "You are a great scientist, Maya!" The class clapped. Maya beamed. She realized that sharing knowledge helps everyone learn. She added a new page to her notebook: "Wallaby facts for everyone."



Maya sat on the hill one last time before school started again. She watched the wallaby family hop away into the sunset. She felt grateful for the amazing things she had learned. Her notebook was full of facts and drawings. She whispered, "Thank you, wallaby family." And she knew that animal families are truly fascinating.