

BIRD IN A CAGE

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One day, when I was a young bird, my life completely changed. I do not know how long ago it was, but I still remember flying through the sky looking down at the green forest below.

While I was looking for food, suddenly everything went dark.

I crashed into something soft, and then I was unable to move. I struggled to get loose, but I was not able to get free. I found myself in a small dark room. The walls were very hard, and I did not have much room to move. I hit the walls with my wings and yelled for help. After a while, since no one came to help me, I just gave up.

Inside the box, I found some water and food to eat. I do not know how long I was in the box.

Suddenly, the box opened, and a bright light blinded me. I fell to the ground, and I felt the warmth of the sun on my back. It took a minute for my eyes to adjust to the light. When I was able to see, I looked around. I was FREE!

I stretched my wings and waved them against the air. It felt so good to flap my wings and walk around. I must have been in there for a long time because my wings were very weak.

I began to explore. This place was so different. The ground was hard. It was not green. It was brown. Above me, I could not see any trees.

As I looked around, I saw birds everywhere. I had no idea what kind of birds they were. I had never seen any of these birds before. There were black birds, blue birds, yellow birds, green birds, and red birds, and they were all looking at me!

I flew around looking for a place to land so I could relax. Something was over the top of where I was, so I could not escape.

I flew in circles looking for a place to rest, and then I saw a small hole in a black box. I landed on the branch outside. When I put my head inside the hole, something bit me.

I said, "Ouch!" and then I jumped back.

When I tried to go inside again, the same thing happened.

A black bird popped out.

She yelled at me, "Leave me alone, can't you see I'm trying to take care of my family! They're sleeping. Leave us alone!"

I decided this was not a safe place, so I flew to the other side where I tried to hide in a corner. I found a place to land, but I was hanging upside down. I was not very comfortable like that.

I saw a place where I could rest, so I flew over to the open spot.

A big yellow bird flew over and sat next to me.

"Hello, my name is Tiki, what is your name?" asked the bird.

"Uh... Uh... um... I don't know, I don't think I have a name," I replied.

The other birds began to laugh.

"You don't have a name? Ha ha ha, now that's new!" said one of the larger birds laughing so hard he could hardly speak.

An older bird flew over and sat on my other side. He looked at me from my beak to my tail.

"I think we'll call him Newbie," he stated to the others. They all laughed. Then he flew away.

I thought to myself, "Hm.... Newbie? Yeah, Newbie, sounds OK to me."

So, from that day on, my name was Newbie.

I found out they called this place a zoo. It is a place where many animals live so humans can come to laugh and stare at them.

I liked the children. They are fun. They liked to come to our house and giggle.

They threw food at us. I found out if I flew from one end of the cage to the other, the people would go “oo” and “ah”.

Sometimes, it would rain for many days. I hated it when it rained.

In the forest, I could hide under a tree to keep dry, but in this place, when it rained, I got all wet. There was no place to hide from the rain.

After the rain stopped, the sun would come out. It was so bright and hot it dried my feathers quickly, but then I was uncomfortable from the heat because I did not have any shade.

I do not know how long I had been in the zoo, when one day, I decided to stay on the ground to look for food. To my surprise, the gate to our home opened. A human came inside, and we knew what this meant! Every time a human came inside, one of my friends disappeared.

I jumped up to fly away, but I was caught in a net. I knew this feeling. Once again, I was trapped.

I found myself in a dark place and could not move.

“What now?” I thought to myself.

The box moved up and down. I tried to keep from hitting the sides of the box, but I bounced up and down like a toy.

Finally, the bouncing stopped. Then it got very quiet. I waited to see what would happen next.

The box opened, and I was gently dropped to the ground. I rolled over and got onto my feet. I spread my wings and flapped them to get rid of the stiffness. I looked around. I was in a very different place, and I was alone. I was in a very small cage. I looked up and saw a place to sit, so I jumped up to get a better view.

While I was looking around, suddenly, there was a face in front of me. It was one of those small humans. I did not have enough room to fly away, so I just sat there and stared back at him. I do not know how long this lasted. Then I heard a strange noise.

“Hay - low, Hay – low, Hay – low, Hay – low”, the small child said over and over again. I had nothing better to do, so I sat there and watched the small person who was making the strange noise.

This continued for many days. He kept coming to the cage and making that strange noise, “Hay - low, Hay – low, Hay – low, Hay – low”.

He would say it again and again.

Finally, I got mad. I did not want to hear that sound anymore, so I yelled, “Hay – low!”

The small child stopped making the noise. He began to laugh at me. He was just like the kids at the zoo. Then he gave me some food.

The next day he came back. He started making that noise again, “Hay - low, Hay – low, Hay – low, Hay – low”.

I got fed up with the noise. Once again, I blurted out, “Hay – low!”

He stopped.

I found out that if I said, “Hay – low” he would stop. Then he would give me some food. This became our game.

Then he started making other noises. I found out that if I repeated the noise, he would give me a treat. I liked the treats, so I learned many new words. The small human and I became good friends.

VOCABULARY (*Match the word to its definition*)

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. forest _____ | a. bill, the mouth of a bird |
| 2. young _____ | b. vanish, go missing |
| 3. struggle _____ | c. sound |
| 4. blinded _____ | d. woodland, place with many trees |
| 5. corner _____ | e. where two walls meet |
| 6. beak _____ | f. up and down motion |
| 7. zoo _____ | g. sightless, unable to see |
| 8. disappear _____ | h. resist, try hard, fight |
| 9. bounce _____ | i. menagerie, place with many animals |
| 10. noise _____ | j. immature, not old |

TRUE / FALSE

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. I liked the forest. | T / F |
| 2. My name is Norman. | T / F |
| 3. I liked the hot sun in the zoo. | T / F |
| 4. I liked living in the zoo. | T / F |
| 5. The small child said “Ah-Choo” to me over and over. | T / F |
| 6. I liked the treats the children gave me. | T / F |
| 7. I was in the circus. | T / F |
| 8. My new friend in the zoo was named Tiki. | T / F |
| 9. I missed the rain and the hot sun at the zoo. | T / F |
| 10. I hated the humans who entered my cage at the zoo. | T / F |

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. Where did I live before I was caught the first time? _____
 - a) in the city
 - b) in the zoo
 - c) on a farm
 - d) in the forest

2. What name was I given when I was at the zoo? _____
 - a) Norbert
 - b) Tiki
 - c) Newbie
 - d) Norton

3. What happened when a human came into the cage at the zoo? _____
 - a) I was caught.
 - b) I caught a cold.
 - c) I got wet.
 - d) Tiki yelled at me.

4. What did the little boy say to me over and over? _____
 - a) Hay-Ho
 - b) Hey-You
 - c) Hay-Low
 - d) Hop-Ho

COMPREHENSION: *(Write a complete sentence to answer the question.)*

1. Where was I born?

2. What was the name of the yellow bird I met at the zoo?

3. Where was I living after I left the forest?

4. What was the name that yellow bird gave to me?

5. What was the word the small human wanted me to say?

6. What did I find inside of the first box after I was caught?

7. What did I do so the small humans at the zoo would say “oo” and “ah”?

8. What did the people say when I flew across the cage?

9. What always happened when humans entered the cage at the zoo?

10. What happened when I put my head into the small hole in the black box?
