

Laura Santos
and the
Spix Macaws

A book by
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9 years old



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Chapter 1 - The Woodcutters

“Darling, I’m just going to collect nuts for breakfast,” Yellow the Spix macaw said to his wife.

“Of course, be careful!” cooed Violet, his wife. Yellow flew out the window and gracefully disappeared with his beautiful blue wings.

“Mama, what’s for breakfast?” asked Red and Blue, just waking up.

“Your Father is hunting for some nuts right now.” answered their Mother. ”

All of a sudden, Yellow returned, panicking and sweating.

“They’re here! Woodcutters are cutting trees just a few miles away!” he screeched.

“Oh my! Oh my! What will we do?” Violet exclaimed because she was panicking now, fanning herself with her feathers.

“Oh darling, what about our home? We both have lived here all our lives, we can’t stop that now!”

Chapter 2 - Serious News

Meanwhile in Brazil, a talented, black haired girl called Laura who had always loved the rainforest, was listening to the radio.

”Hello everyone and I’m Barry Lee and today the weather forecast is in my hands.” a voice was projected from the little contraption.

“Come on, no one wants to learn about the weather!” moaned Laura. She skipped the update and onto some more interesting news.

“Hi everyone I’m Shera Banks and here is today’s news. We will be reporting serious damage to the rainforest. People are cutting down trees and disturbing creatures living in this wonderful place. Will anyone stop them? And if so, how?” the news lady reported.

Immediately Laura jumped up. The rainforest? Being damaged? This couldn’t happen! The rainforest contained so many living creatures! She ran to the computer and started booking flights to the nearest place to the rainforest.

Chapter 3 - The Sloths

In the rainforest, the Spix Macaw family were very worried. When nothing could get any worse, the Sloths knocked on the door. Violet welcomed them in.

“H-e-l-l-o” slowly said one of the Sloths.

“Yes yes good morning” hurriedly replied Yellow clearly not happy the Sloths had arrived.

“Well, you must be off” carried on Yellow.

“No! Have you heard?” surprisingly shouted the Sloth.

“Wow! Um well you must stay and have some fruit tea.” Violet interrupted, becoming frightened of how the sloth spoke so fast.

“A-s I w-a-s s-a-y-i-n-g t-h-e f-o-r-e-s-t-i-s i-n d-a-n-g-e-r.” The Sloth was taking his time.

“Hey Mr. Sloth, I heard there are some buds and leaves hanging around the river.” Red quickly reported to the sloths, saving her parents from hassle.

“O-o-o-h-h:h!!!!” the Sloths sang in chorus and climbed their way out of the Spix Macaws nest.

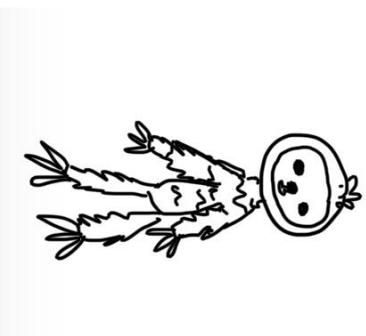
“Hooray!!!” Yellow exclaimed.

“Excuse you!” Violet slapped her husband.

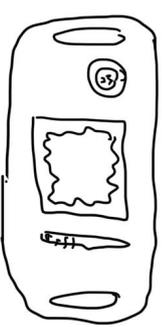
“Sorry” Yellow sulked sheepishly.

“Thank you,” whispered Violet to her daughter.

“Ah Ha!” Yellow seemed to have caught his wife red handed. Violet looked at him with an evil eye and left the room with Red.



Chapter 4 - The Rainforest



“May I take your order?” asked a clerk on Laura’s plane.

“Oooh, yes please.” Laura answered, taking a look at the menu. “I’ll have some jam on toast please.” Laura answered after a long look at it.

“Of course.” The clerk walked away with Laura’s order and disappeared.

Laura couldn’t wait to visit the RainForest. The plane was soon going to land. “I wonder what it will be like,” she muttered to herself, beginning to feel hungry. The clerk returned with a tray and passed it on to Laura.

“Thanks! Um, when is the plane landing?” Laura asked.

“Ten minutes” the clerk replied and left as quickly as she had come.

Laura spent the next nine minutes eating her toast. Then the plane started to slope, it was landing! Laura couldn’t contain her excitement. When the plane landed, Laura was the first to exit. She ran to her hotel, dropped off some of her things, and stood outside the cab rank with her backpack. She wanted to get to the forest as soon as possible!

Meanwhile, the Spix Macaw family were getting ready to leave. They couldn’t carry everything, so everyone was going to leave empty handed. They took one last look at their home, and flew away.

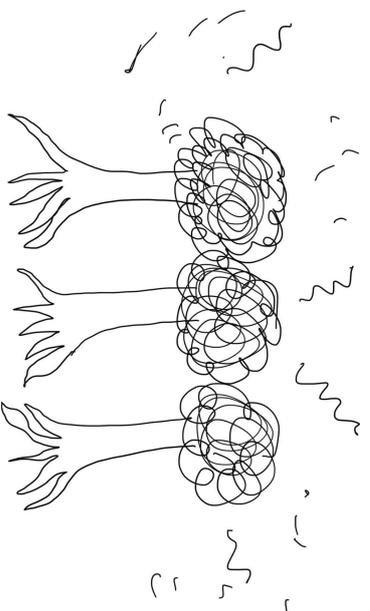
Chapter 5 - The Spix Macaws

Laura stepped out of the cab and took a look at the forest. She heard drills and chainsaws coming from inside. For once, Laura felt scared. Could she face these people? But when she thought about the endangered animals, she ran in. She followed the sound of chainsaws to a completely plain area. All the trees had been cut down.

“Why are you doing this? You can’t do this! It’s plainly illegal!!!!” Laura clamped her hand over her mouth, why did she say that?

“Hey there little girl, none of this is your business, so just get out of here!” one of the woodcutters shouted fiercely at her.

Everyone laughed. Laura ran away, embarrassed and her eyes wet. She found a rock and kicked it. “Ouch!” she exclaimed and sat on it, rubbing her sore foot. All of a sudden, she heard a squawking noise. She looked up and saw a flash of blue wings. She could recognise those birds anywhere, they were Spix Macaws! She had gained courage again. She jumped up, and ran after them.



Chapter 6 - Hugs and Squawks

The Spix Macaws were flying as fast as they could, trying to find a safe place to land. On the other side, Laura was wishing they didn't fly so fast, she needed to keep up with them. Suddenly, the Spix Macaws landed. Laura didn't dare move. She peeked behind a bush.

"Mama, why are we here?" asked Blue, causing Laura to jump, they could talk? Unfortunately Red heard and turned back.

"Mama, there's a human hiding in that bush!" Red exclaimed

"Fly!" screeched Yellow, taking sight of Laura too.

Laura saw her chance, she jumped up and said, "I won't hurt you, who would want that?"

"But how can we trust you?" Red asked.

"Because, if you couldn't trust me, I would have hurt you by now."

"Come on Mama, I think we should trust her." Red strutted towards Laura. Laura stroked her feathers. They were soft and clean.

"Cuddles!!!!!" Blue flew towards Laura and snuggled on her lap. Laura felt excited. The Spix Macaws were talking to her!!!!!! Plus snuggling, she thought, now stroking Blue. Yellow and Violet strutted to Laura and before she knew it, the Spix Macaws were in her hands!!!

“Where are you from?” asked Violet.

Laura explained how she had come here and why.

“Oh no! So they really are here!” Violet cried.

“Yes, but we must stop them!” Laura answered. “But before we can stop them, I think you’ll need a place to stay. You don’t mind hotels, do you?”

Red, Blue, Violet and Yellow looked at each other.

“Let’s try it!” Yellow grinned, then Violet grinned, then Red grinned and then Blue grinned (Only because he wanted to do whatever his family was doing) and finally, Laura grinned, scooped them up and hurried outside to catch a cab.

Chapter 7 - The Cab Ride

“Now shhhhhh, be quiet!” Laura hushed her feathery friends, who were in her backpack as she stepped into the cab.

“Morning Ma’am, where are we going today?” the driver asked. He was quite surly with ringlets of brown hair and beady eyes.

“Ummmm, Hotel Amazon please” Laura answered.

“Of course!” The Driver grinned again, showing shiny white teeth.

Inside the backpack, the Spix Macaws were fiddling with all the things Laura owned. Toothbrushes, makeup, rope, toiletries and all sorts. Suddenly, Yellow found a random feather duster and brought it up to his beak to inspect it. He accidentally brushed it on his beak and he felt a sneeze coming. A big one. He tried to cover it up, but it was too strong. 3, 2, 1.....

“ACHOOOOOOOOO!” he sneezed.

“Ma’am, what was that sound coming from your backpack?” the driver asked.

“Ummm, uhhh, that was me! Not to worry!” Laura replied. She slapped the backpack. Meanwhile inside, because Laura slapped it, there was a gigantic period of fumbling. And somehow, the feathers brushed everyone’s beaks. 3, 2, 1.....

”ACHOOOOOO!!!” It was too strong this time. The driver stopped the cab and said,

”Alright Missy, If you have anything illegal in there, I have to check.”

He opened the door of the cab and started toward Laura’s side. Laura knew, it wasn’t a yes or no question, she opened her opposite door and ran with all her might, towards the hotel.

“Come back!” the driver roared, but Laura couldn’t hear.



Chapter 8 - The Plan

That night, Laura made a nest in her backpack for the Spix Macaws. They all fell asleep quickly, but Laura had to take a bath. She ran the tap, opened the window and put in the bubbles. When it finished running, she sank in, so relaxing, she thought. Especially because the cool breeze was blowing in from the window. Laura heard some music. Jazz was played from the opposite balcony of another hotel room. She looked up, and to her surprise, it was the cab driver!!!!!! She screamed, which attracted the driver's attention, he looked over. His face turned scarlet. Laura screamed again and hid under the bubbles. When she was sure he was gone, she got out, closed the window and went to bed. In the morning, she explained what had happened to the Spix Macaws.

“Oh my! We shall get caught!!” Violet was being a drama queen and fanning herself with her feathers.

“Just calm down! We'll just have to avoid him for now.” Laura replied “We have another problem to solve! And it's about you!” Laura grinned.

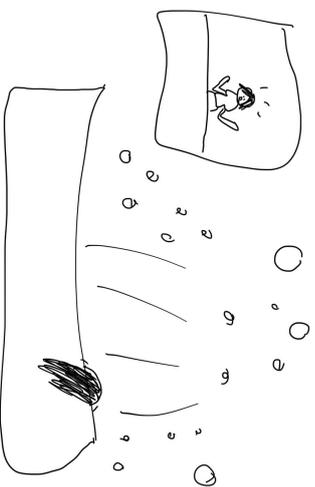
“But what can we do?” asked Yellow. “What if.....” Laura was interrupted by a knock on the door.

“Hidel!!!” She hissed and started towards the door. When she opened it, the cab driver was there.

“Were you talking to yourself?” he asked suspiciously, looking around.

“Umm, no.” Laura replied. “HMMMMMM” The driver looked even more suspicious.

“Bye!” Laura suddenly shooed him out the door and slammed it. “I’m glad that’s sorted” she sighed. Suddenly she looked up, “I know how to save the rainforest!”



Chapter 9 - The Presentation

“We shall make a presentation! “ Laura’s face looked shining.

“But what will it be about?” Red asked, curious.

“You! And the rainforest!” Laura answered enthusiastically. “And I will present it to Peru, Columbia and Bolivia! Let’s go to the Forest and take some photos!”

The Spix Macaws jumped in Laura’s backpack and Laura put it on. They would be heroes! Outside the Cab Rank, Laura spotted the driver. She dipped behind a bench. What was he doing? The driver seemed to be watching out for something. Could it be Laura? A sudden thought came to her. What if he had reported her to the authorities? A cab pulled up just outside. Laura needed that cab. She revealed her hiding place and ran to it.

“The Rainforest please” She shut the door.

“Of course.” The driver seemed to be in a bad mood.

Laura looked out the window, and to her disgust, her previous cab driver was following her in his own cab! How are we going to get photos now? Luckily, they were almost there, so Laura could just disappear into the rainforest. When the driver stopped she paid him, and ran into the forest. She smelt the breeze as she unzipped her backpack. The Spix Macaws flew out, happy to see their home again.

“Where are the best spots for photos?” asked Laura.

“Come on! We’ll show you!” replied Red with a grin.

They flew and Laura walked for what seemed like miles. Until they reached a waterfall. The water was crystal clear, the rocks below were smooth and beautiful and the air smelt deliciously clean. Snap! Snap! Laura didn’t want to waste a minute in this beautiful place.

“Do you play here?” she asked Blue and Red.

“Yeah, we play hide and seek here, its so fun! Jumping in between rocks and flying so fast we can hear the wind howling!” Red’s voice rose.

“Wow! It must be so fun to play here. But we need to get moving if we want to make it back to the hotel for two.”

She stood tall, ready to carry on running after these beautiful birds. Then after that, the birds took her to more wonderful places, waterfalls, rock pools, nests and even introduced her to some animal friends! As they were taking the journey to their final destination, they heard someone walking towards them.

“Hello, Ma’am,” It was the original cab driver.

Chapter 10 - Cab Racing

The Spix Macaws and Laura froze.

“I see you have some friends there. Maybe they can make friends with me? If so, call me Bill.” He smirked.

Laura tried to give Red, Blue, Violet and Yellow the signal that they needed to move, but before they could, the cab driver suddenly said sternly

“Give them to me before I hand you to the authorities!” His face turned into a mischievous grin.

But Laura didn't like this, she ran over and stomped on his foot.

“OOOOWWWW!!!!!!” Bill screamed in pain.

Laura ran with the Spix Macaws, deeper and deeper into the forest. When they finally sat down, Red asked, “Where's Blue?”

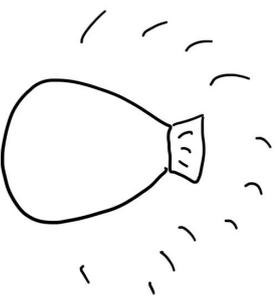
Laura looked around. Blue was gone. They ran back to where they met Bill, but he was gone, the place was deserted. Laura scooped up Red, Violet and Yellow, then she ran, faster than ever before. She found a cab with the driver that drove her there inside, but he was sleeping, she jumped in, and slammed her foot on the accelerator. VRRROOOMM!!!! The engine sprang into life and they were off. Soon Bill's cab was visible, and inside stood a large sack, a screeching sound was coming from it. Red, Violet and Yellow flew out the window, into the cab and started ripping the sack.

Bill realised and tried to shake them off, but the Spix Macaws weren't going to let go now! Laura drove faster, until she was in line with Bill's cab. She reached her hand out the window, ready to catch Blue, but there was too much fumbling, she couldn't get him. Suddenly, Laura saw Policemen by the side of the road, she called to them and indicated Bill. The Policemen got in their cars and started the chase. Luckily, the police cars were faster than Bills, so they caught him up fast.

“Stop the vehicle and get out!” One of the policemen shouted.

Bill had no choice. He got out, and walked towards the policemen. When no one was looking, Laura snuck out of her racing cab and collected Blue from the sack.

“Lady, we have this all cleared up, have a good day.” a policeman saluted at her and Laura walked the rest of the way to the hotel feeling good about herself.



Chapter 11 - Meeting the President

That afternoon, Laura and the Spix Macaws finished making the presentation. It was time for Laura to go home.

“I’ll miss you,” Laura said.

“Of course we will too dear, but you will always remember us.” Violet handed her a single feather. It was blue and soft. Laura hugged her friends. She opened the window and helped them up. Laura waved, and they flew away.

At the airport, Laura kept the feather safe in a little purse in her backpack. She would always remember the Spix Macaws. As she boarded the plane, she took one last look at the forest from a window, and stepped forwards. The plane flight was short, so when Laura left, it was just about lunchtime. But she had bigger things to do. She took a taxi to the government house in Brazil. When she arrived, the building was shiny white and there seemed to be a lot of offices. She went inside and took an elevator. As the doors opened, she faced a hall. Down at the end was a door that read, President. Laura walked to the end and knocked on the door. A woman answered.

“Are you here to visit the President?” she asked.

“Yes please” Laura answered. She was brought in and directed to a chair behind a desk. Sitting on the opposite chair sat the president.

“What may I do for you?” he asked politely.

“Um...” Laura was lost for words.

But then she remembered the Spix Macaws and found her voice. She explained what had happened, including Bill and the Spix Macaws. The President listened attentively and spoke only when wanted. He finally said,

“What an amazing adventure you have had. Of course you may present this.” He smiled “ We will organise a meeting tomorrow at three in the afternoon ” He smiled again, “And you shall be the guest of honour.”

“Thank you!” Laura grinned and stood up.

“You’re welcome,” The President replied.

Laura left the room. She couldn’t wait for tomorrow, because she, Laura Santos, was going to save the Spix Macaws!

A daring adventure.

A scary journey.

But it's filled with fun!

All words and illustrations by AML April 2022