

The Revelation



Jessica stood stiffly at the edge of the river and stared out into space, deliberately turning her back on the rest of the group. She hadn't wanted to come on this trip at all, but her mother had insisted that it would be good for her.

"You've got to be interested in something," her mother had sighed as she packed Jessica's clothes. "The only thing you seem to like these days is your music. Maybe going on this wilderness trip with other teenagers will be just what you need."

Before they had gotten in the van, Madeline Degas, the woman in charge of the group, had taken away Jessica's CD player and headphones and handed them to her mother. "Nothing electronic on the trip," she had reminded Jessica, smiling. "You'll be surprised by what you notice when you don't have things distracting you."

Jessica had glared at her, outraged by this invasion of her privacy, but it had done no good. Madeline had only grinned at her and walked over to speak with two other girls who had just arrived.

Now that they had reached their destination, Madeline and two other leaders were busily organizing the teenagers. Jessica, irked by their positive attitudes,

ignored them. She had been forced to come, so she intended to remain indifferent throughout the entire trip; she would not show a single sign of interest.

While looking over her new surroundings, a faint movement in the brush beside her caught her attention. Walking quietly over, she peered through the greenery and realized that a pair of dark eyes was looking steadily back into her own. She was startled and drew back for a moment, but the creature did not stir, so she parted the greenery to get a better look.

It was a mallard duck. It was nestled low in the bush, and the dark green of its head blended with the leaves, but the band of white on its neck gave it away.



"Sorry, fellow," she murmured. She watched it for a minute, wondering why it had allowed her to come so close. Then she realized that it must be injured. Cautiously, she let the branches fall back where they had been so that she wouldn't startle the bird, which was still staring at her trustingly.

She had to help it, she decided. Trust should not be betrayed. It was something that she felt was missing from the world, based on her experience. Jessica watched Madeline as she bustled about among the other campers. She hated to have to depend on Madeline for help, but she had to ask someone.

"Ready to go, Jess?" Madeline asked cheerfully as she approached.

Jessica hated having her name abbreviated. She managed to shrug it off, however, and replied, "No, actually, I have a question."

"Yes?" Madeline inquired expectantly.

"Is there a rehabilitation center for wildlife anywhere around here?" Jessica asked.

"A rehab center for wildlife?" Madeline repeated a little blankly. "Well, yes, there is. Why do you ask, Jess?"

Gritting her teeth, Jessica answered patiently. "I found a mallard that's been hurt and he needs someone to take care of him. I'd like to stay with him."

"Would you?" Madeline replied thoughtfully. "My assistant volunteers at the center. She could take you there and you two could catch up with us later."

Jessica nodded, certain that she could help the mallard. Smiling at the duck, she felt as though a great weight had been lifted from her heart. She had not known that helping another living creature could be so rewarding.

It was a revelation.

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Author's Words (AW)		Prior Knowledge (PK)		Inference
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Explain how finding the injured duck was important to Jessica. Support your answer with two details from the story.				
Based on the information in the story, what inference/assumption can you make about Jessica? Include information from the story to support your inference.				