The Camouflage Show

Preeti Talwar

DEEP in the heart of the lush green Amazon Rainforest, a special event was going to take place. Birds twittered from tall trees, monkeys swung through vines, and insects buzzed like tiny, weeny instruments. As tonight wasn't just any jungle night — it was the long-awaited Camouflage Show, a jungle tradition where animals showed off their best hiding skills.

"I can't wait!" chirped Luna the Dart Frog, hopping excitedly across a mossy log. She was tiny but bold, with electric-blue skin and black spots that gleamed out like paint on a canvas. "This year I've got the perfect pose! Nobody will mess with this look."

Perched underneath a leaf nearby, Glen the Glass Frog giggled softly. His skin was a fresh leaf-green, and his belly was so transparent that one could see his tiny heart thumping.

"Luna, you're glowing like a jewel. Are you sure that counts as camouflage?"

"Of course it does!" Luna said proudly. "This is called *warning camouflage*. My bright colours say: 'I'm poisonous! Don't even think of messing with me!"

"Ohhhh," Glen blinked. "I guess being flashy is your way of hiding from predators."

"That's right!" Luna puffed out her chest. "It's hiding in plain sight!"

Just then, a low, whispery *hooo-hooo-HUH* echoed through the trees. A log-shaped lump on a branch suddenly gave a wide yawn above, opened two wide yellow eyes and blinked slowly.

"Is that a broken branch... or...?" Glen whispered.

"Shh! That's Twiggy the Potoo!" Luna whispered back. "She's the camouflage queen!"

Twiggy didn't move. She sat completely still, looking exactly like a broken tree stump — until she slowly turned her head and said in a sleepy, scratchy voice, "You two are quite noisy for creatures trying to hide."

"We're practising!" Luna giggled.

"Good," Twiggy replied, fluffing her grey-and-brown feathers. "Camouflage isn't just about colour. It's about stillness... patience... and becoming one with one's surroundings."

Glen's eyes widened. "Wow. You don't even *look* real!"

"That's the point," Twiggy said with a sleepy smile. "During the day, predators walk right by me. They think I'm just a branch."

"And at night?" Luna asked.

"I hunt," Twiggy replied. "My eyes are made for the dark, and my mouth opens *this* wide," She opened her beak in a comically large circle, and both frogs leapt back with surprise.

Glen laughed. "Okay, that's a talent!"

As twilight fell and fireflies danced through the vines, all the animals of the jungle gathered in a leafy clearing. The Camouflage Show was about to begin. A sloth judge named Mossy — wearing a crown of leaves and flowers — slowly climbed onto a big passion flower, which served as a stage.

"Welcome, welcome..." he said, voice too soft and slow as his movements. "Tonight we shall see... the unseen."

Paco the parrot squawked the order of performance. "Luna the Dart Frog! Glen the Glass Frog! Twiggy the Potoo!"

"First up, me!" Luna whispered. She hopped confidently into the spotlight. The crowd oohed and aahed, seeing her dazzling blue skin.

Luna froze on a rock and croaked, "I might look like a dazzling gem, but it's my way of saying: 'I'm dangerous!'"

"Oooooh," murmured the crowd. Junky the jaguar cub clapped its paws.

Next was Glen. He climbed onto a branch under a large leaf and curled into a little green pebble. You could barely see him. The crowd leaned in, squinting.

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