Two blue green eyes peeked out from behind the couch, watching, as a solemn tired man in army fatigues pulled on a jacket and exited through the hall door opening to the garage. As the garage door opened, the pajama clad boy flipped over the couch and peered through the window as his dad backed the car out of the garage into the darkness. He checked to see if the bedroom door leading to his sister’s room was shut, then turned on the camp light he wore on his forehead. He went into the garage and opened a backpack he was carrying.

A mourning dove cooed as Caleb plundered through a box extracting scissors, construction paper, tape, twine, cloth, craft knife, large colored pens, ribbon, ruler, marker and dowels from a box in the garage and quickly returned to his own bedroom without waking either Sissy or his Mother. He hid his new possessions and camping light under the lower bunk and quietly climbed back into the top bunk without disturbing his younger brother’s deep sleep.
Two hours passed in what seemed like just a moment, the early morning bird chirps turned into a shrill screeching sound emanating from their opened bedroom door. “Get up and wash your hands! Mom has made breakfast and it is on the table!” announced their sister Katie in a very authoritarian voice. Her voice was accentuated with the sound of sizzling bacon. A woman dressed in business attire brushed through the doorway and briskly lifted up the three-year-old Noah and gave him a big hug and then pulled the covers down from Caleb’s face. He moaned and tried to turn around and pull the covers back up, but his mother already had grabbed the covers and threw them to the bottom of the bed. She kissed his cheek. “Good Morning boys” said the smiling woman. Her eyes twinkled and her face expressed tenderness and love. “Mommy has to leave now so listen to your sister, stay out of trouble and have fun.” She turned and gave her daughter a hug and told her “no hitting, screaming or yelling.” She turned toward the boys, “none of you! If you don’t listen to Sissy, you will suffer the consequences when I get back this afternoon.” Their mother blew them kisses and added “I love you, see you.” The boys looked at each other with understanding eyes; if Katie gave their Mom a bad report the planned evening basketball game with Dad would be cancelled.
While Katie lay on the rug nearby engrossed in messaging with her friends on Facebook, the boys slowly complied with their mother’s directives and were soon in the sunny alcove filling their plates with food and helping themselves to juice.

Caleb turned on the TV set while Noah settled down on the rug with his breakfast. “Turn the TV off and get back to the table. You two are NOT allowed to eat in the living room” bellowed Katie. “You can’t yell at us” screamed Caleb as he turned up the sound to drowned out his sister’s voice. Katie jumped up and jerked the TV remote from his clutched fist and shoved him toward the kitchen. Caleb kicked back at his sister and ran back into the kitchen. Noah picked up his food and followed his brother while Katie turned the TV channel to her favorite show.

After breakfast, the boys went back to their bedroom, shut the door, turned on their little TV and selected a cartoon channel. Caleb turned toward his brother and announced, “We are going to make a kite and fly it!” He dived under the bunk and dragged out the treasures he had collected earlier.
The two boys spent the next two hours creating their kite with Caleb assigning simple tasks to his younger brother. They ran excursions into the kitchen to get more juice and bicker with Sissy before retreating back to their bedroom to continue their clandestine creation of the monster kite. Finally, they were finished with the project. “Help me with the window,” Caleb ordered Noah. Together the two managed to open the locks and pull up the lower pane. Caleb then released the screen and together they dropped the kite and twine to the ground below their window. They shut the bedroom window and pulled the shade down. “Let’s go,” said Caleb. The boys left their bedroom in search of their sister. They found Katie still in the living room playing on the computer. “We’re going out to play,” Caleb told Katie. “Don’t leave the backyard,” ordered Katie as the boys skipped past her and exited out the back door. The two went around the corner of the house and grabbed their kite.

Caleb trudged up the hill then turned releasing the kite as he quickly started running down the hill. The kite soared into the air. Both boys were cheering and dancing about as they watched the kite catching the wind and flying high. “My turn, my turn,” yelled Noah. He kept trying to grab the kite string from Caleb. Caleb laughed and ran away from his brother. Finally, Noah got close enough to Caleb and grabbed him by the shoulder.
Both boys fell as they clawed for the kite string which broke. The kite soared up high toward the electrical lines. “No, No!” shouted both boys as they ran after the string crying in horror.
The sounds of the crying boys and blowing wind were smothered in a surreal slow motion movement of a figure running up behind them and jumping into the air.
A giant large colorful bird flew overhead and caught the kite as it was about to get tangled in the electrical wires. The boys stood in disbelief and filled with a sense of impending doom.
The bird turned around, descended from the sky, and gently dropped the kite to the ground in front of the boys then landed next to Noah.

Caleb put his arms up to protect his brother and screamed "Stay away from my brother! Run to the house Noah!"

Caleb ran at the bird waving his arms and screaming trying to scare the bird and protect his little brother. The bird did not budge; it continued staring straight down into Caleb’s face.

Suddenly the macaw transformed into his sister Katie. She smiled at them. “Sharing is much more fun than fighting, so how about using my watch timer to take turns flying the kite. One of you can fly the kite for five minutes while the other plays with other toys. When this alarm goes off, you switch places and set it for another five minutes,” she quietly told them. They questioned her in total wonderment about her transformation and begged her to transform again and teach them how to do it. After morphing between bird and girl a couple of times, Katie explained that one day, when they were much older, they would learn what their second self looked like and could transform at well.
Later in the afternoon their mother returned from work. “Did the boys behave?” She asked Katie. “Yes, it was a quiet, uneventful day,” answered Katie with a smile as she turned and winked at the boys.

The end
The Scarlet Macaws are large multicolored parrots who live in Mexico, Central America and South America. They are an endangered species because of the destruction of the rain forests. They spend their nights sleeping in trees high in the jungle canopy and their days flying to forage for seeds, nuts and fruit.

These intelligent, curious parrots stay with their parents for about two years and can grow to about 39 inches. They have very long beautiful tapered tail feathers that exceed the length of their bodies. Their wing span is about 4 feet wide that taper at the end helping them to fly at high speeds.

The second and fourth toe point backward, and they use their feet to grab things along with climbing and clinging onto limbs and feeding themselves. Their big, hooked nosed beaks can break open seeds, fruit and nuts.
They like to nest in tree holes and usually have two eggs which they take turns incubating for about 27 days while the other gets food and regurgitates it for their partner’s dinner. Their babies do not start flying until they are about sixteen weeks old. They mate for life, which averages about 50 years. Old age sets in at about 40 years.

Macaws communicate with one another by squawking, screaming and making other loud bird sounds vocalizing who they are and marking flock territories. You can walk along the beach in remote federal reserve areas of Costa Rica and see very large flocks flying just above the jungle canopy sometimes flying 35 miles an hour to go long distances in one day as they forage for food. They share their trees with other creatures such as the Coatl who climb up in the trees to get food.
Vocabulary List

1. Accentuated  Stressed or emphasized
2. Budge:     To move or stir slightly
3. Clandestine  Secret, concealed usually for some secret or illicit purpose
4. Complied  Yielded to a request, or demand
5. Directive   An order or instruction
6. Dowels     A round stick or rod
7. Emanating  To come forth or proceeding from a source (such as a light)
8. Excursion  A short journey made with the intention of returning to the starting point
9. Extracting Pulling out
10. Impending  Hanging or hovering menacingly
11. Macaw      Tropical American Parrot (Title page picture, I took in Costa Rica, is of a Macaw)
12. Mourning Dove  A wild dove and state bird of Oklahoma
13. Retreat    The act of withdrawing to a secure place; a refuge
14. Sizzling   Making a hissing sound
15. Surreal    Having the qualities of surrealism – total liberation of the unconscious
16. Transformation To change form or appearance
17. Trudged    Walked in a heavy-footed way, to plod
18. Twine      To twist together; a strong string or chord formed by twisting together
19. Wonderment Astonishment, awe, or surprise
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