

The Great Kapok Tree

A man walked into the rain forest. Moments before, the forest had been alive with the sounds of squawking birds and howling monkeys. Now all was quiet as the creatures watched the man and wondered why he had come.

The man took the axe he carried and struck the trunk of the tree. Whack! Whack! Whack! The sounds of the blows rang through the forest. Chop! Chop! Chop! Soon the man grew tired. Resting at the foot of the great Kapok tree, the heat and hum of the forest lulled him to sleep.

A boa constrictor lived in the Kapok tree. He slithered down its trunk to where the man was sleeping. He looked at the gash the axe had made and hissed in the man's ear. "Senhor, this tree is a tree of miracles. It is my home, where generations of my ancestors have lived. Do not chop it down."

A bee buzzed in the sleeping man's ear. "Senhor, my hive is in this Kapok tree, and I fly from tree to tree and flower to flower collecting pollen. In this way I pollinate the trees and flowers throughout the rain forest. You see, all living things depend on one another."

The man awoke with a start! All around him were creatures who depended on the Great Kapok Tree. The sun streamed through the canopy. Spots of light glowed like jewels amidst the dark green forest, but the creatures were strangely silent.

The man stood and swung back his axe as if to strike the tree. Suddenly he stopped. He turned and looked at the animals. Dropping his axe, he walked out of the rainforest.

276 words

Should be 300-350