

How Toucan Got Her Long Beak

By Sienna



A long time ago when the days were new, toucans used to have short plain colored beaks. One day late in the dry season of the Amazon rain forest, Berry the toucan was flying through the trees noticing some cool birds hanging out together.



Berry hears some samba music and heads over to see what was going on. A lot of bright pink Flamingos were dancing in a lake.

“What is going on you guys? Can I join in the dance?” Berry asked.

“No you can’t hang out with us because your beak is way to short,” said a flamingo.

So berry heads home and builds a longer beak to put over her short one. She glues it on and heads over back to the flamingos.

“Hey guys can I join in the dance now?” Berry asked.

“No, not now or ever because your beak shape is way to straight,” said a different flamingo.

Berry flew away upset.



As berry flew away, she heard a referee and went over to check it out. When she got over there, she saw a bunch of scarlet macaws playing soccer. Berry wanted to watch the soccer game but there was no seat to be found. So she headed up to the very top of the bleachers and had to stand. At half time one of the soccer players got hurt and the team needed a new player. So they asked the crowd who wants to play, and surprisingly Berry got picked by the announcer. Then the players noticed Berry.

One macaw said, “What no you can’t play because your beak and feathers are too plain.”

“Well can I come back later and maybe play then if you guys are still playing?” asked Berry.

“We’ll see when you come back if you’re bright enough,” the macaw said.



So Berry flew home as quickly as her feathers would take her. When she got there, she stamped her beak with some nearby plants and painted her feathers with some non-toxic yellow and red paint. She flew back too the soccer game and they let Berry play. Just as her claw hit the field, it started to pour rain. All of the red paint Berry had put on her black feathers all washed away!

Oh no all my paint is washing off except yellow and a sliver of red paint and what is that going to do to help me, thought Berry.

“Hahaha! I knew it was paint and from now on you will never play soccer with us again!” laughed a different macaw.

Berry flew off again



Berry goes home for a while and comes back to give things another try. She meets some Paradise tanagers playing for square with a nut for a ball. She quickly flew off and painted her beak green and blue to fit in. Then she came back.

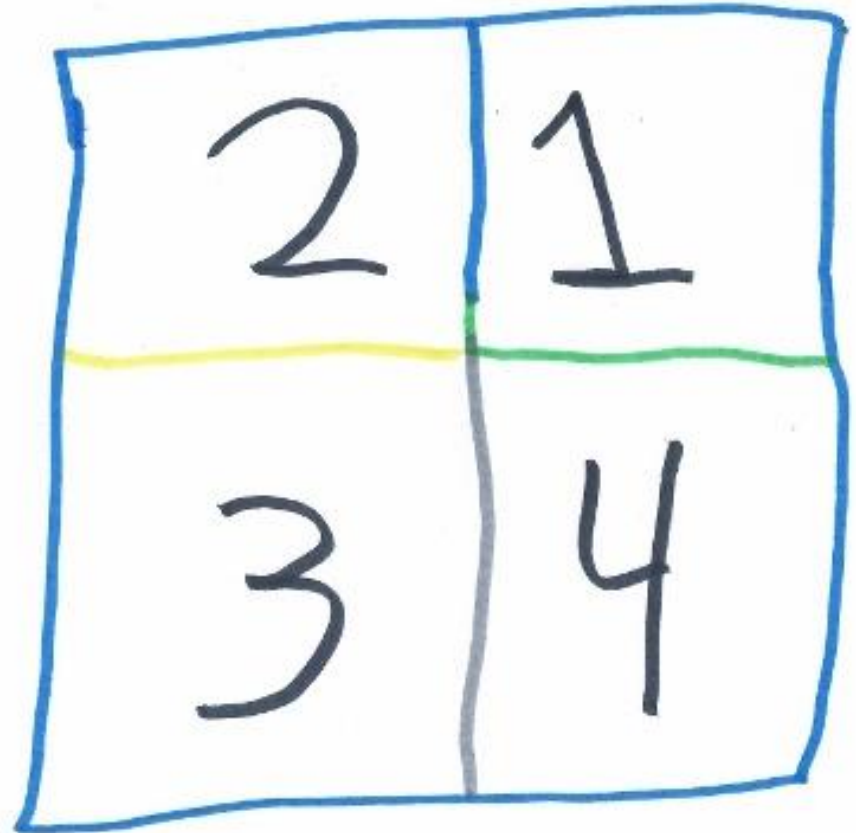
"Hey guys can I try and play with you, if you're ok with it?" asked Berry in a weak voice.

"I don't think so. Maybe the next round you can play," said one of the tanagers.

When they finished their round and a lot more after that, the tanagers still didn't let Berry play. So after a while Berry decided to head home disappointed.

"Wait" called a voice right as berry was taking off for the air.

"Come and play with us. But first you are way to big to fit in the squares we made, so as fast as you can and make your self a little bit smaller why don't you," said the same tanager from before.



So Berry went home and made herself a little bit smaller by taking off the new beak. She headed back over to the place where she had met the tanager speaking to her.

"I'm back!" Berry said in a tired voice.

"Ok nice now you can start the game. Now shall we?" said a different tanager.

"What wait, you can't play! You don't have any green or blue on you so go away!" yelled a different tanager.

The other tanagers agreed that Berry needed to go away and called him mean names.

Berry flew away. "I can't do anything in this rain forest."



Berry flew to a tree, climbed inside a hole, and sobbed. Spix macaw heard him and flew over to see what was the matter.

Spix asked, "Are you OK?"

Berry replied, "Leave me alone and I'm fine!"

"I don't think so because you are sobbing."

"Well OK, no one will let me play with them. I tried everything they said to change myself. I changed my colors and beak, and they still wouldn't let me play," said Berry.

Spix said, "Well that's really funny. True friends would let you play no matter how you look. What's that super cool looking beak doing over there?"

"I made it so that I could play with the other birds. I do think it looks cool," answered Berry.

"If you like the beak then wear it and that's the way it's going to be," Spix said. "Don't let anyone else make you change that decision."

Berry put on the beak and smiled a great big smile at Spix. Berry and Spix became great friends. From that day on toucans have long colorful beaks and they are proud of their appearance.

