

Lesson 12

READ THIS STORY #1, Basic

The Mockingbird

Did you hear the mockingbird warbling last night? He sang the same song at least a dozen times. Finally, Duane got up and closed the window. Duane likes birds, but he said he couldn't sleep with that perpetual singing going on. I've heard that mockingbirds like to sing in the light of a full moon. The little individual bird was probably trying to attract a female.

This morning, I got out my binoculars and took a close look at that bird. He was sitting on a branch in our eucalyptus tree. His feathers were gray on top of his body, but he had a white breast. His wings were black with patches of white. His body was not conspicuous, but he was genuinely beautiful.

Someone told me that it's not unusual for mockingbirds to imitate a woodpecker's tapping or a baby's cry. So I whistled a simple tune to see if he would mimic it. He cocked his head and looked at me as if I were being presumptuous. He listened, but he sang something else.

Duane said that he had read of a mockingbird in Boston who demonstrated his virtuosity by singing eighty-seven tunes in seven minutes. Then he dropped dead!

I think Duane was teasing me.