

The Black Bird

Tom had always been a happy cat. He used to walk around his backyard whenever he wanted. His favorite thing to do was to take naps in a sunny spot by a big rock in the backyard. Then one day a black bird moved in, and all his peaceful days were over.

The black bird had built its nest in a tree in the backyard and didn't want Tom to come near it. So now, when Tom went out there, that big black bird flew at him. Sometimes it even pecked Tom on the head.

As soon as Tom would go outside to smell the breeze, that bird would scream at him. When he tried to get to his best sunny spot by a rock, it would fly at his head and try to peck him.

Tom still wanted to go outside, but he needed to make sure it was safe. He peeked outside the kitchen window where he could see some birds hopping around in the grass. None of them were big and black, and they were only looking for bugs.

Tom peeked out another window for a better look at the yard. No, he couldn't see that black bird anywhere. He turned his ears to listen but couldn't hear any black bird sounds. He poked his nose out the door and couldn't smell any strange smells. He slowly walked outside. He slipped over the side of the porch and walked next to the house. He stayed low as he walked next to the fence. He kept looking back at the house to make sure the door was still open.

Tom made it all the way to the flowers without a problem. When he reached the back of the yard, he sat down and sniffed the breeze. He looked again at the back door. It was still open, so he could go back inside if he needed to.

He worked his way to his sunny spot by the big rock. There was no sign of that terrible bird. He was feeling sleepy, so he stretched out on the sun-warmed earth.

He'd just started to go to sleep when he heard a terrible sound. "Squawk. Squawk." That black bird was back. Tom thought that if he lay very still, then the bird wouldn't see him. "Squawk. Squawk," cried the bird as it flew over Tom's head. Tom had to make a run for it. He jumped over the rock and headed for the back door. The black bird flew low and dived at Tom as he ran. Tom meowed loudly when the bird flew down and pecked his head.

Tom finally made it to the back porch. He ran through the open door, into the house, and up the stairs where he hid under a bed. "Well," he thought to himself, "that bird won today's war, but tomorrow is another day."

1. Where did the black bird build its nest?

- A. In a tree in the backyard.
- B. In a corner of the backyard.
- C. Near a big rock in the backyard.

2. Where did Tom hide when he ran into the house?

- A. In his cat bed.
- B. On the stairs.
- C. Under a bed.

3. What was Tom's favorite thing to do?

- A. Take naps in a sunny spot by a rock.
- B. Smell the air for new smells.
- C. Walk around the backyard.

4. What changed Tom's peaceful life?

- A. He couldn't find a place to take a nap.
- B. A black bird moved into his backyard.
- C. He had to make sure the back door was open.

5. Why did the black bird chase Tom out of the backyard?

- A. It thought that cats should be indoors all the time.
- B. It only wanted other birds to be in the backyard.
- C. It didn't want Tom to come near its nest.

6. What was Tom like before the black bird came?

- A. He was happy but was always afraid of birds.
- B. He was a happy cat and did what he wanted.
- C. He was afraid that he would get locked out of the house.

7. What did Tom think would happen if he lay very still in the back yard?

- A. He would be able to see the birds eating bugs.
- B. He would be able to go right to sleep.
- C. The black bird wouldn't see him.

- 8. What was the first thing Tom did when he reached the back of the yard?**
- A. He sat down and sniffed the breeze.
 - B. He looked to see if the back door was open.
 - C. He walked over to the flowers and smelled them.
- 9. What was the first thing Tom did to see if it was safe to go into the yard?**
- A. He poked his nose out the door.
 - B. He peeked through the windows.
 - C. He listened for the sound of birds.
- 10. How did the story end?**
- A. Tom hid under a bed, but he didn't feel safe from the black bird.
 - B. Tom got through the door but decided he would never go outside again.
 - C. Tom was inside the house and decided that he would try again tomorrow.
- 11. What let Tom know that he was in trouble when he started to go to sleep?**
- A. He heard something fly over his head.
 - B. The black bird made a squawking noise.
 - C. The birds in the yard were afraid and flew away.
- 12. Why did Tom keep looking back at the house to see if the door was open?**
- A. He wanted to make sure he could get back in if the black bird chased him.
 - B. He was afraid that he might get locked out and never get back in.
 - C. He was wondering if the black bird would be able to fly into the house.