

The Little Hoatzin



Aysel Banu YAVUZAL

The Little Hoatzin

Aysel Banu YAVUZAL



In the heart of the flooded forest, where trees stand in calm brown water, lived a little hoatzin. She had a round fluffy body, rusty brown feathers with darker streaks, and a bright blue face. On her head grew a spiky reddish crest that wiggled when she walked on her long thin legs. She loved to explore, but she often wished for a friend to share her adventures.



One sunny morning, the little hoatzin heard a soft splash. She peeked through the leaves and saw a capybara standing in the shallow water. He was large and round, with shaggy reddish-brown fur and a blunt boxy snout. His small round ears twitched, and his calm gentle eyes looked friendly. 'Hello,' said the hoatzin. 'Hello,' said the capybara. 'Would you like to explore with me?'



The capybara smiled a slow, warm smile. 'I would like that very much,' he said. 'I know the waterways well, but I have never had a friend to share them with.' The little hoatzin flapped her tiny wings happily. 'Then let's go!' she chirped. 'We can travel past tall trees and calm water and see what we can find.' And so the two new friends set off together.



They started down a narrow water path. The little hoatzin rode on the capybara's broad back, her bright blue face shining with excitement. 'Look at those tall trees!' she said. 'Their roots go right into the water.' The capybara nodded. 'Yes, the flooded forest is full of surprises,' he said. 'But we must stay on the path. It is easy to get lost among the trees.'



As they glided along, the little hoatzin pointed at a family of turtles sunning on a log. 'Hello, turtles!' she called. The turtles blinked slowly and waved their flippers. The capybara chuckled. 'You are good at making friends,' he said. 'I think everyone is your friend,' said the hoatzin. 'Even a big capybara like you.' The capybara felt happy and warm inside.



The water grew calmer, and the trees grew taller. 'I have never been this far before,' said the capybara. 'Neither have I,' said the hoatzin. 'But we are together, so we are brave.' They passed under low branches and over clear, still pools. The little hoatzin's spiky crest stood up with curiosity. 'What is that ahead?' she asked. 'I see something green and thick.'



The capybara squinted his small dark eyes. 'It looks like a wall of leaves,' he said. 'But there might be a way through.' The little hoatzin flapped her tiny wings. 'Let's find out!' she said. They pushed gently through the leafy curtain. The branches brushed their backs, and the water rippled softly. On the other side, the light changed, and everything felt new.



They found themselves in a quiet, hidden place. The water was smooth as glass, and the air smelled sweet. The little hoatzin gasped. 'What is this place?' she whispered. The capybara looked around with wide eyes. 'I don't know,' he said. 'But it feels special.' They floated slowly, taking in the peaceful scene. The little hoatzin's heart beat fast with wonder.



Then the little hoatzin saw it. Beyond a row of tall reeds, a small island rose from the water. It was covered in soft green grass and bright flowers. 'Look!' she chirped. 'A hidden island!' The capybara smiled. 'I have never seen it before,' he said. 'We must have found a secret.' They paddled closer, their eyes full of wonder.



On the island, colorful butterflies danced in the sunlight. The little hoatzin hopped off the capybara's back and landed on the soft grass. 'It's beautiful!' she said. The capybara climbed out of the water and shook his shaggy fur. 'It is the most beautiful place I have ever seen,' he said. 'And we found it together.' They sat side by side, watching the butterflies.



The little hoatzin turned to her friend. 'We make a good team,' she said. 'You are big and steady, and I am small and curious.' The capybara nodded. 'Unusual friends make wonderful discoveries,' he said. 'I never would have found this island without you.' The hoatzin's bright blue face glowed with happiness. 'And I never would have been brave enough without you.'



They explored the island for a while, finding shiny pebbles and sweet berries. The capybara showed the hoatzin how to nibble the tender grass, and the hoatzin showed him a tiny flower that looked like a star. 'We should come back here someday,' said the capybara. 'Yes,' said the hoatzin. 'But first, let's go home and tell everyone about our discovery.'



As the sun began to set, they left the hidden island and swam back through the flooded forest. The little hoatzin rode on the capybara's back, feeling sleepy and happy. 'Today was the best day ever,' she said. The capybara agreed. 'And it all started with a simple hello.' They passed the turtles again, who waved goodnight. The forest was quiet and peaceful.



When they reached the place where they had met, the little hoatzin hopped down. 'Thank you for the adventure,' she said. 'Thank you for being my friend,' said the capybara. 'Will you come back tomorrow?' asked the hoatzin. 'Of course,' said the capybara. 'We have many more paths to explore.' They promised to meet again, and the hoatzin felt warm and safe.



That night, the little hoatzin nestled in her nest and thought about the hidden island. She realized that the best part of the adventure was sharing it with a friend. Even though they were different—a small bird and a big capybara—they had found something amazing together. Unusual friends, she decided, make wonderful discoveries. She fell asleep with a smile on her bright blue face.



And from that day on, the little hoatzin and the capybara explored the flooded forest together. They never knew what they might find, but they always knew they would find it as friends. So if you ever see a small bird with a bright blue face and a spiky crest riding on a big, round capybara, wave hello. They might just be on their way to another wonderful discovery.