



Zanzibar

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GECKO PRESS

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Chapter 1

Zanzibar had just begun dinner when there was a knock at the door.

It was a lizard in glasses.

“*Bonjour*,” said the lizard. “I’m Achille LeBlab, special correspondent. I wonder if I could ask you a few questions?”



He doesn't look dangerous, Zanzibar thought. He let the reporter in.

The lizard settled into the best armchair.

"First of all," he said, "your name."

"Zanzibar," said Zanzibar.

"Zanzibar? Like the African island?"

"That's right. Like the island."

"Very nice," said the lizard.

He licked a finger and leafed through his notepad.

"I'm writing a feature for my newspaper. I'm looking for exceptional characters. Do you do anything out of the ordinary?"

Zanzibar stopped to think.

“Like, for instance, can you sing?”
asked the lizard.

“Well...yes.”

“There you go! If you can sing as
sweetly as the nightingale, I’ll write an
article about you.”

“CAW! CAW! CAW! CAW!” Zanzibar
sang.

“Do you call that singing, that
mournful croaking?”



Zanzibar shrugged. This reporter
was starting to get on his nerves. What’s
more, his dinner was getting cold.

“Zanzibar-r-r...” said the lizard,
rolling the r with an air of inspiration.
“Would you happen to be a champion at
anything at all?”

Zanzibar shot a glance at his plate.

“I’m very good at mushroom
omelettes.”

The lizard burst out laughing.

“Omelettes! How quaint! But I’m
afraid, my good man, I don’t think that
would interest our readers.”

Zanzibar said nothing.

“Oh well, apart from your very poetic name, I’m sorry to say you’re a rather ordinary crow,” the lizard concluded as he capped his pen. “I’ll leave you to your omelette.”

“Fine,” said Zanzibar a little coldly.

“But here’s my card. You never know.”



Zanzibar slammed the door. His omelette was ruined. Not that it mattered. The visit had spoiled his appetite anyway.

He stepped over to the lamp and examined the lizard’s card.

ACHILLE LeBLAB

Special Correspondent

The Voice of the Forest

The Voice of the Forest, Zanzibar thought to himself, must be a very important newspaper.

That reporter will probably write an article about the nightingale. And about the fox, who's a chess champion. And maybe about Ginette, the frog, who once dived into the pond from the top of a tree...

Zanzibar got into bed. He fluffed up his pillow sadly.

"I would have liked to be in the newspaper. But I'm just ordinary. As ordinary as a crow can be."

He switched off the light and tried to sleep. He couldn't stop thinking about Achille LeBlab.

"He left his card. He could see that I'm a crow with enormous potential."

Zanzibar suddenly sat bolt upright and spoke aloud: "I haven't done anything remarkable yet, but it's never too late! I'm going... I'm going to lift a camel! That's it! I'll lift a camel in the air with just one wing!"

