

Samantha and Tricky

There was a swooshing sound as a blinding light shot down from the sky. Samantha grabbed Tricky and dashed under the picnic table.

“It’s okay,” said Samantha as she tightened her arms around her trembling cat.

Samantha poked her head out. “It looks safe. Come on, Tricky. I don’t know what that was, but it’s gone. Let’s go see if Mom saw it, too.” She put Tricky down and crawled out from under the table.

“I’m not going out there.”

Samantha looked around. “Who said that?”

Tricky poked her head out. “I did. I can understand you.”

“What!?” Samantha’s brows shot up into her forehead. “Tricky! You can talk! And, you know what I’m saying. How? What? MOM!”

Samantha raced into the house. “Mom! Mom!”

Mom poked her head out of the family room. “What’s the matter?”

“Tricky can talk! Did you see that bright light outside? Tricky understands me.” Samantha threw her hands this way and that way.

“Slow down,” said Mom. “What’s going on?”

Just then Tricky scampered in. “I think that light did something. I can understand the birds in the yard, too.”

“See, Mom. Tricky can talk.”

Mom burrowed her brows. “She’s just meowing. She always does that.”

“No, no. I understand her, and she understands me.”

“Honey,” said Mom, “the cat can’t talk. Now, go back outside and play while I make lunch.”

Samantha tightened her lips.

Tricky jumped on the chair next to Samantha. “Mom can’t understand me. It must have been that light. Maybe it was from a meteor or something.”

“Hey, could be,” said Samantha. “It could have crumbled before it actually hit the ground. I can’t believe you understood the birds. I wonder if we can understand all animals. Let’s go check it out.”

They went in the yard and talked to the birds. It turned out the birds didn’t like it when Tricky chased them.

Then they saw the mean dog next door.

“Max,” said Samantha, “why do you growl and bark at me when I play in the yard?”

Max stuck his nose against the fence. “You’re always blowing a whistle. It hurts my ears. I keep trying to tell you to please stop, but you never do.”

“Oh, Max. I’m sorry. I couldn’t understand you. Now that I know, I won’t do it anymore.”

“I’m sorry too, birds,” said Tricky. “I won’t chase you anymore.”

Samantha’s eyes opened wide. “Wow! Imagine if everyone could understand what other creatures and people are saying. There would be no misunderstandings. It’d sure be a lot easier to get along with everyone.”

“Yeah,” said Tricky. “I can’t wait to talk to Rover down the street. That crazy dog is always chasing me.”

Questions

1. How did the light affect Samantha and Tricky?
2. Why did Max always growl at Samantha?
3. What does “misunderstanding” mean?
4. Why would being able to understand everyone be a good thing?