

The Early Bird Catches the Worm

by RV staff writer J.C.

The little bird perched itself on the tree branch outside Vanessa's bedroom window. It trilled an energetic song as the first pale yellow rays of sunshine peeked over the horizon.

"Oh my gosh, what is that noise?" she complained to herself, pulling her bed sheets over her head in an attempt to drown out the chirping. It was no use, and she she knew it. The loud tweeting signalled the coming of the day. To confirm it, Vanessa's mom knocked twice on her door, then came in with a smile. "Time to get up, Sleepyhead," she whispered. "The early bird catches the worm, you know."

"Ugh," mumbled Vanessa into her pillow. "What does that even mean?"

"It's just an expression, Honey," her mom replied. She gave Vanessa a kiss on the cheek and urged her to get out of bed. Vanessa rolled over and slept for a few more minutes.

Vanessa shuffled her way downstairs for breakfast, ate slowly, and missed her bus. When she finally got to school, she had missed attendance and had to get a late pass. She missed the first part of math class, so she didn't understand the lesson and had to get extra help. Her teacher gave her extra homework to make sure she knew it. This day was no fun.

The next morning, Vanessa was woken up by the same loud, twittering song. Instead of ignoring it, today Vanessa walked over to the window and opened the curtains. Soft light filled the room. "Well, hello there, little fellow," she said when she saw the pretty bird outside, still chirping happily. It was startled by her voice and flew down to land on the fresh dew of the morning grass. As she watched, the bird cocked its head, plunged its beak into the wet ground, and plucked out a wiggling worm for breakfast. "Hmm," thought Vanessa.

She raced through breakfast, caught the bus, and was one of the first kids to enter her classroom. Her teacher reminded her that there were only a few spots left in the Robotics Club, and if she was interested, she needed to sign up right away. Vanessa was very interested! She wrote her name down in one of the last spaces and smiled to herself.

At lunchtime, Vanessa finished her lunch early and had time to go to the library. The librarian was stacking some new books that had just arrived. One of them was the sequel to a great story Vanessa had just finished. She was the first one to check it out! Later, when the gym teacher asked for volunteers, Vanessa put her hand up immediately and was chosen to be the captain of the softball team. Today was turning out to be pretty awesome.

"Wow, it sounds like you had a great day, Vanessa," her mom said later when Vanessa told her all about it at dinnertime.

“Yup. Just call me the early bird,” said Vanessa, with a grin.

Questions

1. What does the expression “The early bird catches the worm” mean to you?
2. Can you think of another example of this kind of figure of speech?
3. Why did Vanessa have a bad day, and what changed to make the next day better?
4. Can you find four words that describe the sounds the bird was making?