

TEN WORD TALES No. 6  
**Quest for a Quetzal**  
by The Story Spinner

CHAPTER 5



Javier had seen Alanza jump up quickly with an intensely thoughtful expression on her face. He told the Professor, still on the radio, “Alanza’s seen something.” He walked softly over himself and passed over the radio to Alanza while he took out his own binoculars. Alanza told Professor Paola exactly what she could see and exactly where they were.

All the searchers gathered in the little clearing to witness the extraordinary bird for themselves; cameras, clicking quietly, captured

the bird on film. The professor gave instructions for the pictures to be sent world-wide so everyone would know a new quetzal had been sighted on the reserve. All the time the bird was looking down on them, occasionally turning its head, undisturbed by the attention and fuss.

At five, dark began to fall in the forest. No one had stirred for ages, all fascinated and excited. Alanza was almost swaying with tiredness. The others began to move back to the path, leaving Javier, Professor Paola and Alanza. Perhaps surprised at all the movement, the quetzal suddenly rose from the tree and in a moment of swooping tail and flash of bright colours, it disappeared into the leaves.

Alanza gave a great sigh and smiled a small gleeful smile.

“I found it,” she said.

“Yes,” said the professor, shaking her hand.

“Yes,” said her dad, giving her a great hug. “Now let’s go home.”

And they did.