

Ghost Bird: Part 1

[Karen the Cardinal goes in search of the mysterious Ghost Bird...]

Karen the Cardinal has an **inquiring mind**. She is a **graduate student** at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Karen is working on her **Master's Thesis** in **ornithology**. She **specializes in extinct** species and her thesis **focuses on** the **exceedingly** rare two-headed cardinal.

But Karen has a big problem. The two-headed cardinal is believed to be extinct and there is no remaining **physical evidence** of its existence. It's June 6th and her thesis is due by the end of June if she wants to **keep on track** and graduate on time. She **feels pressure** and is worried about how she can finish her thesis. Her sleep is **beginning to suffer**; some nights she has **insomnia**.

Karen the Cardinal uses contemplative meditation to consider her problem and potential solutions. She uses her orange beak to construct a nice nest out of fine, soft golden hay. She meditates in her nest for 8 minutes and 8 seconds. She decides that the best thing she can do is consult with her **thesis advisor**. She decides to **follow up on** the problem with her advisor in the morning.

While she is on her nest she begins to feel sleepy. Her stress and exhaustion **give rise to** the best night of sleep she has had in two weeks. With her bird **bottom nestled** into the golden nest, she falls asleep for 8 hours and 8 minutes. She dreams of the **long gone** two-headed cardinal, of life 2,600 years ago when it roamed the earth and flew in the clean, unpolluted skies of pre-industrial earth.

Karen gets up at 8:08 AM. She washes her sleepy bird eyes and washes the **beige** feathers on her face. She toasts two pieces of plump pumpernickel bread and, **in turn, crunches it down** with her shiny and powerful orange beak. She drinks two glasses of **O.J. to wash it down** and promote good digestion in her **diminutive** bird **crop** and **gizzard**.

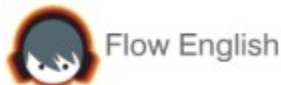


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After breakfast Karen flies to school to see her advisor in the biology department. Her advisor's name is Dr. Poltergeist and he is an ornithologist and **crypto-zoologist**. Karen visits him on a branch in a tree outside his office. He is a cardinal.



"Good morning Dr. Poltergeist. It looks like you are **levitating** berries!" says Karen. "Yes Karen, I'm having a mid-morning snack and also practicing my **telekinesis** skills," says Dr. Poltergeist.

Karen the Cardinal explains the problem with her thesis to Dr. Poltergeist the Cardinal. Dr. Poltergeist **puts forward** a potential solution.

"**For the sake of** your well-being and finishing your thesis on time, you need a **radical plan of action**. Because the bird you are studying appears to be extinct, you must find the ghost of a two-headed cardinal to study and observe!" says Dr. Poltergeist.

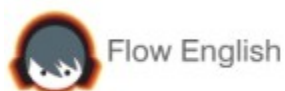


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"Oh My! That sounds both terrifying and wonderful! **In the short run** it will be dangerous, but **in the long run** it could change modern science's understanding of the evolution and development of all species of cardinals!" exclaims Karen.

Karen and her advisor discuss a plan for her to make an expedition deep into the spooky woods of the Mason Farm Biological Reserve in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. They **touch on** a number of issues for the planned trip- most importantly they discuss the danger and fright that may occur upon **having contact** with the ghost bird.

"Woops, I dropped my berry again," says Dr. Poltergeist. "Where did it go?"



"I'm leaving to pack up my gear for the expedition now, Dr. Poltergeist. I'm sure you can find a new berry to pick, levitate, and eat...," says Karen.



Flow English

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Dr. Poltergeist says goodbye to Karen and wishes her good luck.

Karen the Cardinal leaves to pack her expedition equipment and prepare herself psychologically for the difficult and dangerous trip into the dense and dark woods of the Mason Farm Biological Reserve...

[Karen's search for the Ghost Bird continues in Foto English: Lesson 11...]

Vocabulary:

inquiring mind: curious, inquisitive mind

graduate student: student working on a master's level or Ph.D. level degree

Master's Thesis: project or research required for a master's degree

ornithology: study of birds

specializes in: expertise in a narrow topic

extinct: dead, species no longer lives

focuses on: is about, emphasizes

exceedingly: very, very much

physical evidence: physical clues, physical proof of something

feels pressure: has stress about something

keep on track: maintain course, maintain plan

beginning to suffer: deteriorating, declining

insomnia: not able to sleep, not able to sleep well

thesis advisor: faculty that provides help with thesis project

follow up on: pursue something, work on some issue or problem

give rise to: cause, start something

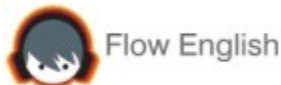


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bottom: hindquarters, bottom half of body

nestled: settle into comfortable position

long gone: disappeared a long time ago

beige: tan color

in turn: next, the next thing that happens

crunches it down: eats and swallows, chews and swallows

O.J.: orange juice

to wash it down: to drink something after eating something

diminutive: very small

crop: part of a bird's throat

gizzard: part of a bird's digestive track

crypto-zoologist: person who searches for animals whose existence has not been proven

levitating: to rise and float something in the air without physical contact

telekinesis: the psychic power to move or change an object with one's mind

puts forward: suggests

For the sake of: for some specific purpose, on behalf of something

radical plan of action: extreme idea and plan

In the short run: for a short period of time

in the long run: for a long period of time

touch on: deal with something, discuss something

having contact: meeting, seeing

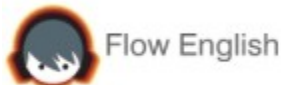


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Notes:

