

## Echoing Howls



“We’re here!” cried the twins, all excited by the sight of the main entrance to the provincial park. The park is an animal refuge where the public can view animals in their natural habitat while protected by fences in certain places. Tours are conducted by trained guides. 1

We had never been here before, I have to say, especially not so late at night. We had heard about the public wolf howling expedition, and that’s why this moment was so eagerly awaited by each member of our family. It was also a night of the full moon, the best time to hear the howling of wolves. 2

My only problem was that I had to share the responsibility of watching my eight-year-old twin brothers, Patrick and Eric, with my father. He had been very clear about this: “Don’t let them out of your sight, Lisa! You know how they are; you can expect just about anything.” 3

First, a guide led us to the edge of the forest where, to our great joy, we found observation platforms where we could observe the activities of raccoons. Surprisingly enough, these little animals come out at nightfall—thanks to their excellent night vision. They often travel at night to their favourite hunting ground to eat their fill. We could see them very clearly, with the white fur around their eyes shining in the night. 4

As we continued down a path, we heard a loud screeching. 5

“What could that possibly be?” I asked. 6

We realized that owls were trying to keep us away with their cries. When we stopped, and listened very carefully, we could hear them calling to each other. The guide informed us that their huge eyes could capture the slightest rays of light. This is how they can see well enough to trap small mice at dusk. 7

Continuing our tour, we didn’t expect to see anything more awesome than these owls. Then the guide pointed out the bats—animals that can’t really be described as birds, even though they fly. We watched them swoop around in the night air for a while, but Patrick, who is afraid of bats, was hanging on to my jeans, so we didn’t stay long. 8

Soon after, we put on military night-vision goggles for a unique experience—the chance to observe wolves in the middle of the night. Our guide, a master in the art of imitating animal cries, began to howl. For the first time in their lives my brothers were listening attentively because they didn't want to miss anything. Also, we had been warned to keep quiet. The wolves responded immediately. At first, just one or two wolves howled. After a while they all began howling at once. What a concert! You'd have thought they were howling just for the fun of it. What cries! What voices! What a mournful choir! We'd never heard anything like it. It was breathtaking. I feel goosebumps even now, just thinking about it!

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We had to leave, reluctantly, because of the late hour. Moving quickly, we were on our way out when I realized I had lost sight of Eric. Where was he? I started to panic, as it was my responsibility to keep an eye on him.

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The panic didn't last long. In a moment, a small, odd voice—an awkward yet familiar howling—attracted our attention.

11

“That sounds like Eric trying to howl like the wolves,” I thought to myself.

12

In the light of the moon, we found the lost twin, howling on all fours on the observation platform.

13



- 1** From whose point of view is this text written?
- a Lisa's
  - b the twins'
  - c the guide's
  - d the father's
- 2** In paragraph 1, the word "refuge" means
- a a fence.
  - b a safe place.
  - c an entrance.
  - d an animal clinic.
- 3** According to this text, platforms allow visitors to
- a be safe.
  - b hear owls.
  - c view animals.
  - d move quickly.
- 4** In paragraph 5, the owls begin screeching because
- a visitors are getting too close.
  - b it is too dark for them to see.
  - c they are trying to attract mice.
  - d they are being chased by wolves.
- 5** In paragraph 9, the wolves start howling because
- a the guide howls.
  - b there is a full moon.
  - c the visitors are quiet.
  - d they want to have fun.

- 6** In paragraph 9, the word “what” is used repeatedly to
- a ask questions.
  - b create rhymes.
  - c show amazement.
  - d express confusion.
- 7** The word “awkward” as used in paragraph 11 means Eric
- a lacks skill.
  - b acts strange.
  - c moves clumsily.
  - d sounds confident.
- 8** What do all of the animals in this text have in common?
- a They live in a protected area.
  - b They hunt together in groups.
  - c They sleep during the nighttime.
  - d They make loud sounds at night.
- 9** Which animals show awareness of the visitors?
- a bats
  - b owls
  - c mice
  - d raccoons
- 10** One of the things that upsets Lisa in this text is that
- a the twins cry.
  - b she loses sight of Eric.
  - c an owl screeches loudly.
  - d she has to wear goggles.

**11** Identify one of Lisa’s feelings during her tour of the animal refuge and explain why she feels this way. Use specific details from the text to support your answer.

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**12** Explain whether paragraphs 10–13 provide an effective ending. Support your answer using specific details from the text.

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