



Who Really Killed Cock Robin? (Rise and Shine)

By National Geographic Learning

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The people of Saddleboro think their town is cleaner than most. So when their feathery mascot is found dead, they want answers. A young boy named Tony is determined to find them. As he unravels this eco-mystery, Tony soon realizes that Saddleboro isn't as clean as people may have thought.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Jean Craighead George wrote over one hundred books for children and young adults. Her novel *Julie of the Wolves* won the Newbery Medal in 1973, and she received a 1960 Newbery Honor for *My Side of the Mountain*. She continued to write acclaimed picture books that celebrate the natural world. Her other books with Wendell Minor include *The Wolves Are Back*; *Luck*; *Everglades*; *Arctic Son*; *Morning, Noon, and Night*; and *Galapagos George*.

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(1)

Cock Robin

Cock Robin lay on his back with his feet in the air. A red breast feather twisted in the wind, his clove-brown wings folded like a dancer's fan. It was seven minutes past six a.m. on the twenty-fourth day of May. He was dead.

Many robins have died without notice by the human race, but this was a particular robin, the Cock Robin of Saddleboro, and his death was a crisis.

At nine minutes past six on that memorable morning, the telephone rang in the kitchen of 65 Elm Street and awoke Tony Isidoro, who was sleeping in his room at the top of the back steps. He uncurled all of his five feet three inches, put his feet on the floor, and shook his head. Slowly he ran his fingers through a crop of shining black hair. The phone jangled again, and he stumbled downstairs to answer it. As he grabbed the receiver, he tripped over his eighth-grade math book, which he had left on the floor by the kitchen door so he would remember it when he left for school. Kicking it sleepily aside, he mumbled, "Hello."

"Cock Robin is dead!" a voice exclaimed. Tony recognized it as that of Mary Alice Lamberty, the daughter of the wealthiest man in town. For a moment he did not answer.

"He's dead!" she repeated, and this time he asked her how she knew.

"Mayor Joe just called my father," she replied. "He accused Daddy of killing Cock Robin because our mill still dumps aniline dyes in the river. That is not true."

"Why are you telling *me*?"

"You know perfectly well why I'm telling you. The Mayor gets all his information about robins from you, and he's going to ask you who killed Cock Robin. I know he will; and I just want you to know right now that if anyone murdered him, it was the Mayor with all his fancy garden sprays."

Tony rubbed his eyes with his fist and shifted his weight from one foot to the other. He was about to say something, but Mary Alice hung up before he could collect his thoughts. He shrugged and went back to his room, picked up his field glasses, and focused them on Mayor Dambrowski's lawn across the street.

There lay Cock Robin with his feet in the air. Several silver-winged bugs slipped out of the bird's feathers and disappeared into the grass. Their departure was as clearly a sign of the robin's death to Tony as rats deserting a ship are a sign of its sinking. His brow crinkled with sadness; then he put down his binoculars and walked to his desk. Reaching behind a terrarium of plants and caterpillars, he picked up a small pocket notebook and opened it.

The first entry was dated April 29: "A male robin arrived from the south in the maple tree across the street just after sunup," he read. "He hasn't sung yet, so I don't know if he is on his way to Canada or is home. However, he acts as if he were home, for he is inspecting the limbs of the trees, preening his feathers, and

looking down on the yard."

The next note was dated April 30: "The male in Dambrowskis' yard sang the territorial song of the robin who is home from the south." Farther down on the same page, Tony saw, he had made a note of other male robins. "One is singing from somewhere near the library. Also in the Town Park, also on Pine Street."

Tony was keeping these notes for his older brother, Izzy, who had been drafted into the Army before he had been able to finish his graduate-school thesis on the robins of Saddleboro. A few days before leaving last fall, he had asked Tony to keep tabs on "his" birds when they returned in the spring. Flattered by such a responsibility, Tony had assured him he would do his best.

Although Izzy was eleven years older, he had often taken Tony on his rounds of the streets and yards of Saddleboro. They counted robins, mapped their territories, and numbered eggs and fledglings. The night before departing for boot camp, Izzy had sat down with Tony and showed him how to take notes.

"Good notes are the basis of scientific research," he told him. "If you take them well, they'll reveal the truth."

He had then taken Tony around the town again, told him to jot down weather, plants, anything unusual or even usual, then suggested he make one round alone. When he came home, Izzy had been surprised by his powers of observation and had told him so with a real pat on the back.

Six months had passed since then.

Tony studied his notes, then went to Izzy's office-bedroom to brief himself for the phone call from the Mayor that Mary Alice had told him to expect. He took out a map of bird territories and saw that where there had been many pairs of robins four years ago, there now were very few. He was shocked. Like all the people of pollution-fighting Saddleboro, Tony was under the illusion there were more, not fewer, robins. Since Mayor Joe and his Clean Environment Party had come into power, everyone assumed that Saddleboro was a model town where man, plant, and beast were in balance. There was good reason for this assumption.

Joe Dambrowski—or Mayor Joe, as he was called—had been elected to office after campaigning against DDT, automobile exhaust, and the sewage pollution in the Missatonic River that ran past Saddleboro. He obtained funds from the state and town and built a sewage-disposal plant. He also walked to work instead of using his automobile to avoid putting carbon dioxide and lead into the air, and had organized the children to find every can in town that contained DDT. These were collected by the Saddleboro sanitation trucks, then buried in wet cement near the town dump.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Mohammed Thomas:

A lot of people always spent their very own free time to vacation or perhaps go to the outside with them family or their friend. Did you know? Many a lot of people spent that they free time just watching TV, or perhaps playing video games all day long. If you would like try to find a new activity that is look different you can read a new book. It is really fun to suit your needs. If you enjoy the book that you just read you can spent all day every day to reading a e-book. The book Who Really Killed Cock Robin? (Rise and Shine) it is extremely good to read. There are a lot of people that recommended this book. They were enjoying reading this book. In the event you did not have enough space to bring this book you can buy often the e-book. You can m0ore simply to read this book from your smart phone. The price is not to fund but this book features high quality.

Sam Current:

Reading can called brain hangout, why? Because when you are reading a book specially book entitled Who

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Elliott Preciado:

Who Really Killed Cock Robin? (Rise and Shine) can be one of your beginning books that are good idea. Most of us recommend that straight away because this guide has good vocabulary that may increase your knowledge in vocab, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nonetheless delivering the information. The article writer giving his/her effort to set every word into satisfaction arrangement in writing Who Really Killed Cock Robin? (Rise and Shine) yet doesn't forget the main stage, giving the reader the hottest along with based confirm resource information that maybe you can be among it. This great information can easily drawn you into brand-new stage of crucial considering.

Michael Beebe:

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