

THE
CAPYBARA GUARDIANS

THE
RIVER
OF SHADOWS

An adventure series by **MARC FINKS**

FUN FUN FUN
ACTIVITY GUIDE

VOCABULARY

Chapters 1 - 2

Trickle

A small, slow flow of liquid

Swirling

Moving in a twisting, spinning pattern

Swerved

Changed direction suddenly

Escort

Guide or lead someone somewhere

Collided

Crashed into each other

The River of Shadows

D	T	R	I	C	K	L	E	S	O	L	R	A	C
C	D	L	C	K	I	S	A	L	I	M	A	C	R
L	C	A	R	T	K	M	W	A	E	M	H	V	C
I	M	R	A	H	S	A	L	E	M	S	T	W	L
A	R	E	C	E	E	W	O	A	R	A	L	R	E
M	O	C	D	A	A	L	I	L	R	V	Z	S	A
O	I	L	W	R	E	B	O	R	B	A	E	O	E
R	I	P	A	T	C	R	L	A	L	O	A	D	N
K	R	I	C	S	E	L	M	O	N	I	A	S	M
E	E	E	E	S	C	O	R	T	O	T	N	A	O
I	R	A	V	G	I	R	A	C	N	M	R	G	A
M	K	A	T	I	R	E	R	R	K	R	L	A	A
P	M	A	I	R	R	N	E	K	C	A	R	B	W
I	E	Z	C	O	L	L	I	D	E	D	S	V	A

SWIRLING
SWERVED
CAMILA
BRACKEN
RIVER
COLLIDED
TAPIR
AMAZON
TRICKLE
HEART
CARLOS
ESCORT
BLOOM

COMPREHENSION

Prologue and Chapter 1 - "Welcome to the Jungle"

1. Which word best describes the river when Carlos and Camila first see it?

- A) Dry
- B) Swirling
- C) Calm
- D) Frozen

2. Why do you think Bracken says, "Gran always said, if you want to stay healthy, eat the whole thing!"? What might this foreshadow?

3. Use the word "cultivating" in a sentence that relates to the story.

Chapter 2 - "A New Adventure"

1. What creatures attacked Carlos and Camila in the river?

- A) Sharks
- B) Piranhas
- C) Dolphins

2. What does Carlos mean when he says, "We saved a mountain from melting"?

ACTIVITY

These native animals are all mentioned in this book. Can you identify them?



I am a _____

Poison Dart Frog:
I'm tiny but deadly! My bright colors warn predators. Indigenous people use my toxins for hunting.



I am a _____

Howler Monkey:
I have a powerful voice that echoes for miles! My loud roars warn others of danger.



I am a _____

Toucan:
I have a huge, colorful beak! I use it to reach fruit on thin branches.



I am a _____

Piranha:
I have razor-sharp teeth and hunt in groups! I mostly eat smaller fish and fallen fruit.



I am a _____

Glasswing Butterfly:
My wings are transparent like glass! I can fly almost invisibly through the rainforest canopy.



I am a _____

Caiman: I'm a fierce predator with armored skin! I have powerful jaws to catch fish and animals.

WRITING

Research:

The Glasswing Butterfly is a real animal! What can you learn about it? Write down everything you can learn.

A series of ten sets of primary writing lines, each consisting of a solid blue top line, a dashed blue middle line, and a solid red bottom line, providing space for the student's research notes.

VOCABULARY

Chapters 3-4

Kapok

A type of tropical tree

Footholds

Places where you can securely place your feet while climbing

Downpour

A heavy fall of rain

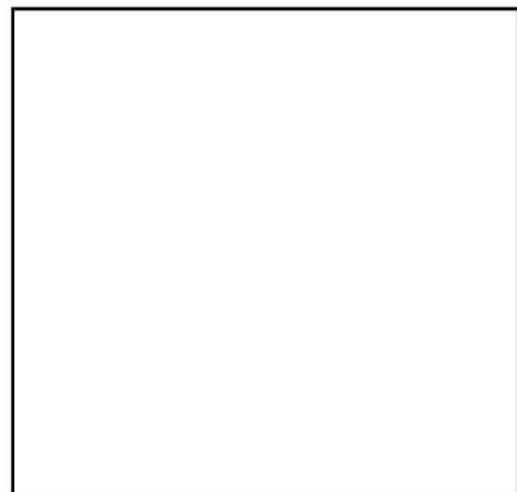
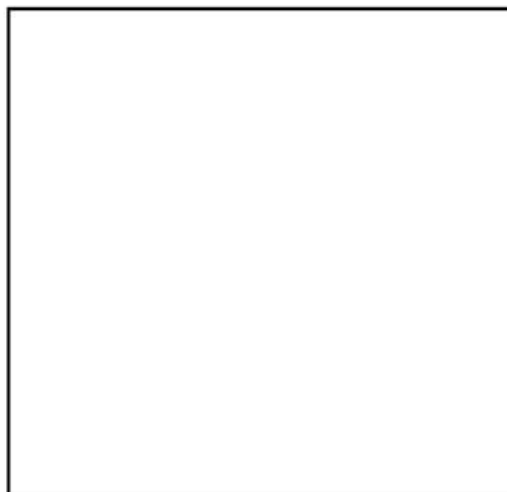
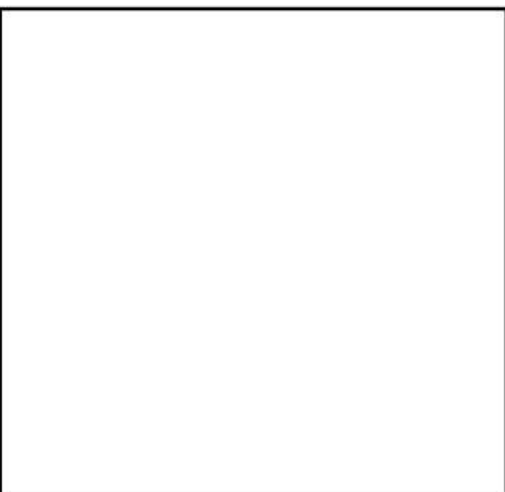
Fitful

Restless and not a very restful sleep

Camouflaged

To blend in so it's hard to see

Draw a comic where 3 of the words are used/drawn in the story somewhere. Label each word and draw an arrow to it.



COMPREHENSION

Chapter 3 - "Strangers"

1. What emotion best describes how the jungle capybaras initially react to Carlos and Camila?
 - A) Joy
 - B) Suspicion
 - C) Excitement
2. The jungle capybaras immediately welcomed Carlos and Camila into their village. (True / False)
3. Why do you think the jungle capybaras kept Carlos and Camila in a separate burrow?

Chapter 4 - "A Desperate Plea"

1. The capybara elders immediately offer to help Carlos and Camila. (True / False)
2. What does the ancient capybara elder tell Camila about the healing flowers?
3. Who does the elder assign to guide Camila on her quest for the healing flowers and why does he pick him?

ACTIVITY

Helping Carlos

Carlos is sick. Can you draw a scene showing how they can help him get better?



WRITING

A Conversation with Strangers:

What would you say or ask if you met strange capybaras from the jungle?

Write your questions below.

A writing template consisting of ten sets of horizontal lines. Each set includes a solid blue top line, a dashed blue middle line, and a solid red bottom line. The background is a lush jungle scene with tall trees and thatched huts.

VOCABULARY

Chapters 5-6

Wasteland

An area that has been devastated or ruined

Lodge

An underwater home that beavers make.

Stumps

The bottom parts of trees left projecting from the ground after the trunks are cut off

Colony

A group of animals of the same type living together

Roar

A loud, deep sound

Draw a line to connect each word to its synonym.

(A synonym is word that has the same meaning)

1. Wasteland

A. Home

2. Lodge

B. Destruction

3. Stumps

C. Loud Sound

4. Colony

D. Group

5. Roar

E. Cut-trees

COMPREHENSION

Chapter 5 - "Whispers in the Wild"

1. What animal does Savino warn Camila about that is "beautiful, but deadly to touch"?

- A) A boa constrictor
- B) A poison dart frog
- C) A jaguar
- D) A spectacled owl

2. How does Savino help Camila with her mosquito bites?

3. Describe two ways Savino helps Camila adapt to the jungle environment.

Chapter 6 - "Dangerous Answers"

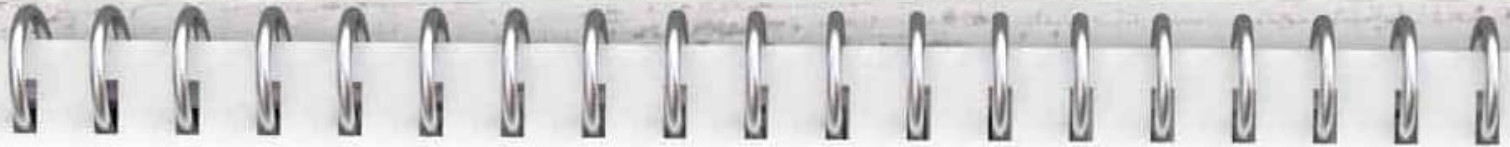
1. The beavers are happy to see Camila and Savino. (True/False)

2. What happens to the beavers' dam?

3. How do Luna and Santiago help Camila in this chapter?

ACTIVITY

Can you draw a picture of a rainforest where half of the trees have been cut down?



WRITING

Camila's Journal

**Write a journal about how Camila feels
after her day in the woods.**

Handwriting practice lines consisting of a solid blue top line, a dashed blue middle line, and a solid red bottom line. There are ten such sets of lines provided for writing.

VOCABULARY

Chapters 7-8

Feverish

Having a high body temperature

Resentful

Feeling or expressing bitterness or indignation

Chieftan

The leader of a group

Wary

Cautious or on-guard

Coaxed

Persuaded gently or gradually

Draw your best images for these
4 synonyms

Hot

Leader

Bitter

Persuade

COMPREHENSION

Chapter 7 - "Whispers of Hope"

1. What observation does Savino make about the mosquitoes and the Heartbloom?

2. What important information does Savino remember about the healing flower?

- A) It's blue and grows in water
- B) It looks like the heart of the rainforest and the early morning sky
- C) It only grows in deep shade
- D) It has a strong, unpleasant odor

3. What unexpected challenge do the animals face when they reach the creek where the Heartbloom grows?

Chapter 8 - "A Dark Message"

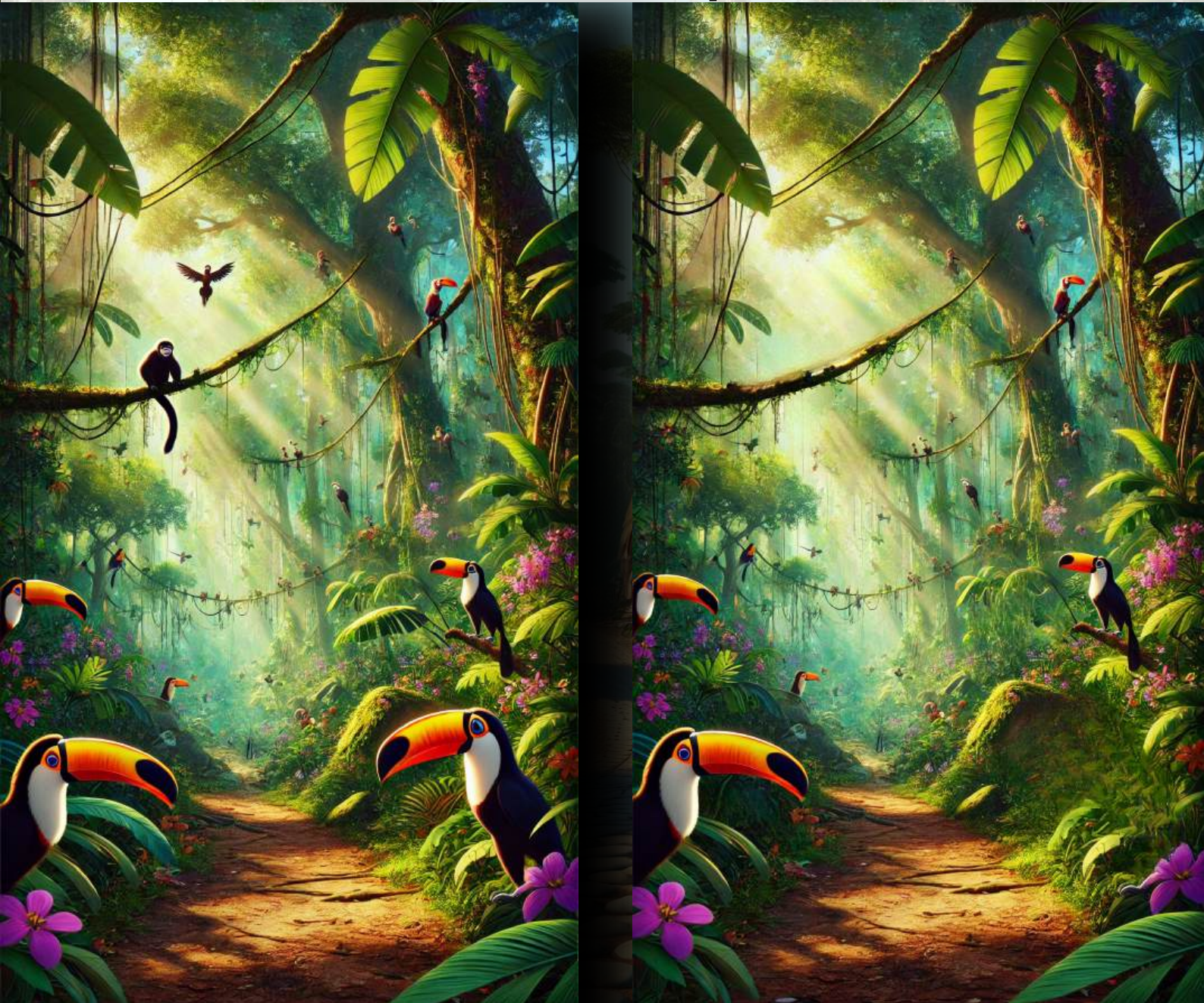
1. What message do the howler monkeys bring to Camila, and who is it from?

2. The beavers are now happy that Camila and Savino are helping them.
(True / False)

ACTIVITY

Spot the Differences

Can you spot the FIVE differences between the two pictures?



Can you name the five things you found here?

1. _____

4. _____

2. _____

5. _____

3. _____

VOCABULARY

Chapters 9-10

Peals

Loud sounds or bursts of laughter

Chuffed

Very pleased or happy

Lumbered

Moved in a slow, heavy, and awkward way

Trembled

Shook or quivered slightly

Anxiously

In a manner showing worry, nervousness, or unease

Can you figure out which word goes in each sentence?

1. Which word describes what a scared person does?

2. Which word describes how you can walk?

3. Which word describes a worried person?

4. Which word describes a soft, happy sound?

5. Which word describes a loud, happy sound?

COMPREHENSION

Chapter 9 - "The Healing Begins"

1. Santiago and Luna easily escape from the pit trap set by the beavers.
(True / False)
2. Who speaks up to stop the beavers from keeping Santiago and Luna trapped?

3. What change does Chieftain Oak announce regarding the capybaras and the Heartbloom?

Chapter 10 - "A Funny Story"

1. How do Santiago and Luna initially react when they're trapped in the pit?
 - A) They laugh it off
 - B) They roar angrily
 - C) They cry for help
 - D) They fall asleep
2. What unexpected reaction does Luna have after they are freed from the pit?

3. What was the funny story the beavers shared?

ACTIVITY

Can you build a beaver dam like the one in the story?

Materials Needed

- Popsicle sticks (at least 20)
- Modeling clay or play-doh
- Small rocks or pebbles
- A shallow pan or tray
- Water
- Optional: Small twigs, leaves, or grass

Instructions

1. **Prepare Your "River":** Fill your shallow pan about halfway with water. This is your river!
2. **Plan Your Dam:** Look at pictures of real beaver dams for ideas. Think about how to make your dam strong.
3. **Build the Foundation:** Use clay to create a base for your dam on the bottom of the pan, sticking up above the water.
 - Construct Your Dam: Stack popsicle sticks across the pan, pressing them into the clay base.
 - Use small amounts of clay to hold the sticks together.
 - Add rocks to make the dam stronger.
 - If using, add twigs, leaves, or grass to make it look more natural.
4. **Test Your Dam:** Slowly add more water to one side of the pan. Watch to see if your dam holds it back!
5. **Improve Your Design:** If water leaks through, think about how to fix it. Can you add more sticks or clay to plug the holes?
6. **Reflect and Connect:** As you build, think about the beavers in the story. How does your dam compare to theirs? How do you think real beavers solve problems when building dams?

Bonus Challenge:

- Try to build a dam that can hold back water and also let a small amount flow through, just like real beaver dams do!
- Remember: Building a good dam takes practice. Don't worry if it doesn't work perfectly the first time – that's how engineers learn!

Have your parents share your amazing dam on our Instagram page!

WRITING

The Beavers' Letter

Write a letter from the beavers to Willow.
What would they say to her now?

A writing area consisting of ten sets of horizontal lines. Each set includes a solid blue top line, a dashed blue middle line, and a solid red bottom line, providing a guide for letter height and placement.

VOCABULARY

Chapters 11-12

Rotting

Decaying or decomposing

Sobbing

Crying noisily while taking short, sudden breaths

Delicate

Very fine in texture, structure, or workmanship

Indignation

Anger or annoyance provoked by unfair treatment

Harmony

A state of agreement or peace

Can you figure out which word goes in each sentence?

1. The wings of the glasswing butterfly look very _____.
2. Our entire class gets along and we are all in _____.
3. Luna and Santiago showed _____ when they were locked in the pit.
4. The _____ garbage smelled very bad.
5. The boy was _____ when he heard his puppy was missing. Luckily, they found it later.

COMPREHENSION

Chapter 11 - "The Wraith's Plan"

1. What connection does Camila make between the sickness and the mosquitoes?

2. According to Chieftain Oak, what initially brought the beaver colony to the rainforest?

- A) Searching for food
- B) Escaping predators
- C) Following a stranger's advice about a sickness
- D) Looking for a new home

3. The beavers intentionally set out to destroy the rainforest ecosystem. (True / False)

Chapter 12 - "Reunions and Revelations"

1. How does Carlos appear when Camila finally sees him?

- A) Completely healthy
- B) Still very ill
- C) Slightly better with brighter eyes
- D) Unconscious

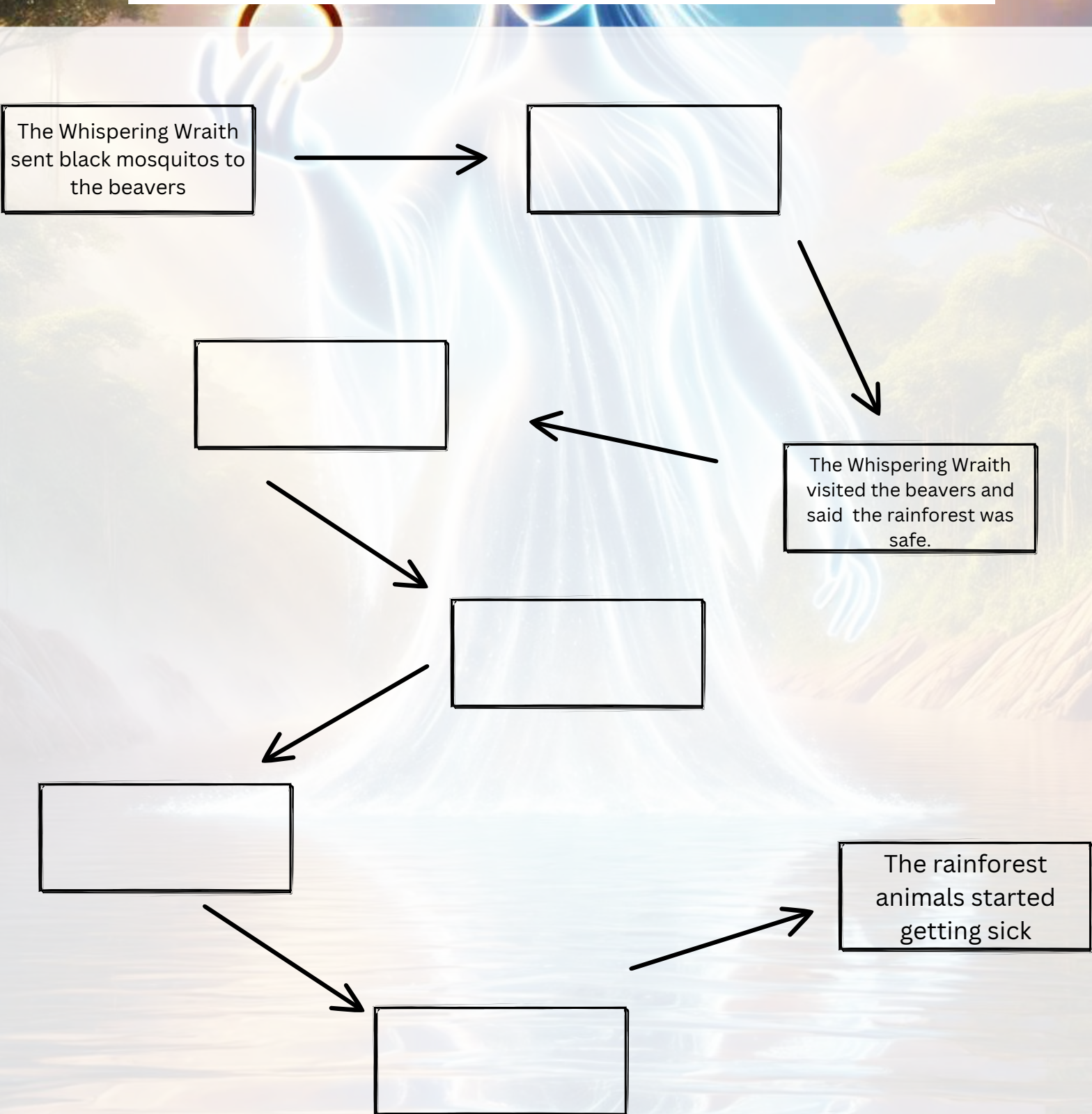
2. What new character appears to thank Carlos and Camila for their help?

3. What gift does the Spirit of the Amazon River give to Camila, and what does it represent?

ACTIVITY

Whispering Wraith - Cause/Effect

Can you make a cause and effect chain to show how the Whispering Wraith caused the jungle animals to start getting sick?



SEE YOU IN BOOK 7!

THE
CAPYBARA GUARDIANS
THE
GHOST CAT'S
MENAGERIE

COMING SOON

An adventure series by

MARC FINKS