

Title: **Zera's Quest**

I always wanted to be just like my neighbour, Zera Azzo. She's a famous author and explorer.

Zera wrote one of the most mind-blowing, best-selling books I've ever read. It's called 'The Great Unknown'! Want to know how she came up with it? Listen closely...

Zera was in the Amazon Rainforest, studying the wildlife, and embracing the calm, peaceful atmosphere. Suddenly, she saw a strange dark shadowy creature move swiftly behind the bushes. What was this *thing*? Slowly and silently, she crept through the bushes to investigate further. *WHOOSH!*

The creature brushed against the bushes, seemingly behind her again. *SWISH!* Abruptly, she turned around ... still nothing. Zera carried on, and walked further into the rainforest. She got tired after a while, so stopped to rest.

Zera closed her eyes when ...

"Tweet, tweet!" a little bird chirped.

That brought Zera back to reality, and reminded Zera where she was and what she was doing.

"I'm in the Amazon Rainforest, looking for a strange creature," she thought to herself as she started to walk onwards.

After a few minutes of walking, it looked as though Zera wasn't going to get anywhere.

"You're not getting anywhere. You might as well give up, and go home" said a voice in her head.

"No, you will keep going, because ZERA DOESN'T QUIT!" shouted another voice in her head.

Zera was confused.

“Listen to ME!” said the first voice.

“Now, now Zera. We all know that you should listen to ME!”

“To ME!”

Zera struggled with what to do next, but knew deep down, she had to keep going.

First of all, she needed some bait. What attracted the creature to come when she was studying the leaves? A-ha, she thought! Food! She was munching on some crunchy crackers, when the creature was approaching. Maybe she had some left?

Zera searched her backpack for some food she might've kept. No crackers. But, an apple! She threw it out in front of her, and hid silently behind a bush.

Camera, at the ready.

Zera, at the ready.

Eventually, Zera heard a low, deep, growl. Could this be it? Her greatest discovery?

She steadied her camera, and ... there it was! A small, curious creature with a ball-shaped back, two little furry feet sticking out at the bottom, under thick layers of teal-coloured fur. She was speechless.

CLICK! She took the photo. She waited for the instant print-out from her camera, but when she looked at it, there was nothing was there - just the ground and bush leaves. Zera looked up to where the creature had stood.

It had disappeared. Oh no! Nothing on camera, and nothing in sight.

Though Zera was disappointed, she *knew* she had discovered a new species. No-one had ever described a *teal* animal before! Not one living on land, anyway. She decided to write about what she had seen, and that was the start of her book. She searched the globe for the creature, and wrote a journal all about her incredible adventures, looking for the mysterious, gentle beast.

I hope that one day, I can be just like her. Zera's a bit old now, but reads me chapters from her book once a week. One day, I'm going to go on marvelous adventures, just like Zera.