



The bird girl

A coffee, please!

Thank you.

Mmmm, this coffee smells delicious!

Its aroma reminds me of a story a friend of mine once told me while we were having a coffee like this one.

Hey, I should warn you, it's a terrifying story, the kind that makes your hair stand on end.

It's the legend of...the bird girl!

The story begins in a tiny village, as tiny as a cup of coffee, in the South American jungle.

The place is so remote that you can count the number of people who have visited it on one hand. According to the legend, a young girl named Cuimaé lived in the village.

Cuimaé was a very happy girl, who could think of nothing but having fun. She didn't want to work or study. All she wanted to do was to have a good time with her friends.

Every afternoon she'd put on her hemp dress and a matching necklace and go out to find her gang of friends and have as much fun with them as she could. Cuimaé never had enough and she'd go out to revel and frolic about in rain or shine. Cuimaé was always the gang leader. She was by far the most enthusiastic. Yes - she was always the life of the party!

One day, Cuimaé and her friends got together just outside the village because they wanted to hold a celebration. That day the whole gang turned up. Cauac, Cafú, Filombà no one was missing.

The gang started the festivities. The drums rang out and the boys started dancing around. Cuimaé was as happy as a lark, dancing about with her friends and having the time of her life.

But while Cuimaé was at the height of her merriment, her mother was home sick in bed. The poor woman was so ill that she had Cuimaé summoned to her bedside.

"Call Cuimaé," she cried in the weak voice she could muster. "Please, I want to say goodbye to my daughter for the last time."

But when they told Cuimaé that her mother was very ill, she paid no attention and went on partying.

"I'll go home when the party is over," she said calmly, as she lit a bonfire to call up the good luck elves.

Once the fire was ablaze, she started dancing again until the party was over.

When Cuimaé got home, it was too late. Her mother was dead.

"Mother, mother," cried Cuimaé, inconsolable as she noticed the enormous salty tears running down her face.

But her cries and sorrow were to no avail; her despair and her tears were useless. Nothing could be done. It was too late.

"I'll never forgive myself!" she said regretfully.

And she tried pulling out her hair at the thought of not having left the party when she was called. Cuimaé couldn't stop crying...

And as she cried, Cuimaé wailed in such a frightful way that it resembled the sound of a wounded bird echoing throughout the jungle.

Then suddenly she began to change. Cuimaé's mouth slowly started turning into a pointed beak. Brown, red and black feathers starting growing over her body. And her legs turned into three-toed claws.

That's right, Cuimaé had been transformed into a bird.

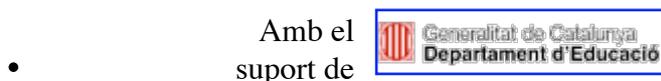
Ever since then, her bloodcurdling cries fill the jungle every night. There is silence during the day, but when the sun sets... the bird girl starts crying again.

Cuimaé is a bird that cries and cries from the top branches of a willow tree.

And this is the terrible story of the bird girl.

I hope you've enjoyed it, at least as much as I've enjoyed this coffee.

Script: J.M. Hernandez Ripoll



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