

The Possum Brothers. A story for Lachi and Dani from Aunty Nomi

Gather around children and let me tell you a story. A story about two brothers I once met. They were Lachlan and Dani, The Possum Brothers and they were more different than two brothers had ever been.

Lachlan was the older brother and he was big and strong, with an elegant, golden tail. He could scurry through the trees with speed and grace, though he rarely did, because Lachlan was cautious.

Dani was younger and smaller. His short legs held such power that he could leap effortlessly from tree to tree, his tail trailing behind him. Dani was brave and headstrong, he was afraid of nothing and went where he wanted.

I came across the brothers one fine morning, chattering upon the branches of a tree. Floating in the river below was the plumpest, juiciest looking paw paw they had ever seen. The brothers argued about the best way to get the juicy fruit for their lunch.

"I will jump down and get it, I am so fast and strong I will be back in the tree in no time" Dani boasted.

"No no" argued Lachlan "that's much too dangerous, we are safest here in the tree, I will use a stick to reach down and catch it"

"That's silly, it will take too long, I'm hungry now" complained Dani, and he prepared to leap down to the river bank.

Watching near by, under the cover of water and river plants, was a hungry crocodile. He smiled to himself at the thought of a tasty young possum for his lunch. He began to swim slowly towards the fruit bobbing in the water.



Brave Dani could wait no longer. He leapt off of his branch and landed on the river bank, reaching out with his long black tail towards floating fruit. The hungry crocodile saw his chance, opened his jaws and....

SNAP....Chomped off Dani's tail with one quick bite.

At least he would have, if it hadn't been for cautious Lachlan, watching from above. Lachlan took his stick, and poked that crocodile right in the eye. So all that hungry crocodile got a tuft of fur from the end of Dani's tail.

"Ouch, ouch, ouch" Dani ran away as fast as his little legs would carry him. All the while Lachlan watched cautiously from the tree and the hungry crocodile looked greedily up at him.

The birds in the trees and the bugs in the grass seemed to be shouting at Lachlan "run away, run away". But he stayed still and secure in the tree, his tail wrapped firmly around the safe branch.

And so he sat and waited, as the air grew cooler and the sky grew dark.

Lachlan's eyes grew heavy and he drifted off to sleep, and as he did his beautiful golden tail unfurled from around the branch and dangled down towards the water.

The crocodile opened his jaws wide, and at that very moment a terrible noise was heard running out from between the trees.

"STAY AWAY FROM MY BROTHER" Dani yelled as he leapt, fists shaking towards the crocodile.

The crocodile was so startled by the noise that he froze, just as Lachlan awoke and scurried to the safety of a higher branch.

Now if you pass by that very same tree, by that very same river, you might see two little possums, sitting among it's branches both smiling down at the river below. And Dani is still leaping from branch to branch as bravely as ever, though sometimes, just sometimes, he listens to the advice of his big brother. Lachlan still treads cautiously upon the branches, and now sometimes, only sometimes, he follows the example of his brave little brother.

And as for me? Well I swam away hungrily, with a taste for possums tail and a story to tell.

The End