



The Patient Little Sapling

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In the heart of a sun-drenched meadow, a tiny sapling named Sprout stretched its two small leaves toward the sky. Around Sprout stood a circle of giants, their branches reaching high above the clouds and casting long, dancing shadows on the grass.



Sprout looked up at the towering trees and sighed, wishing it could see over the hills like they did. The little tree tried to stretch its trunk as hard as it could, but it still barely reached the height of a dandelion.



A wise old oak tree named Elder Oak, with bark like wrinkled velvet and a crown of golden leaves, looked down and rustled softly. Patience, little one, he rumbled with a voice like the earth itself, for great things take time to build their foundation.



One afternoon, a sudden storm rolled in, bringing heavy rain and whistling winds that bent the tall grass. Sprout felt small and vulnerable, but Elder Oak leaned his massive branches over, shielding the sapling from the harshest gusts.



Focus on your roots, Sprout, Elder Oak advised as the rain soaked the thirsty earth. Sprout closed its eyes and felt the cool water seep deep into the soil, realizing that growing down into the earth was just as important as growing up.



When the sun returned, the forest transformed into a palette of orange and red as autumn arrived. Sprout marveled at its own few leaves turning a bright, fiery gold, feeling like a tiny, beautiful torch amidst the fallen leaves.



Winter brought a blanket of soft white snow, and the forest grew very quiet and still. Sprout learned that even when nothing seems to be happening on the outside, the heart is resting and gathering strength for the bright days ahead.



As spring bloomed, tiny bluebells began to grow right at Sprout's base, finding shelter and shade under its small branches. Sprout realized with a start that even as a sapling, it was already big enough to provide a home and comfort to others.



Elder Oak watched with a proud smile as Sprout danced in the gentle breeze, no longer reaching desperately for the clouds. You see, the old tree said, there is a special magic in being exactly where you are right now.



Sprout closed its eyes and felt the warmth of the sun, happy to be a small tree in a big, wonderful world. It knew that one day it would be a giant, but for today, the view from the meadow was just perfect.