



The Golden Thread of the Blue Mountains

Davonna Mckenzie



Beneath the giant ferns of the Blue Mountains, a young hiker sits on a mossy stump eating a sandwich. Suddenly, a pair of dark, twitchy whiskers pokes out from behind a rock as Brownie the Coney asks where the sun is hiding in the bread.



High above the swirling mountain mist, Ray the Sun pours warm, golden light onto the lush hillsides. Arabica the Coffee Plant stretches her shiny green leaves wide, acting like a tiny factory that turns sunlight into energy to grow bright red berries.



Homerus the Giant Swallowtail Butterfly, with wings as big as dinner plates, drifts down beside Bizzy the Bee. They land softly on Arabica's fragrant white flowers to sip sweet nectar, tasting the sunshine stored inside the plant.



A flash of emerald green zips through the air as the Doctor Bird hovers gracefully with its long tail feathers trailing behind. It dips its long beak into the coffee blossoms for a high-energy drink, carrying the golden thread of energy further.



THE SPIRIT'S GIFT

On a lower branch, Kicket the Grasshopper is busy munching on a thick, vibrant green leaf with a loud crunch. He is a plant eater, taking the energy Arabica made from the sun and storing it within his own small, jumping body.



Zandoli the Anole Lizard stays perfectly still, his green skin blending seamlessly with the coffee leaves. With a lightning-fast dart, he catches Kicket the Grasshopper, showing how energy moves from those who eat plants to those who eat meat.



By a cool, splashing stream, Whistla the Frog sits patiently on a wet, mossy stone. In a blink, his long, sticky tongue snaps out to catch a passing beetle, helping to keep the mountain's delicate balance in check.



As Brownie nibbles on fallen berries, the shadow of Buteo the Red-tailed Hawk sweeps across the grass. High in the clouds, Buteo circles as the top hunter, representing the strongest link at the very peak of the golden thread.



Brownie points his furry paw toward an old, decaying log covered in white, umbrella-shaped mushrooms. These decomposers break down old plants and animals, turning them back into rich, dark soil so that Arabica can grow once again.

JAMAICA



As the sun sets and turns the peaks a deep purple, the hiker realizes that the golden thread is actually a beautiful, never-ending circle. Brownie nods in agreement as they watch the mountain glow, knowing they are all part of the same magical story.