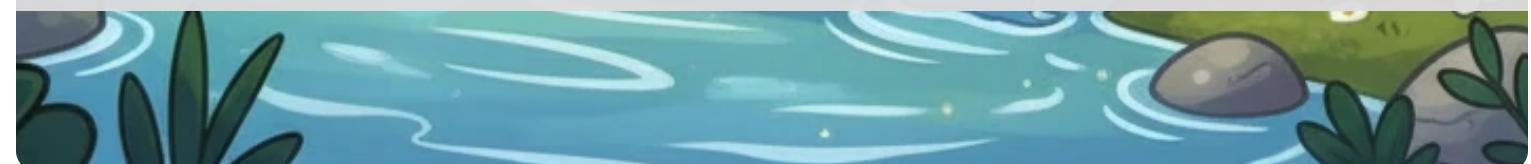




Willow and the Wobbly Log

Sherly Escandor





In a sun-dappled glade, where wildflowers bloomed in every color, lived four best friends: Willow the graceful deer, Shelly the steady tortoise, Corvus the clever crow, and Pip the speedy mouse. They spent their days playing hide-and-seek among the giant ferns and sharing juicy berries, their laughter echoing through the trees.



One sunny morning, the friends discovered a patch of the sweetest, juiciest blueberries they had ever seen, just across a sparkling, gurgling stream. The berries looked so plump and inviting, but the stream was too wide for Pip and Shelly to cross alone, and too deep for Willow to wade through without a splash.



Willow, with her gentle eyes, gazed longingly at the berries, a soft sigh escaping her lips. Shelly slowly approached the water's edge, his head tilted, pondering the challenge. Corus chirped thoughtfully from a branch above, while Pip scurried back and forth, eager but unsure.



Corvus, ever observant, suddenly flapped his wings excitedly. "Look!" he cawed, pointing a black wing towards a thick, gnarled log that had fallen during a recent storm. It stretched almost all the way across the stream, but it wobbled precariously in the middle.



Pip, being the lightest and quickest, bravely offered to try crossing the wobbly log first. With tiny, careful steps, he began to tiptoe across, his whiskers twitching with concentration, but the log swayed and dipped alarmingly under his small weight.



Shelly, seeing Pip's struggle, had a brilliant idea. "Perhaps," he rumbled, "if I place my strong, heavy shell on the wobbly part, it will help steady the log." He slowly made his way to the middle, his shell acting like an anchor.



Even with Shelly's weight, the log still had a slight wobble. Willow, with her powerful legs, carefully nudged the end of the log on their side, bracing it against a sturdy rock. Her gentle strength held it firmly in place.



With Shelly stabilizing the middle and Willow securing their end, Corvus flew ahead, guiding Pip, who scuttled across the now much steadier log. Soon, all four friends had safely made it to the other side, thanks to their combined efforts.



They cheered with delight, their eyes sparkling as they feasted on the sweet, plump blueberries. The berries tasted even better because they had worked together to reach them, a delicious reward for their clever teamwork.



As the sun began to set, casting long shadows through the trees, the friends made their way back across the now familiar log. They knew that no matter what challenge the forest brought, their friendship and unique strengths would always see them through.