



## THE OAK AND THE FERN

There was a faraway country, where there were almost no hills. There were only flat fields and beautiful meadows and lakes. There was a big, majestic oak by one of those lakes. It must have been growing there for ages because it had a strong, firm trunk and its crown was dense and full of branches. The oak was very proud of its strength and beauty. It kept reminding everyone that it was the best looking, strongest tree around.

“Nobody can take me, and nobody would dare try,” it said often, to impress everyone around and remind them how strong and beautiful it was.

Nearby, on the bank of the lake, there was some fern growing. The oak never took much notice because the fern was slender, calm, and quiet. It never asked for any attention, it just rustled softly in the wind with its leaves. It also provided shelter to small animals that felt safe in its shade.

One day, a strong wind came into the land. It howled menacingly and it destroyed everything in its way. The branches on the trees broke as if they were just tiny matches. And even the roofs from houses tore off and started flying around, while window frames banged and the window panes broke. Everyone hid wherever possible.

When the storm came to the lake, the oak stood proudly and fought the wind. So far, nothing could have threatened this huge, majestic oak, and so it thought

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that it could withstand even this nasty wind. But the wind that day was stronger than ever before.

After a hard battle, the oak was ripped from its roots and fell to the ground. When the broken tree was lying on the ground, it noticed the fern by the lake. The wind didn't seem to bother it at all. It just swayed from side to side following the direction of the wind. When it blew a bit more, it just whooshed to the side and kept on swinging. The oak, fallen to the ground, just watched in disbelief.

"How can you resist such a strong wind? You're so fragile and soft! The wind was so strong that it broke me, why didn't it destroy you, too?" asked the surprised oak.

"You were too proud of your beauty and strength. You were too stubborn, so you stood up to a wind that was stronger than you. Couldn't you see it destroying everything around us? Your pride blinded you," whispered the fern calmly. "I am a fern, so I know I am weaker than the wind, so why fight it? I will just bend my head with the wind and let it fly on."

The broken oak had to admit defeat and the fact that sometimes it's better to go with the flow instead of resisting at any cost.