



THE TALE OF THE LION AND THE MOUSE

Once upon a time, there was an old lion who ruled his entire forest. When he roared, the sound echoed throughout his entire kingdom. It told all the animals in the forest to be careful, because the lion was taking his daily stroll through the forest. Whoever didn't hide, was at risk.

Today, just like any other day, the lion was sleeping off a good lunch in the shade under the trees. But this time, he lay down by a small mouse hole that he had not noticed. When the mouse came out of his hole, he tickled the lion right under the nose with his tail. The lion woke up and roared so loud the ground shook. When he saw the mouse, he clutched it in his claws right away.

"How dare you wake me from my afternoon nap, you little mouse."

He was angry and decided to eat the mouse. He could not just let him go, that would be ridiculous. That would make him a laughing stock for all the animals in the forest.

"Stop, stop, please," said a voice from the lion's claws. "What will you even gain if you eat me? I would get lost in your enormous stomach, you wouldn't even feel me. But if you let me go, I might be useful to you," pleaded the little mouse. The lion listened to him with curiosity, he had to admit, that this little grey mouse wasn't really much of a snack. So he took pity on the mouse and let him go. The days went by and the lion had already forgotten that he once freed a

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tiny little mouse. The mouse, however, was much more careful, making sure to never cross the lion's path again, because next time it could cost him his life.

The warm days of summer were coming to a close and the weather was getting colder. The forest was all abuzz because most of the animals were preparing for the winter. However, people prepare for the winter, too. And that is why the hunting season had also begun. The hunters walked around the forest all day, placing traps. And then they waited with their hunting dogs for their catch.

One day, the lion was taking his stroll around his forest and was thinking about what he might eat for lunch. But suddenly, he stepped into a trap that had been set up by some hunters and found hanging on a tree trapped in a net. He was roaring like a madman, swinging his claws around, but there was no way out of the trap. The other animals were not brave enough to come close to the lion, because they thought he would eat them as soon as they helped him out. And so the lion was stuck in a net hanging on a tree all helpless, waiting for the end to come. But then the little grey mouse he once let go from his claws appeared right under him. He remembered that he had taken pity on him.

"Now I can keep the promise that I gave to you," the mouse squeaked in his tiny voice.

"How could you. You're so small and helpless," the lion despaired. Right then, the mouse ran up the tree from which the net was hanging. He crossed the branches carefully, scuttled up to the knot that held the net and got to work. He started chewing on the rope that fastened the net with his tiny but sharp teeth. The barking of hunting dogs could already be heard in the forest. The hunters were coming to check their traps. "Hurry up," he rushed the mouse in a frightened voice. Then, the little mouse finally bit off the last threads of the rope. This caused the net to become loose and the lion fell down from the tree like a rotten piece of fruit. The ground shook and the lion roared so loudly that the hunters' dogs got scared and scattered. When it was over, the lion and the mouse stood face to face. The mouse wasn't sure whether this was his end, because the lion could catch him and eat him right there. He, however, took the mouse in his big paw and thanked him for saving his life. Ever since then, the lion and the mouse have been the best of friends. The lion doesn't care at all that the entire forest is laughing at him, when he lets the little mouse sit on his back during his stroll around the forest.

The Lesson: Even someone weak can help someone strong. The end