

## **(1) The Power of Working Together**

In a place called the Green Forest, a long and clear river gave water to every living thing. In the spring, the water sparkled under the bright sun, and all the animals were happy. However, one summer, the weather became very hot and dry. The sun was burning, and the river slowly began to disappear.

The animals were very worried. "Without water, our plants will die and we will all be thirsty," they said. Leo the Lion, the leader of the forest, went to find the reason. He led a group of animals up the high mountain. When they reached the top, they saw a big problem. A massive rock had fallen from a cliff, completely blocking the path of the water.

"I am the strongest king of this forest," Leo said proudly. "I will use my powerful muscles to push this rock away." Leo took a deep breath and pushed with all his strength. He tried for a long time, but the rock stayed in the same place. Leo felt very tired and disappointed.

Then, Ellie the Elephant stepped forward. "I am much larger than a lion," she said. "My trunk is strong enough to move trees." She wrapped her trunk around the rock and pulled as hard as she could. Even though she was very big, the rock did not move an inch. The animals began to lose hope, fearing their forest would stay dry forever.

Suddenly, a small squirrel named Sam had an idea. He saw that the giant rock was balanced on many tiny stones and a pile of thick mud. "Excuse me," Sam said quietly. "Instead of moving the big rock, maybe we should remove the small things under it first."

Leo the Lion laughed at the little squirrel. “How can a tiny squirrel do what a lion and an elephant cannot?”

But Sam did not give up. He called his friends: the rabbits, the mice, and the small birds. “If we work together, we can dig out the mud and the pebbles,” Sam explained. The small animals began to work. The rabbits used their claws to dig, the mice carried away the stones, and the birds moved the dry leaves.

Seeing their hard work, the bigger animals felt ashamed and joined the team. Ellie used her trunk to spray water on the mud to make it soft. Leo used his heavy paws to move the dirt that the small animals had dug out.

For many hours, everyone worked as one team. They did not care about who was the strongest or the smallest. Slowly, the ground under the giant rock began to shift.

“It is working!” Sam shouted. “Now, let’s all push together!”

Everyone pushed at the same time. With a loud sound, the giant rock finally rolled over the cliff. A second later, a rush of cold water burst through and flowed back into the valley. The animals cheered and jumped into the river. Leo the Lion looked at Sam and smiled. “I learned a lesson today,” Leo said. “True power comes from working together.”

From that day on, the Green Forest was never dry again. The animals always remembered that no one is too small to make a big difference.