



# The Lion & The Mouse



Once in a dense jungle far far away there lived a mighty lion whom all the other creatures used to fear very much. King of the jungle as he was, the terrible beast knew no fear and he loved the respect he received from all and sundry in the forest. He used to spend half his day in hunting and the other half in sleeping. No creature dared to come near his den at any time of the day, specially when he was asleep for the mighty beast got terribly angry if his sleep was disturbed in any way.

But one day it so happened that a little mouse got curious to see how the lion's den looked like. So he set out for the cave where the lion rested. When he got near, he could not see the lion.

"He has gone somewhere. Is he going to come back soon? Nah...I don't think so." thought the mouse. It ran and sneaked into the cave. It was a dark, desolate place but big enough for the lion to live. The mouse felt small and a little afraid when he saw the large footprints of the lion on the ground.

"Maybe I should turn back." thought he.

Just then he heard the sound of the footsteps of the lion.

"Oh no, he is coming back. Now what do I do?" the mouse trembled anxiously.

The lion had only gone to quench his thirst from a river close by and he was coming back to take rest.

The mouse hid himself in the dark inside of the cave and saw the huge shadow of the lion falling on the floors. The lion sat near the entrance of the cave and rested his head on his huge paws. Soon he was fast asleep. The whole cave seemed to tremble with the loud snoring of the jungle king.

The mouse tried to creep out as stealthily as he could. Soon he was near the entrance. But as he tried to cross the lion, his little tail grazed against the left paw of the beast and the lord of the jungle woke up with a start. Imagine his anger and the roar he gave when he saw the puny mouse in his den.

The frightened mouse lost his mind and began to run up and down upon the lion. The lion placed his huge paw upon its tail and opened his big jaws to swallow the mouse when the latter cried out,

"Pardon, O King, please forgive me. I did not mean to wake you, I was only trying to leave this cave which I had entered out of curiosity. Kindly let me go this time, I shall never forget your nobility: if destiny gives me a chance I will assist you in whichever way I can on one of your bad days."

The lion was amused at this thought. How can the little mouse help him? But he let him go and roared with laughter. The mouse ran for his life, thanking his stars.

A few days, as the lion was prowling majestically through the jungle, it was suddenly caught in a hunter's snare. He struggled furiously to break free. But for all his efforts, he only found himself getting even more entangled in the net of ropes. He roared out of anger and helplessness. The whole jungle began to shake due to the terrible sound and every animal heard the cries of the beast. The mouse heard it too.

"The lord of the jungle is in trouble." thought the mouse. "It is my chance to be of help to him now".

Thinking so, the mouse ran as fast as he could to the place where the sounds were coming from. Soon he found the lion trapped in the hunter's snare.

"Don't move, Your Majesty, I'll cut your ropes and you will soon be free" squeaked the mouse. Without wasting a second, he began nibbling through the ropes with his sharp little teeth. Very soon the lion was free.

"I did not believe that even you could help me. But I was wrong" said the lion humbly. And the two creatures became the best of friends from that day.

No matter how weak and small a creature is, he may be of help if time comes.