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On the wide, sunny grasslands, a little zebra stood near his mother. His coat was soft cream-white with bold black stripes, and his big ears twitched at every sound. He wore a simple woven grass bracelet on one front leg. He wanted to explore, but his skinny legs felt shaky. "What if I get lost?" he whispered.

Just then, a young elephant calf came thumping by. He was round and grey, with big floppy ears and a small red cloth band tied around one ankle. "Hello!" he trumpeted softly. "I'm looking for someone to explore with. Want to come?" The little zebra blinked his large brown eyes. "Me? But I'm not very brave," he said.

The elephant calf smiled. "That's okay. I get scared too, sometimes. We can be brave together!" He held out his short trunk. The little zebra looked at the elephant's bright dark eyes and felt a tiny spark of courage. "Okay," he said, and they started walking. The grasslands stretched out before them, full of tall grass and waving flowers.

Soon they came to a shallow stream. The water bubbled over smooth stones, and the little zebra stopped short. "It looks deep," he worried, his tiny hooves tapping the ground. "Let's try step by step," said the elephant calf. "Watch me." He placed one sturdy round leg into the water. "See? It's only up to my toes!"

The little zebra took a deep breath. He put one hoof in, then another. The water was cool and gentle. "You're doing great!" cheered the elephant calf. The zebra's big ears perked up. He crossed the stream with a little hop. "I did it!" he laughed. His grass bracelet was wet, but he didn't mind at all.

On the other side, the grasslands were new and strange. Tall grasses whispered, and strange bugs buzzed. The little zebra pressed close to his friend. "What if something scary is hiding?" he asked. The elephant calf wrapped his trunk gently around the zebra's back. "I'm right here," he said. "Let's look together."

They explored side by side, step by step. The elephant calf showed the zebra how to listen for bird songs and how to sniff the sweet clover. The little zebra began to relax. "This is fun!" he said. His short upright mane bounced as he walked. He even led the way through a patch of soft grass.

Then they reached another stream, wider than the first. The little zebra's heart beat fast. "I can't do this one," he said. "It's too big." The elephant calf stood close. "Remember the first stream? You were scared, and you did it. Let's try one step at a time. I'll be right beside you." The zebra looked at the water and nodded slowly.

The elephant calf went first, his round legs making gentle splashes. "See? The bottom is smooth," he said. The little zebra watched his friend's red ankle band bob in the water. He took a step. Then another. His skinny legs trembled, but he kept going. "You're so brave!" called the elephant calf. The zebra smiled a wobbly smile.

Halfway across, the little zebra slipped on a wet stone. He gasped and froze. "I'm stuck!" he cried. The elephant calf turned back at once. "I've got you," he said. He held out his trunk, and the zebra grabbed it. Together, they stepped carefully to the other bank. "We did it together," said the elephant calf. The zebra felt warm and safe.

After that, the little zebra stood taller. His large brown eyes shone. "You know," he said, "I think I'm getting braver." The elephant calf flapped his big floppy ears happily. "You always were brave," he said. "You just needed a friend to remind you." They walked on through the grasslands, and the zebra didn't feel shy at all.

They found a grassy hill and climbed to the top. From there, they could see the streams winding like silver ribbons. "Look how far we came!" said the little zebra. He touched his grass bracelet and smiled. "I used to be afraid of everything. Now I want to explore more!" The elephant calf trumpeted a happy little tune.

The sun began to set, painting the sky pink and gold. "We should go home," said the elephant calf. "But we can come back tomorrow." The little zebra nodded. "And the day after?" he asked. "And the day after that!" laughed the elephant calf. They walked back together, crossing the streams with easy steps.

Back at the herd, the little zebra's mother nuzzled him. "You look different," she said. "You seem taller." The little zebra smiled. "I made a best friend," he said. "And he helped me be brave." The elephant calf gave a shy trumpet. "He helped me too," he said. "Exploring is more fun with two."

That night, the little zebra lay under the stars. He thought about the shallow streams and the wide grasslands. He thought about his friend's encouraging voice and the red band on his ankle. "I can't wait for tomorrow," he whispered. His grass bracelet felt like a tiny medal. He closed his eyes and slept with a smile.

And from that day on, the little zebra and the elephant calf explored together. They crossed many streams and wandered through many grasslands. The zebra still felt scared sometimes, but his friend was always there. And he learned that with a good friend by your side, any new adventure is easier and much more fun.