

The Two Little Otters



Jane MEADOW

The Two Little Otters

Jane MEADOW



Down by the sparkling river, where the water sang over smooth stones, lived two little otters named Olive and Oscar. Olive was the older sister, with a red ribbon tied behind her ear and a cream-colored belly that flashed when she swam. Oscar was her little brother, rounder and shorter, with a blue cord bracelet on his paw. They loved to play by the river all day long.



The river was their favorite playground. They chased minnows, dove through the cool water, and somersaulted off mossy logs. Oscar's amber eyes grew wide with excitement whenever he splashed. Olive's long whiskers twitched with joy as she invented new games. Every morning they raced to the water, eager to begin another day of play.



One sunny morning, Olive found a smooth, flat rock at the river's edge. It was the perfect shape for sliding into the water. 'This is my special rock!' she declared, patting it proudly. But Oscar scrambled up beside her. 'I want it too!' he said, his little chest puffed out. 'I was here first!' Olive replied. They both tugged at the rock, frowning.



The sun sparkled on the water as the two otters argued. Oscar grabbed the rock with both paws, but Olive pulled it back. 'You always get the best things!' Oscar grumbled. 'That's not true!' Olive said. They each wanted the smooth rock all to themselves, and neither would give in. The happy morning felt suddenly grumpy.



Just then, two young otters came padding along the riverbank. One was Pip, a shy little otter with a yellow daisy tucked behind her ear. The other was Sunny, who wore a green leaf band on her wrist and had a big happy grin. 'Can we play too?' Sunny asked. Pip peeked from behind her, her large dark eyes wide and hopeful.



Olive and Oscar stopped tugging and looked at their visitors. 'We were just... playing with this rock,' Oscar mumbled, still holding it tightly. Pip took a small step back, her thin whiskers drooping. Sunny tilted her head. 'It looks like you're arguing,' she said gently. The two siblings glanced at each other, feeling a little embarrassed.



Olive's quick mind began to whirl. She looked at the rock, then at the four otters, and a bright idea popped into her head. 'Why don't we make a game?' she said. 'Everyone can have a turn on the rock!' Oscar's ears perked up. 'A game?' he asked. 'Yes!' said Olive. 'We'll take turns sliding, and someone can be the splash-caller!'



Oscar's stubborn frown melted into a grin. 'I want to be the splash-caller!' he shouted. Sunny giggled and clapped her paws. Pip smiled shyly, her daisy bobbing. Olive explained the rules: one otter slides down the rock, another calls out a silly splash word, and everyone cheers. 'And we all get a turn,' she added firmly. The others nodded eagerly.



Oscar scrambled onto the rock first. 'Ready, set, splash!' he called, and slid down with a whoop, sending up a spray of water. Sunny laughed and shouted, 'Super splash!' Pip clapped her paws. Then it was Sunny's turn. She zoomed down the rock and made a huge splash. 'Gigantic splash!' Oscar yelled. The river echoed with happy squeals.



When it was Pip's turn, she hesitated. 'What if I splash too small?' she whispered. Olive swam over and gave her a nudge. 'Any splash is a good splash,' she said. Pip took a deep breath, slid down the rock, and made a tiny plip. Everyone cheered loudly. Pip's dark eyes shone with pride. She had done it!



The game went on and on. Each otter had a turn, and each turn brought new laughter. Oscar made up silly splash words like 'kerfloosh' and 'splisharoo.' Sunny invented a dance for every splash. Pip grew braver with each turn, her daisy bouncing as she slid. Olive beamed, watching her friends play together. The smooth rock was now the best game in the river.



After many turns, Oscar flopped onto the bank, panting happily. 'That was the best game ever!' he said. 'And we all got a turn,' said Olive, smiling. 'Even me,' Pip whispered, her voice full of wonder. Sunny grinned. 'Sharing makes everything more fun!' The four otters lay in the sun, their tails touching, feeling like the best of friends.



From that day on, the smooth rock was known as the Sharing Rock. Whenever young otters came to play, Olive and Oscar welcomed them with a cheerful 'Ready, set, splash!' They had learned that a small quarrel could turn into a big, happy game. And the river always rang with splashes and laughter when the otters played together.



As the sun began to set, the four otters swam home side by side. 'I'm glad we shared the rock,' Oscar said, twisting his blue bracelet. 'Me too,' said Olive, her red ribbon fluttering. 'It's more fun when everyone plays.' Pip and Sunny nodded, their hearts full. They promised to meet again the next day for more splashy adventures.



Back at their cozy den, Olive and Oscar curled up together. 'You know,' Oscar whispered, 'sharing wasn't so hard after all.' Olive nuzzled him. 'That's because we did it together,' she said. 'Teamwork makes everything better.' They fell asleep to the gentle sound of the river, dreaming of slides and splashes and friends.



And so, the two little otters learned a big lesson: a favorite spot is even more special when it's shared. The river still flows, the rock still waits, and somewhere, otters are laughing as they take turns. Because when friends play as a team, every splash is a happy one. The end.