

The Rabbit and the Duck



Jane MEADOW

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In a sunny meadow, beside a quiet pond, lived a small rabbit named Ruby. Her fur was soft and warm brown, and her long ears stood up tall. She wore a sky blue scarf with tiny white polka dots. Every morning, Ruby hopped through the grass, looking for new friends to play with. The meadow was full of flowers, and the pond sparkled like a mirror.



One day, Ruby heard a splash and a quack. She peeked through the tall grass and saw a duck paddling in the pond. The duck had bright yellow fluffy feathers, an orange flat bill, and a little green leaf hair clip on her head. She looked cheerful and friendly. Ruby felt a little shy, but she was also very curious.



Ruby took a deep breath and hopped closer to the water's edge. "Hello," she said. "My name is Ruby. What's your name?" The duck smiled and waddled onto the shore. "I'm Daisy," she said. "I've never met a rabbit before. Would you like to play?" Ruby nodded eagerly, her fluffy white tail twitching with excitement.



Ruby and Daisy stood side by side, looking at each other. Ruby didn't know what ducks liked to do, and Daisy didn't know what rabbits liked to do. They were both a little unsure. "What shall we play?" asked Ruby. Daisy tilted her head. "I don't know," she said. "What do you like to do?" They were both silent for a moment.



Ruby's ears perked up. "I know!" she said. "I can teach you how to hop!" She crouched down and sprang into the air, her long ears flopping. Daisy tried to hop, but her orange webbed feet made her waddle instead. She giggled. "This is hard!" she said. Ruby laughed too. "That's okay! Let's try something else."



Ruby led Daisy to a patch of soft green grass. "Let's play tag!" she said. "You run, and I'll chase you." Ruby hopped quickly, her fluffy tail bouncing. Daisy waddled as fast as she could, her webbed feet pattering on the ground. She quacked with laughter. "I'm too slow!" she said. "But this is fun!"



They played tag until they were both tired. Daisy flopped onto the grass, her yellow feathers ruffled. "I'm thirsty," she said. "Let's go to the pond." They walked to the water's edge. Daisy slipped into the pond with a gentle splash. She floated easily, bobbing on the water. "Come in, Ruby!" she called. "The water is cool and nice."



Ruby stood at the edge and looked at the water. She had never been in a pond before. It looked deep, and she felt nervous. "I don't know how to swim," she said softly. Daisy paddled close. "That's okay," she said. "I can teach you. Just stay near the edge and splash your paws."



Ruby dipped one paw into the pond. The water was cool and tickled her fur. Then she splashed with both paws. Drops of water flew up and sparkled in the sun. Ruby laughed. "I'm splashing!" she said. Daisy laughed too and splashed water with her orange bill. Soon they were both splashing and laughing. "This is wonderful!" said Ruby.



Daisy showed Ruby how to float. "Just relax," she said. "The water will hold you up." Ruby lay back in the shallow water and felt herself float. She looked up at the sky and smiled. "I feel like a cloud!" she said. Daisy floated beside her. "Now you know my favorite thing," she said. "Splashing and floating by the pond."



After their splash, they sat on the warm grass to dry off. "I liked hopping and tag," said Daisy. "And I liked splashing and floating," said Ruby. "We can do both!" said Daisy. "But how?" asked Ruby. Daisy smiled. "We can play in the meadow, and then come to the pond to cool off. Friends can share different places."



Ruby's eyes lit up. "You're right!" she said. "I can show you more meadow games, and you can show me more water games." So they hopped and waddled back to the meadow. They played hide-and-seek among the flowers. Daisy hid behind a big sunflower, and Ruby found her easily. "Your yellow feathers gave you away!" Ruby giggled.



Then they returned to the pond for another splash. Daisy showed Ruby how to make ripples with her paws. Ruby showed Daisy how to skip a pebble across the water. They laughed and played until the sun began to set. The sky turned pink and orange, and the pond sparkled with the colors of the sunset.



Ruby and Daisy sat together on the grass, watching the sky. "I'm so glad we met," said Ruby. "Me too," said Daisy. "Even though we like different places, we still had a wonderful time." Ruby nodded. "Friends can enjoy different things," she said. "That makes it even more fun."



From that day on, Ruby and Daisy played together every day. Ruby taught Daisy new meadow games, and Daisy taught Ruby new water games. They learned that friendship is not about being the same. It is about sharing and trying new things. And they knew they would always be good friends, no matter where they played.



As the sun set, Ruby hopped home through the meadow, and Daisy waddled to her nest by the pond. They called goodnight to each other, their hearts full of joy. Ruby touched her blue scarf and smiled. She knew that tomorrow would bring more fun with her friend Daisy. And they both slept happily, dreaming of their next adventure together.