

The Girl and the Beaver



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Ella lives in a little house at the edge of a green wetland. Every morning, she pulls on her mustard-yellow rain boots and walks down the muddy path. She carries a small canvas satchel for nature finds. Today, she hopes to see the beaver family again. They live near the pond, and Ella thinks they are the busiest neighbors in the whole world.



The wetland is full of sounds. Frogs croak, birds sing, and water wiggles between the reeds. Ella sits on a smooth log and waits. Soon, she hears a splash. Mama Beaver swims out of the lodge with her glossy reddish-brown fur shining in the sun. Her flat paddle tail goes slap, slap on the water. Behind her paddles Little Beaver, fluffy and round.



Mama Beaver is an amazing builder. She uses her long orange front teeth to cut down a small tree. Then she pushes the branch through the water. Little Beaver tries to help, but he trips over a twig and tumbles into the pond. Splash! Ella giggles. "Good try, little one!" she whispers. The beaver family works together, and Ella watches every move.



Every day, Ella visits the beaver family. She watches Mama Beaver stack sticks and mud to make their lodge strong. Little Beaver carries tiny twigs in his mouth, though sometimes he drops them. The beavers are always busy, always building. Ella draws pictures in her notebook. She writes: "Beavers are builders!" Her hazel eyes shine with wonder.



The beavers do more than build their home. Their dam slows the stream and makes a wide, calm pond. Ella sees frogs hopping on lily pads. Ducks paddle in the water. Fish flash under the surface. "Your building helps everyone!" Ella tells the beavers. She feels happy inside, like she has discovered a secret. The wetland is a busy, happy place because of them.



One afternoon, Ella's teacher, Mr. Halloran, asks the class to share something they have learned about nature. Ella thinks of the beavers right away. She raises her hand. "I know a family of beavers," she says. "They are remarkable builders!" Mr. Halloran smiles, his round glasses twinkling. "That sounds wonderful, Ella. Would you like to make an exhibition?"



Ella gets to work. She draws pictures of Mama Beaver and Little Beaver. She paints the pond, the frogs, and the birds. She glues real sticks onto a big board to show how beavers build. She writes facts in her neatest handwriting. Her green ribbon bounces as she works. "This is going to be the best exhibition ever!" she says.



At home, Ella practices her presentation. She tells her family how beavers cut sticks with their teeth. She explains how their dam creates a wetland home for fish and frogs. Her little brother listens with wide eyes. "Beavers are cool!" he says. Ella nods. "They are! And they help nature in so many ways." She feels proud of her work.



The day of the exhibition arrives. Ella sets up her display in the classroom. She brings sticks, mud, and a small model of a lodge. Her classmates gather around. Mr. Halloran wears his green knitted cardigan and holds his clipboard. "Ready, Ella?" he asks. Ella takes a deep breath. "Ready!" she says. Her heart beats fast, but she smiles.



Ella begins. "This is Mama Beaver," she says, pointing to her drawing. "She uses her strong teeth to cut branches. And this is Little Beaver. He is still learning to build!" The class laughs at the picture of Little Beaver splashing. Ella shows how the dam makes a pond. "The wetland is a home for frogs, birds, and fish," she explains. "Beavers are builders, and they help everyone!"



When Ella finishes, the room is quiet. Then Mr. Halloran claps. The whole class claps too! "Wonderful job, Ella!" Mr. Halloran says. "You taught us so much about beavers." Ella's cheeks turn pink with happiness. Her classmates ask questions, and she answers them proudly. She feels like a real nature expert.



At the end of the day, Mr. Halloran gives Ella a special sticker. It says "Nature Explorer." Ella sticks it on her satchel. She thinks about the beaver family. She can't wait to visit them again. "Thank you, beavers," she whispers. "You are the best builders in the world." She skips all the way home in her yellow boots.



That evening, Ella sits by the pond. The sun sets behind the trees, and the water turns golden. Mama Beaver swims by with Little Beaver close behind. They slap their tails softly. Ella smiles. She knows that the wetland is a better place because of these clever animals. Animals really are remarkable builders!



Ella's exhibition stays up in the classroom for a whole week. Other classes come to see it. Mr. Halloran tells everyone how Ella observed the beavers and shared what she learned. Ella feels proud and happy. She knows that sharing nature's secrets is important. Maybe one day, she will be a scientist who studies animals.



Ella keeps visiting the beaver family. She brings her satchel and sketches new things she sees. The frogs, birds, and fish are all part of the beaver's world. And Ella is part of it too. She learns something new every day. "Being curious is fun!" she tells her mom. Her mom smiles and hugs her.



The beavers keep building, and Ella keeps watching. She knows that even small animals can do big things. The wetland is a happy, busy place, full of life and sound. And Ella is glad she shared its story. "Animals are remarkable builders," she says. "And so am I!" She laughs and runs home in her mustard-yellow boots.