

The Little Dik-Dik's Garden



Aysel Banu YAVUZAL

The Little Dik-Dik's Garden

Aysel Banu YAVUZAL



On the wide, sunny savanna, where golden grass waved in the warm wind, lived a little dik-dik. He was small, with a warm tan-brown coat and big, gentle eyes. Two short horns stood up like tiny spikes on his head, and his long, slender snout twitched as he sniffed the air. He carried a little woven grass satchel over his shoulder, though it was empty for now.



Every morning, the little dik-dik trotted to the top of a small hill and looked out over the savanna. "I wish there were flowers here," he sighed. "Bright red ones, and yellow ones, and purple ones, too." But all he saw was grass, grass, and more grass. Still, his big dark eyes sparkled with hope. He believed that one day, flowers would bloom.



One day, a flash of blue and violet zipped past his nose. It was a sunbird, hovering in the air with shimmering wings. His feathers shone like jewels, and his long curved beak dipped into a tiny red flower tucked near his wing. "Hello!" chirped the sunbird. "Why are you staring at the grass?" The dik-dik smiled. "I'm dreaming of a garden," he said.



"A garden?" The sunbird tilted his bright, alert head. "I love flowers! I carry seeds in my feathers when I fly across the savanna. But I never have time to plant them." The dik-dik's ears perked up. "And I can dig and water," he said. "But I have no seeds." They looked at each other. "We could work together!" they shouted at the same time.



The sunbird darted away and returned with a tiny seed in his beak. "Here!" he said, dropping it into the dik-dik's satchel. Then he flew off again and brought another, and another. Soon the satchel was full of seeds of all shapes and sizes. The dik-dik's eyes grew wide. "This is the best day ever!" he cheered, and his little tail wiggled with joy.



The dik-dik found a sunny spot near a gentle stream. With his thin, nimble legs, he dug small holes in the soft earth. The sunbird hovered above, dropping a seed into each hole. "One for you," sang the sunbird, "and one for you!" The dik-dik covered the seeds with soil and patted them down. "Now we water them," he said, "and wait."



Every day, the two friends tended their garden. The sunbird flew far across the savanna to find more seeds, and the dik-dik watered each little mound from the stream. "Will they grow?" asked the sunbird. "They will," said the dik-dik patiently. "We just have to keep caring for them." So they did, day after day, even when the sun was hot.



One morning, a tiny green shoot poked out of the soil. The dik-dik gasped. "Look!" he cried. The sunbird zoomed down to see. "It's a plant!" he chirped. They danced around the little shoot. Soon, more and more green shoots appeared. The dik-dik watered them gently, and the sunbird chased away any bugs that came too close. Their garden was growing!



But one afternoon, dark clouds rolled across the sky. A strong wind blew, and the little plants bent low. "Oh no!" cried the dik-dik. "The wind will break them!" The sunbird flew in circles, worried. Then he had an idea. "We can build a shield from grass and twigs!" he said. Together, they wove a low fence around the garden to protect the tender shoots.



The wind blew and blew, but the little fence held strong. The plants swayed but did not break. When the storm passed, the sun came out again. The dik-dik and the sunbird checked every plant. They were all safe! "We did it!" cheered the sunbird. "We protected our garden." The dik-dik smiled. "Because we worked together," he said.



Weeks passed, and the garden grew taller and greener. Then one morning, the dik-dik saw something wonderful. A bud! And another! And another! "Sunbird, come quick!" he called. The sunbird came and gasped. "They're going to bloom!" he chirped. They waited and watched. And then, slowly, the first flower opened its petals. It was bright red, like the sunbird's little flower.



Then more flowers opened. Yellow ones, purple ones, and orange ones, too. The garden was a rainbow of color on the savanna. "It's beautiful!" whispered the dik-dik. The sunbird hovered among the blooms, sipping nectar and carrying pollen from flower to flower. "And it's all ours," he said. "Well, ours to share," said the dik-dik, his big eyes shining.



The bright flowers could be seen from far away. One by one, animals came to visit. A tortoise stopped to rest in the shade. A family of meerkats peeked at the blooms. Even a tall giraffe bent down to sniff a flower. "What a lovely garden!" they all said. The dik-dik and the sunbird smiled. "Welcome!" they said. "Enjoy the flowers!"



Soon, the garden was a happy meeting place for all the animals. The sunbird carried seeds to other parts of the savanna, and the dik-dik showed the younger animals how to dig and water. "Anyone can grow a garden," he told them, "if they have a friend to help." The sunbird nodded. "And a little patience," he added with a chirp.



The little dik-dik looked at the blooming garden and then at his friend, the sunbird. "Remember when this was just grass?" he asked. The sunbird laughed. "Now it's full of color and life." The dik-dik nodded. "Friendship can make beautiful things grow," he said. "Even in the driest, grassiest place." And the sunbird agreed with a happy song.



So the little dik-dik and the sunbird kept tending their garden on the sunny savanna. They watered and planted and shared the beauty with everyone. And whenever a new animal came by, the dik-dik would offer a seed from his satchel and say, "Plant this with a friend. You'll see what happens." For friendship, they learned, can make the whole world bloom.