

The Little Ibex



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High on a rocky mountain, where the wind hums softly and the clouds float by, lived a little ibex. His fur was warm brown with a cream belly, and his short curved horns had tiny ridges. He wore a small woven grass collar in muted green. Every morning he leaped from rock to rock, strong and cheerful.



The little ibex loved his mountain home. He could climb steep places with his small black hooves and fluffy short tail. But he did not always know which paths were safe. Sometimes he skipped along a trail that ended in a pile of loose stones. He would laugh and find another way.



One sunny day, near a clump of wildflowers, the ibex heard a squeaky voice. "Careful! That edge is crumbly!" A plump marmot peeked out from behind a rock. Her golden-brown fur was thick, her cheeks were chubby, and a tiny red scarf was tied around her neck. Her bright black eyes watched him closely.



"Hello!" said the ibex. "I'm fine—I'm strong!" The marmot shook her head. "Strong is good, but safe is better," she said. "I know this mountain well. I know every safe path and every rocky trap." The ibex tilted his oversized ears. "Then will you show me?" he asked. The marmot hesitated. "I'm scared of steep rocks," she whispered.



The ibex thought for a moment. "I can carry you!" he said. "My back is sturdy and warm." The marmot looked at his gentle dark eyes and smiled. "All right," she said. "But you must listen to my directions." She climbed onto his back and held on to his fluffy tail. "Let's go!" she squeaked. And off they went.



The marmot pointed with her tiny paw. "Turn left at the big gray boulder," she said. The ibex turned left. "Now go slowly over those flat stones." The ibex stepped carefully. His small black hooves clicked softly. "You see?" said the marmot. "Safe is better than fast." The ibex nodded. He was learning to trust his new friend.



They came to a place where the path split in two. One way was steep and rocky. The other way looked smooth but ended in a cliff. "Which way?" asked the ibex. The marmot closed her eyes and remembered. "Neither," she said. "We must find another way." The ibex looked around. He saw a narrow ledge that might work. "Up there?" he asked.



The marmot looked at the ledge and shivered. "It's high," she said. "But I think it's safe if we go slowly." The ibex felt strong and brave. "Hold on tight," he said. "I'll carry you." He climbed onto the ledge. His hooves found good holds. The marmot guided him. "A little to the right... now straight ahead." They moved together, step by step.



The ledge was narrow, but the ibex did not rush. He listened to the marmot's soft voice. "Stop here," she said. "There's a gap. Jump gently." The ibex jumped. He landed safely on the other side. The marmot cheered. "You did it!" The ibex smiled. "We did it," he said. The wind blew softly, and the clouds drifted by.



From the other side, they saw a wide rocky slope. It looked hard to cross. "Is there a safe passage?" asked the ibex. The marmot studied the rocks. "I remember a path," she said. "It winds between the big stones. But it's steep." The ibex puffed out his chest. "I can do steep," he said. "Just show me the way."



The marmot pointed to a line of flat stones. "Follow those," she said. "They lead to a hidden passage." The ibex stepped carefully. The marmot called out, "Left here! Right there!" Her red scarf fluttered in the breeze. The ibex followed every word. Together they crossed the rocky slope, one careful step at a time.



At last, they found the safe passage. It was a smooth trail between two tall rocks. "We did it!" cried the marmot. "We found the way!" The ibex laughed with joy. "Because you knew the paths," he said. "And because you carried me," said the marmot. They smiled at each other. The mountain felt friendly and warm.



From that day on, the ibex and the marmot were the best of friends. They explored the mountain together. The ibex carried the marmot over steep rocks. The marmot showed the ibex the safe paths. They discovered new trails and played hide-and-seek among the boulders. Every obstacle became a game they could win together.



One afternoon, they sat on a sunny ledge and watched the clouds. "You know," said the ibex, "I used to think being strong was enough." The marmot nodded. "And I used to think being careful was enough," she said. "But together, we have both." They shared a sweet mountain flower and watched the sun turn the sky pink.



The marmot tied her red scarf a little tighter. "Where shall we go tomorrow?" she asked. The ibex looked at the rocky peaks. "Anywhere," he said. "As long as we go together." The marmot giggled. "Then I'll bring my map," she said. "And I'll bring my strong legs," said the ibex. They bumped noses and laughed.



And so the little ibex and the little marmot lived happily on the mountain. They learned that friendship helps overcome every obstacle. The ibex's strength and the marmot's knowledge made them a perfect team. And when the wind hums softly and the clouds float by, you might just see them playing on the rocky slope, safe and happy together.