

# The Fossa's New Friend



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Deep in the green forest, where tall trees touched the sky, lived a fossa named Tandro. He had a warm brown coat, a long tail, and big round amber eyes. Every morning he watched the other animals play together. He wanted a friend more than anything in the world. But when he came near, the animals grew quiet. "A fossa is not friendly," they whispered. So Tandro stayed alone.



Tandro was long and low to the ground, with a pale cream belly and small rounded ears. He was gentle, but nobody knew it. He tried to smile at the birds. They flew away. He tried to wave at the mice. They hid in the leaves. "Why won't anyone play with me?" Tandro sighed, curling his long tail around his paws. He did not understand.



One morning, something sparkled near the forest bridge. It was a lemur, small as a cat, with soft grey fur and a white face. Her striped tail curled behind her, and tiny star-shaped sparkles floated around her fur. She wore a leaf-green scarf with a tiny glowing acorn charm. "Hello!" she said. "My name is Niri. What is yours?"



Tandro blinked his round amber eyes. "You... you are talking to me?" he whispered. "Of course," said Niri, her golden eyes bright. "You look kind." Nobody had ever called Tandro kind before. His heart felt warm, like sunshine on a rock. "I am Tandro," he said softly. "And I have no friends at all." Niri smiled. "Well, now you have one."



Niri showed Tandro a little magic. She wiggled her striped tail, and a soft glow lit up the leaves. "I can make light," she said. "It helps me find my way." Tandro watched the sparkles dance around her fur. "That is wonderful," he said. "Can all lemurs do that?" Niri laughed. "Only me, I think!" They walked together along the forest path, talking and laughing.



Every day after that, Tandro and Niri met by the old wooden bridge. Niri brought sweet berries, and Tandro brought cool water in a curled leaf. They told stories under the trees. The other animals peeked from behind the ferns. They had never seen a fossa laugh before. Slowly, the birds came closer. The mice watched with round little eyes.



Then one night, a great storm rolled through the forest. Thunder grumbled, and rain poured down. The wind shook the trees, and it shook the old bridge too. With a loud crack, the bridge broke apart. Planks splashed into the stream and floated away. When morning came, the forest animals stood by the water, looking sad.



The animals could not cross the stream to reach the berry bushes on the other side. "Our bridge is broken!" cried the birds. "What will we do?" asked the mice. The little ones were too small to swim across. Everyone looked worried. Tandro looked at the rushing water, then at his friends. "We can fix it," he said quietly. But nobody heard him.



Niri heard. "Tandro is right!" she said, stepping forward. "We can build a new bridge together." She turned to the animals. "But we need everyone's help." The animals looked at each other. Some of them still did not trust the fossa. "Why should we listen to him?" asked a squirrel, twitching her tail. Niri stood beside Tandro. "Because he is my friend."



Nobody moved. Some animals still remembered old stories about fossas and frowned. "Fossas are not friendly," whispered an old owl from a branch. Tandro's ears drooped, and his long tail tucked behind him. Niri raised her chin. "I have seen his kindness," she said. "Let me show you." But the animals waited, unsure, and the silence felt heavy as a stone.



Then Tandro found a fallen branch, thick and strong. Without a word, he dragged it to the water's edge. He did not growl or push. He worked slowly and gently. Niri wiggled her striped tail and lit the way with her soft glow. The owl watched from her branch. "He is not like the old stories," she said. "He is kind."



One by one, the animals began to help. The squirrel found strong vines. The birds carried twigs. The mice rolled little pebbles. Tandro laid the planks, while Niri tied them with vines, her acorn charm glowing. They worked side by side under the sun. Nobody said a mean word. Nobody pushed. Everyone had a job, and everyone felt glad. The new bridge grew strong and wide.



"It is finished!" called Niri. The animals cheered. The old owl flew across first, then the birds, then the little mice. Tandro crossed last, and everyone waited for him. The squirrel took his paw. "Thank you, Tandro," she said. "I was wrong about you." Tandro's amber eyes grew round and bright. "Thank you for trusting me," he said, his voice soft and warm.



Niri bounced beside him, her starry sparkles dancing. "You see?" she said. "Trust is earned through kindness. You worked hard, and everyone saw your good heart." Tandro looked at the new bridge, then at all his new friends. "I learned something too," he said. "When we help each other, even hard things become easy." The forest seemed to smile around them.



From that day on, Tandro was never lonely again. He and Niri met by the bridge every morning, and other animals joined them too. The forest felt bigger and warmer, full of friends. Whenever someone needed help, the animals said, "Let's do it together, like the fossa and the lemur!" And so the forest worked as one, and everything was better.



Sometimes Tandro sat by the stream, remembering the day he had nobody. He looked at Niri, her striped tail curled beside him, and his heart felt full. "Thank you for being my friend," he said. Niri smiled. "You earned it," she said, "with kindness." And under the tall green trees, a lonely fossa and a magical lemur showed the whole forest that trust and teamwork make everything better.