

The Little Woodpecker



Aysel Banu YAVUZAL

The Little Woodpecker

Aysel Banu YAVUZAL



In the heart of a big green forest, where sunlight danced through leaves, lived a little woodpecker named Pip. Pip had a bright red crown, black-and-white barred wings, and a cream belly. He carried a small acorn satchel in warm brown. Every morning, Pip tapped on trees with his short grey beak, tap-tap-tap, a cheerful sound that echoed through the woods.



Pip loved his forest home. He knew every tree, every bush, and every birdsong. His small dark eyes sparkled with curiosity as he explored. One day, while flying near the edge of the forest, he heard a sound that didn't belong: a strange knocking, deep and hollow, coming from an old oak tree. Tap-tap-tap, but different from his own.



The old oak tree was huge and towering, older than anyone in the forest. Its thick gnarled bark was grey-brown, and moss patches and small mushrooms grew at its base. A round knothole, shaped like a little door, stood out on its trunk. Pip tilted his head. "Who could be knocking inside?" he wondered. His brave heart beat fast with excitement.



Pip flew closer to the old oak and landed on a wide mossy root. The knocking came again, soft but steady. He tapped back, tap-tap-tap, and listened. No answer. He tapped again, louder. Suddenly, a rustle in the branches made him look up. A red squirrel with a fluffy curved tail and a tiny green leaf scarf peered down at him.



"Hello!" chirped Pip. "Did you hear that knocking?" The squirrel nodded, her large amber eyes wide. "I'm Nutty," she said, "and yes, I've heard it too. It's coming from inside this old tree." Pip introduced himself, and Nutty scampered down. "Let's investigate together!" she suggested. Pip agreed, and the two new friends set off to solve the mystery.



Nutty led Pip around the trunk, her twitchy pink nose sniffing. "The sound is definitely coming from inside," she said. "But how do we get in?" Pip noticed the round knothole door. "Maybe through here!" He tapped gently on the bark near the hole. The knocking stopped. Then, a tiny voice called out, "Hello? Is someone there?"



Pip and Nutty looked at each other. "Yes!" they answered together. "We're friends. Who are you?" The voice inside giggled. "I'm a little owl, and I'm stuck! I was playing and now I can't get out." Pip and Nutty promised to help. They examined the knothole, but it was too small for the owl to squeeze through. They needed a plan.



Nutty's clever mind whirled. "We need to make the hole bigger," she said. "But we can't break the tree!" Pip had an idea. "I can tap around the hole to loosen the bark, and you can pull it away with your strong paws." Nutty nodded. "Teamwork!" she cheered. They set to work, Pip tapping carefully and Nutty pulling gently.



As they worked, the old oak tree seemed to watch them kindly. Its broad leafy crown rustled in the breeze, as if encouraging them. Pip tapped a steady rhythm, and Nutty tugged at the bark. Slowly, the hole grew wider. "It's working!" Nutty exclaimed. Pip smiled, his red crown bobbing with each tap. They made a great team, and the forest felt friendly and warm.



Finally, the hole was big enough. A small brown owl squeezed out, blinking in the sunlight. "Thank you!" she hooted happily. "I thought I'd never get out. You two are the best neighbors ever!" Pip and Nutty beamed. The owl introduced herself as Olive and promised to be more careful next time. She flew off to tell her family about the kind woodpecker and squirrel.



Pip and Nutty sat on a mossy root, catching their breath. "That was fun!" Nutty said. "And we did it together." Pip nodded. "Good neighbors help each other," he said. They looked up at the old oak, and noticed something new: a cozy little nest had been built in the branches above the knothole, and inside it were three tiny owl chicks, peeping softly.



The owl family had been living in the old oak all along! The knocking was the little owl trying to get out to find food for her babies. Pip and Nutty had unknowingly helped the whole family. "We're so grateful," hooted the mother owl. "You two are welcome here anytime." Pip and Nutty felt proud and happy. Their teamwork had made a real difference.



From that day on, Pip and Nutty were the best of friends. They played together every day, racing through the trees and sharing acorns. They helped other forest animals too, always ready to lend a hand. The old oak tree stood tall and strong, its round knothole door now a symbol of friendship and cooperation. And whenever there was a problem, Pip and Nutty solved it together.



One sunny afternoon, a strong wind blew through the forest and knocked down Nutty's favorite branch. "Oh no!" Nutty cried. "My cozy spot is gone!" Pip flew down. "Don't worry," he said. "We can fix it together." They gathered twigs and leaves, and with Pip's tapping and Nutty's weaving, they built a new branch-house, even better than before.



Nutty hugged Pip. "You're the best neighbor ever," she said. Pip's red crown glowed with happiness. "Good neighbors cooperate," he replied. "That's what friends do." The old oak tree rustled its leaves, as if saying, "Well done." And from that day on, the forest was filled with the cheerful sounds of tapping, chattering, and laughter, all because two little friends worked together.



And so, in the big green forest, Pip and Nutty lived happily, always ready to help a friend in need. Their story spread among the trees, teaching everyone that kindness and teamwork make the forest a better place. The little woodpecker and the squirrel remained the best of neighbors, proving that good friends are the greatest treasure of all.