

The Little Vicuña



Aysel Banu YAVUZAL

The Little Vicuña

Aysel Banu YAVUZAL



High in the Andes Mountains, where the air is crisp and the clouds drift low, there lies a secret place called the enchanted valley. Soft green grass covers the ground, and wildflowers bloom in every color. In this valley lives a little vicuña with golden-tan fleece and a creamy-white chest. Around her neck she wears a tiny woven band of red and yellow wool.



The little vicuña loves to explore the mountain meadow near her home. Her big dark eyes with long lashes sparkle as she nibbles sweet grass. She has a long, graceful neck and small ears that twitch at every sound. She is gentle and curious, always ready to make a new friend. But most days, she plays alone in the wide, open meadow.



One windy afternoon, the little vicuña spots a stranger near the edge of the valley. It is an Andean fox with rusty-orange fur and a greyish back. His chin and chest are white, and his bushy tail has a dark tip. He looks lonely and a little hungry. The vicuña steps closer, her heart warm with kindness.



"Hello," says the little vicuña softly. "What is your name?" The fox lifts his pointed ears and amber eyes. "I am a fox," he says. "I have no name, and I am all alone." The vicuña smiles. "I will call you Fox," she says. "Would you like to share my grass?" Fox nods slowly, surprised by her kindness.



Fox and the little vicuña eat together in the mountain meadow. The vicuña shares the softest grass, and Fox tells her about his wanderings. He wears a small braided grass bracelet on one front leg. "I have never met a vicuña before," he says. "You are kind, even though we are different." The vicuña twitches her small ears happily.



That night, a cold wind blows through the enchanted valley. The little vicuña shivers. "I know a place," says Fox, "a sheltered mountain meadow where the grass is soft and the flowers are pretty. But it is far away, and the path is windy." The vicuña's big dark eyes shine with curiosity. "Let us go together," she says.



They set off at sunrise. Fox walks ahead, his bushy tail held high. The little vicuña follows, her delicate hooves stepping lightly. They climb over rocks and cross a stream. Fox keeps looking back to make sure she is safe. "Stay close," he says. "The mountain can be tricky." The vicuña feels brave with her friend beside her.



As they walk, the wind grows stronger. The little vicuña's long neck bends against the cold. Fox steps closer to block the wind. "Thank you," she says. "You are a good friend." Fox's amber eyes soften. "No one has ever called me a friend before," he says quietly. They walk on, side by side, through the windy pass.



They reach a rocky slope, and the little vicuña's small hooves slip. Fox quickly stands beside her. "Lean on me," he says. She leans against his rusty-orange fur and finds her footing. "You are strong," she says. "And you are brave," he replies. Together they climb higher, helping each other step by step.



At last, they see it: a sheltered mountain meadow, tucked between two great rocks. Soft grass waves in the breeze, and pretty flowers nod their heads. "It is beautiful!" cries the little vicuña. Fox smiles. "We found it together," he says. They step into the meadow, and the wind grows gentle and warm.



The little vicuña shares her food with Fox. She finds the sweetest grass and pushes it toward him. "Eat," she says. "You must be hungry." Fox eats gratefully. Then he curls his bushy tail around her to keep her warm. "I will keep you safe," he says. The vicuña feels happy and cozy in the soft, sheltered grass.



In the meadow, they play a game of hide-and-seek among the flowers. The little vicuña's golden-tan fleece blends with the grass, and Fox's pointed ears peek over the blooms. They laugh and chase each other. "I am glad we are different," says the vicuña. "Why?" asks Fox. "Because friends can come in all shapes and sizes," she says.



That evening, they sit together and watch the sun set over the mountains. "I was lonely before I met you," says Fox. "Now I have a friend." The little vicuña nuzzles his shoulder. "Kindness matters more than being the same," she says. "You are kind, and that is what counts." Fox's amber eyes glow with warmth.



From that day on, the little vicuña and Fox live in the enchanted valley as best friends. They visit the sheltered mountain meadow often, sharing grass and guarding each other. The vicuña's red-and-yellow neck band and Fox's braided grass bracelet remind them of the day they became friends. They are different, but their hearts are the same.



One day, a young llama from a nearby herd asks the vicuña, "Why are you friends with a fox?" The little vicuña smiles. "Because he is kind and loyal," she says. "And because friendship crosses differences." Fox nods. "We take care of each other," he says. The llama looks at them with new eyes.



And so, in the enchanted valley high in the mountains, the little vicuña and the Andean fox show everyone that kindness matters most. Friends can come in all shapes and sizes, and a gentle heart can turn a stranger into a friend. They live happily together, sharing the soft grass and the pretty flowers of their sheltered mountain meadow.