The Girl and the Little Mouse
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On a bright sunny morning, a girl named Mia put on her blue denim overalls and her wide straw sun hat with the red ribbon. She packed her green canvas satchel with a notebook and a pencil. Mia loved to study little animals, especially the tiny harvest mice that lived in the meadow near her house. Today, she was going to watch them closely.

Mia walked through the meadow, her mustard-yellow rain boots swishing through the tall, green grass. The sun was warm on her light-brown skin, and her curly dark-brown hair bounced in two short puffs as she walked. She found a quiet spot and sat down, ready to observe. The meadow was full of buzzing bees and swaying grass.

Soon, Mia spotted a tiny harvest mouse no bigger than her thumb. It had golden-brown fur, a creamy white belly, and round black bead eyes. Its pink nose twitched as it carried a single blade of dry grass in its mouth. The little mouse was busy building a nest deep in the tall grass. Mia watched, careful not to make a sound.

The little mouse wove the dry grass into a cozy ball, tucked safely among the tall stems. Mia wrote in her notebook: 'Harvest mouse nest needs tall grass to stay hidden and warm.' She visited the meadow every day that week, watching the mouse add more grass and soft moss. The nest grew rounder and snugger, and Mia felt happy.

One afternoon, Mia heard a loud, steady swish, swish, swish. She looked up and saw a tall, sturdy man with a flat cap and a long scythe. He wore an olive-green work shirt and brown trousers. He was the meadow keeper, and he had come to cut the tall grass. Mia's heart thumped. What would happen to the little mouse's nest?

Mia ran to the meadow keeper, her boots thumping on the soft ground. 'Please, sir,' she said, her big brown eyes wide. 'There's a tiny mouse building a nest in the tall grass. If you cut it all, the mouse will have no safe home.' The keeper paused and leaned on his scythe, listening. His kind green eyes looked down at her.

The meadow keeper scratched his stubbly chin. 'I have to cut the grass,' he said. 'But I don't want to harm any little creatures.' Mia pointed to the patch where the mouse lived. 'Could you leave some tall grass standing? Just a strip?' she asked. 'The mouse needs it to stay warm and safe.' The keeper nodded slowly.

Mia led the keeper to the little mouse's nest. The mouse was peeking out, its pink ears twitching. It held another blade of grass in its mouth. 'See?' Mia whispered. 'It's still building.' The keeper crouched down, his leather boots creaking. He watched the tiny mouse work and smiled. 'Well, I'll be,' he said softly. 'It's a busy little thing.'

The keeper stood up and looked at the meadow. 'All right,' he said. 'I'll cut the grass around this patch and leave the tall grass here. That way, the mice have a home.' Mia beamed, her gap-toothed smile wide. 'Thank you!' she said. 'The mice will be so happy.' The keeper tipped his flat cap. 'You're a good watcher, young lady,' he said.

From that day on, the meadow keeper always left a strip of tall grass uncut. Mia visited often to check on the little mouse. Soon, she saw more harvest mice—a whole family! They built nests in the tall grass, weaving blades together. Mia wrote in her notebook: 'Tall grass protects the mice. They need it to live.' She felt proud to help.

One morning, Mia found the little mouse sitting on a grass stem, its whiskers twitching. It seemed to look right at her. She smiled. 'Hello, little friend,' she said softly. The mouse didn't run away. It just sat there, as if to say thank you. Mia's heart felt warm. She knew she had made a difference for this tiny creature.

Mia realized that even the smallest animals deserve a safe home. She spoke up when it mattered, and the meadow keeper listened. Together, they protected the harvest mice. Mia learned that courage and kindness can help nature. She would always remember the little mouse and the tall grass that kept it safe.

The meadow keeper became Mia's friend. Sometimes he would stop his work and ask, 'How are the mice today?' Mia would show him her notebook and tell him all she had learned. He would nod and smile. 'You've taught me something,' he said. 'Even a small voice can make a big difference.' Mia felt ten feet tall.

Mia continued to study the harvest mice, but now she also helped protect their meadow. She told her friends at school about the tiny mice and the tall grass. Some of them came to visit the meadow too. They all promised to be careful and kind to the little creatures. The meadow was a happy place for everyone.

At the end of the summer, Mia sat in the tall grass and watched the mouse family play. The little mouse she had first seen was now a mother, with babies of her own. They tumbled and squeaked in the warm sun. Mia smiled. She knew that because she spoke up, these tiny animals had a cozy home. And that made her very happy.

Mia learned that even the smallest animals deserve a safe home. She felt glad she had helped protect them. From that day on, she always looked out for little creatures, and she knew that one kind voice could make a big difference in the world. And the little mouse lived happily in the tall grass, safe and warm.