

The Little Pebble – A Short Story



Once upon a time ...

there was a beautiful, smooth, flat pebble. He lived at the bottom of a stream. The pebble was grey-brown with a few red speckles. Day in and day out he felt the water flowing over him and washing over his surface, he saw the sun rise and set over the water, sometimes there were clouds in the sky which he perceived in a blur and now and then the rain splashed on the surface of the water. Fish swam by and greeted him in a friendly manner, and he had already acquired a considerable algae coat for his age.

This was the everyday life of the small pebble and one day he got a little bored. He wanted to adventure something. So, he said to the other pebbles lying near him: "Hello, friends! Are you as bored as I am? I would love to have an adventure. Maybe we could let ourselves be washed ashore?" But the other stones were content with their lives, and they didn't feel like a change at all. One said, "A distant relative of mine was washed ashore at the time, and I hear he was trampled by great two-legged monsters and broken into a thousand pieces. It's very dangerous on the land, you must know."

That scared the little pebble very much. And he decided he would rather stay where he was: in safety. But as time went by, the boredom grew, until one day it was greater than his fear. That's when he started to lighten up and push himself off the ground with all his strength so that the water could take him along. And indeed: day after day he advanced a considerable distance. Until, after many, many days, he noticed that he was only half covered with water. He saw the shore; he saw trees and birds and grass and flowers - without the veil of water. "A wonderful world!" he thought to himself. "Why did I hesitate for so long?"

The little pebble enjoyed these new sights and the feeling of the wind on his smooth surface. One day, however, the sounds of the birds and the wind were joined by other sounds - voices he had never heard before. He saw big two-legged creatures laughing and shouting and running around wildly. The little pebble became all nervous and rigid with fear, for he was sure he would shortly be trampled and crushed into a thousand pieces like his friend's relative. The creatures came closer and closer, and the little pebble began to tremble and rattle with fear. He was sure that it was about to happen to him. He squinted his eyes and surrendered to his fate. But then something incredible happened. One of the creatures bent down to him, picked him up and examined him from all sides. It seemed to have taken a liking to him because he was so beautifully smooth and flat. The little pebble suffered mortal fears and prayed to the god of stones that he would be spared. But before he knew it, he was flying through the air like lightning and he felt a tickle on his bottom as he bounced on the surface of the water once, twice, three, no, four times before diving into the water.

Well, there he was again, right where he had started from, telling his friends about his adventure. And you won't believe it: he liked it so much that the very next day he started to lighten up again and push himself off the ground with all his strength so that the water could take him along.

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