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Ririro

IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

Mrs. Elephant's Moonlight Dance

On a beautiful evening in the forest, under the moonlight, there was a gathering. Mr. and Mrs. Elephant, the kangaroos, the foxes, the leopards, little Miss Lynx, and the majestic deer all sat in a large circle by a pond on which beautiful lilies floated.

"Well, that's settled," said the venerable Mr. Tapir. "My friends, we are going to compete for a dance prize. That will break the monotony of our dull evenings. Soon there will be the most beautiful party we have ever given. The music will be provided by the animal orchestra. Furthermore, the ladies will provide delicious snacks."

Mr. Tapir went on for a long time, because all the animals liked to hear him talk, and he liked to hear himself talk. He had been to London. He knew how to do it. So he said it a few more times, but he always ended with, "the snacks will be provided by the ladies."



"What a wonderful speech," whispered the animals. The lovely Miss Giraffe even burst into tears. However, there was great jealousy among the animals, as Mrs. Kangaroo immediately declared that the prize was definitely hers. No one could dance like her. She just had to stretch her waist, lift her chin, and take a leap. Dancing was her specialty.

"When it comes to grace and speed," remarked Mrs. Leopard, "there is really something in my movement that the rest of you completely miss."

So far, Mrs. Elephant had kept quiet. She was always called a "good, reliable, and easy animal." Only when her friends were hateful did they call her "that clumsy old cow."

"This time, I'll get the prize," she growled as she trudged to her spacious house, under the chocolate trees. The next morning, she was still determined to win the prize. She immediately handed the household over to her young sister-in-law. "I have other things to do now," she said.

Then she went to look for her friends, the frogs. They would whistle their tunes in the shade all day, and she would practice her dance steps. At first, it was difficult, but soon she came up with a beautiful dance. Up and down and around she went all day, and especially all night. But she kept her activities secret and that was just as well, for all the animals would have laughed at her if they had seen her scrabbling around at the edge of the frog pond.

The night of the dance came and everyone looked beautiful and there was plenty to eat and drink. It was a game of the cunning Mrs. Fox to encourage everyone to eat as much as possible, and she did it with her sweetest smile.

"Oh, please have another bunch of bananas," she said to Mrs. Elephant, because she wanted everyone to eat too much, except herself. Then the other animals couldn't dance, she knew, and then she would get the prize herself if she showed her beautiful dance steps. But the animals had guessed her plan. They thanked her warmly and smoothed their dresses or went to a corner to practice their dance.

It was a beautiful show, and after some animals had danced their steps, all hope was pinned on the agile and lovely Mrs. Leopard.

"Just wait for Mrs. Kangaroo," whispered the animals. "She is truly amazing."

Then Mrs. Kangaroo came forward. She was indeed amazing. She proudly raised herself up and jumped up and down. Then she made a huge jump but didn't look and plunged into the pond with lilies. A large part of the audience quickly looked away, but the monkeys laughed at the kangaroo.

"Mrs. Elephant! Mrs. Elephant!" now everyone in the audience shouted. "Yes, yes, Mrs. Elephant!" came from all sides. After Mrs. Kangaroo's failure, all the animals had pinned their hopes on Mrs. Elephant and cheered loudly.

Mrs. Elephant herself was very modest. She wore a smooth dress and had two simple palm leaves behind

her ears with a cord of moonflowers in between. She looked regal. "How thin she has become? How do you think she achieved that?" the animals cried.

Then Mrs. Elephant began to dance.

The orchestra started playing the elephant march, but at her request, Mr. Frog began playing his flute. As she swung her legs up one by one and made the most beautiful bends, she also flapped her ears and curled her trunk to the melody of the music. Her dance was beautiful. Mrs. Tapir even called it a majestic dance.

When she captivated the audience, the music changed to a cheerful tune. Mrs. Elephant danced to the audience and asked them all to sing along with the joyful chorus. All the animals sang enthusiastically along.

Of course, Mrs. Elephant won the prize. The only thing she said afterwards was: "Keep practicing, dear friends. I don't dance anymore, but I just wanted to feel on my old age that I could still achieve something.

Determination can take you anywhere."