

## **The Helpful Beaver**

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Long ago, a lion grew unhappy with his territory, which was confined to the plains, because he could not cross the river. He was a proud ruler, and the more he thought about his limited kingdom, the more he was displeased. Meanwhile, as the lion yearned for more land, the fish and other swimming creatures were content with their lives. They enjoyed the occasional company of land animals but were worried about the lion, whose visits had grown frequent. They could tell he was unhappy.

As it happened, one day, as the beaver was swimming with the fish, the lion arrived. Suddenly, the lion had an idea! When the beaver climbed out of the river to go home, the lion asked him, "I noticed you are able to swim and are a hard worker; would you build a dam for me to stop the river?" The beaver knew the lion was usually a fair ruler, so he agreed.

The beaver worked hard, and soon, he was finished. When the river animals saw this, they were all upset! "How dare the beaver do this! He has separated the river!" one exclaimed. The beaver, meaning no harm, began to take apart the dam. However, when the lion saw this, he grew angry. He very much wanted to get across the river! Quickly, he ran across the river to the other side. However, the fish and river animals had asked the sky for a flood! The dam was swept away, and the lion was stuck. The lion roared at the beaver in anger. The beaver realized he had trapped the lion and started rebuilding the dam. However, this time, the beaver, wanting to please both the fish and the lion, created a dam with holes. However, this only made both the fish and the lion angry at the beaver because the river was still separated but the lion could not cross the river. Now, the beaver, confused about what to do, gave up, unable to please both the lion and the fish.

*Moral: Work hard and help others, but know that it is impossible to please everyone. Also, think about what the consequences might be before you act.*