

A Spring Story of Hope and Teamwork
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Once there was a pretty butterfly with beautiful pink wings named Martina. She wanted to lay her eggs but could not. She needed certain types of flowers to lay her eggs on, so they would be able to survive. There were no flowers whatsoever in the garden she lived in, and she didn't want to leave because it was her home and she liked it there. She always felt comforted by the smell of the air and the sight of familiar plants and trees.

Out of desperation, she cried out, "I'm so sad. I wish someone would help me!" Suddenly, a bird, as blue as a bright summer sky, named Layla, appeared who had heard her from a distance and said, "I can help you." "Really?" asked Martina as she cheered up a bit. As they talked, a human family came into the garden to have a picnic, and their children started to play with a ball. Martina and Layla soared to the top of a tree to talk because they didn't want the ball to hit them.

When they arrived at the big tree, they saw flashes of green and the grass below moved. Suddenly, a wise frog named Fred jumped toward the tree. He became visible when the rays of the sun shone on his glistening skin. Coincidentally, up in the sky, there was a cloud that looked like a frog. The cloud was there because Fred was very special. He had observed everything that happened in the garden for a very long time. Fred heard Layla and Martina trying to think of a plan. "What can I do to help you guys?" asked Fred as he chewed on a fly. "You want to help us?" exclaimed Martina. "Yes, I would like to help.", said Fred. "I mean, what is the use of catching flies all day if you are full?" said Fred. "I would like to try and help for once, you know."

Later, a bee named Emma who was very smart, helpful and courageous, came and said, "I heard you talking. Can I help?" Martina, as she fluttered her beautiful pink wings, exclaimed, "Yes, you can help us!" Martina explained everything to Emma, and then Emma said, "I know what we need to do. We need to buzz over to the garden next door and find seeds to plant flowers in this garden." They all flew, buzzed and hopped to the garden next door and found roses and daisies so that they could get seeds for their garden. Carefully, they picked seeds from the flowers and clutched them tightly for the return trip. When they arrived in their garden with the seeds, they remembered that flowers take much time to grow and they were frustrated because Martina needed to lay her eggs soon.

Fred, hopping very excitedly, remembered seeing the humans use something to help plants to grow, and he was pretty sure they called it fertilizer. After searching, he found where they kept the fertilizer, but he couldn't get very close because the human children were playing close to it. Besides, Emma, Martina, Layla, and Fred were too small to carry the fertilizer, so they needed to create an amazing plan. Hmm...

The four thought for a moment and Martina spoke up, saying, "The plan is that we are going to find my friend Caroline, the ladybug, who is very kind and patient, and who knows how to write. She can help us write a note to the humans. If we give food to her, I think she will help us, but I don't know what food to bring." "I know what ladybugs eat," croaked Fred. "What, what?" questioned Layla as she flapped her feathered wings in excitement. "Leaves," answered

Emma with a buzz. “Great!” exclaimed Martina. They gathered leaves together and left to go to the other garden to find Caroline.

After looking for a while, they found Caroline perched on a small twig. “Can you show us how to write?” inquired Martina. “Yes, but you have to give me food,” answered Caroline. Layla gave her the leaves they had gathered. “Okay, I can help you,” said Caroline excitedly as she chomped on a leaf. “What do you need to write?” Martina explained that they needed to write a note to the humans asking them to help plant flowers with fertilizer so they will grow faster. “Okay, let me show you how,” said Caroline. Then Caroline explained everything to them. After listening and watching attentively, Martina exclaimed, “I can do this!”

Back in Martina’s garden, she wrote the note, fluttered down to where the family was, and gave it to the humans. Astonished, after reading it, they agreed to help. The humans used the seeds the new friends had gathered to plant the roses and daisies and carefully sprinkled fertilizer on them so they would grow faster. One hour later, the flowers bloomed. “Oh, I am so happy! Thank you everyone!” squealed Martina very gratefully.

Martina then laid her eggs on the flowers so that her babies would hatch and grow up to be as strong, hopeful and courageous as their mother. Martina and her team of generous friends went up into the tree to watch over the eggs. A short while later a beautiful rainbow appeared that not only had red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple but also every color in between and every color beyond. They all declared, “Thank you for this beautiful rainbow Lord, and thank you for each other,” as they realized that it symbolized something very special. They had learned that together as a team, even a diverse group of strangers and friends could achieve something most beautiful.

The next week they came back, and there was no rainbow until they gathered together. “Isn’t it weird how the rainbow only shows up when we are all here?” asked Fred. “Yes, it is,” said Layla. At that moment they heard something rustling and moving below. They looked down and saw many small caterpillars. “My babies have hatched!” exclaimed Martina excitedly. “Yay! They have hatched!” shouted the friends. Then the caterpillars noticed the rainbow, their mother, and her friends. In unison, they said, “Hello” and asked, “Are you our parents?” Martina proudly replied, “Yes, I am your mother, and these are your aunts and uncle. Together, we helped you to be born and, along the way, became great friends. I am forever thankful for them, and I am especially blessed to have you!”

The End