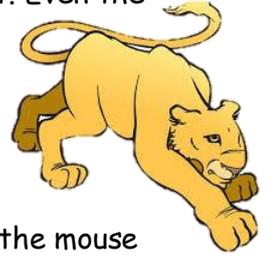


The Lioness and Small Respect

Respect. I expect nothing less. All respect the queen of the African plains. If the zebra or the antelope catch sight of me crouching in the bush, they do not forget to gallop. The elephant and the rhino respect me, and they mind not to tread on my children with their big clumsy feet. Even the snappy crocodile stays clear of me, when I come down to drink at the water.

Yes, respect is good.



I was lying asleep under a tree when I felt something tickling my nose.

I opened one eye and saw that a mouse had scampered onto my face!

"How dare you!" I roared, and was about to swipe him a deadly blow with my paw when the mouse begged: "Oh mighty queen, forgive me! I was running through the long grass, and did not mean to run onto your nose or to disturb your sleep."

I laughed at this furry creature and said: "Little fellow. I was about to kill you but you have shown wisdom and respect for your queen. I pardon your sin."

"Oh, thank you, thank you," said the mouse. "I only hope that one day I may be of service to your majesty."

I laughed again, for how could a little mouse help a mighty queen?

The weeks went by, and I was out for a midnight stroll when all of a sudden, there was no ground beneath my paws.

Thump. I fell to the bottom of a pit. I tried to spring out, but I was tangled in a net. The more my limbs struggled, the more I became entangled.

A hyena came by and saw me in this sorry trap. He cackled with his ugly voice and taunted me: "In the morning the men shall come and throw their spears into your side. Then we shall have to find a new queen."

I snarled with fury and swore to tear him apart when I was free from the snare. But he just laughed his silly laugh.



Towards morning, I had almost given up hope when I heard a little voice.

"My queen," it said. "At last I may be of service to you."

I saw the pink nose of the mouse.

"My loyal subject. It does my proud heart good to hear your well meaning words... But I am afraid you must now pay your last respects to your queen, for my limbs are caught in this net, and very soon the sun will rise and the men shall come to kill me."

"You underestimate the might of a mouse," said my loyal subject. He called to his wife and children, and together they gnawed through the net. I was free within the hour, just in time to spring out of the pit and give the men who had come to kill me a nasty surprise.

And so that is the story of how I, the queen of the jungle, came to respect those who respect me, no matter how small they might be, because sometimes the smallest of those among us, have the advantage over the mighty and the strong.



values WOW!