

The Forest That Lost Its Colors

One morning, Ros the squirrel came out of her burrow and found the forest completely gray.

The leaves were gray. The flowers were gray. Even her tail, which had always been red like a sunset, looked like it was made of ash.

“What happened?” she cried.

The animals gathered around the old oak tree. Fox couldn’t find the orange on her paws. Robin had lost the red patch on his chest. The bees couldn’t distinguish the flowers and flew in circles.

“Perhaps the colors disappeared because we argued too much,” said the oak tree.

The day before, each animal had insisted that its color was the most important.

“Green is the best because it fills the forest,” said Frog.

“Yellow is better because it looks like the sun,” the bee had replied.

“It doesn’t surpass the blue of the sky!” the Swallow had protested.

They argued so much that no one heard the colors, tired, packing their suitcases.

“We must go look for them,” said Ros the squirrel.

The first color they found was blue. It had hidden at the bottom of the pond.

“I won’t come back,” it said. “Everyone wants to look at me, but no one remembers that I need the green of the trees to reflect me.”

The Frog nodded.

“Without you, the pond doesn’t feel like home. And without the green, you wouldn’t be able to play among the reflected leaves either.”

Blue returned to the water and the sky.

Yellow was inside a cave, illuminating a lone stone.

“Everyone says I’m cheerful,” it complained, “but even the sun needs the night to rest.”

The Owl opened its gray wings.

“Darkness helps us see the stars. But your light helps us wake up.”

Yellow left the cave and spread among the sun, the bees, and the buttercups.

Red had climbed to the top of a mountain.

“They say I’m too strong,” he explained. “That I’m only good for warning of danger.”

The Robin flew to his side.

“You’re also the color of strawberries, poppies, and the sky at sunset.”

Red came down from the mountain and painted all those things.

Only green was missing. They searched everywhere, but couldn’t find him.

“Perhaps he’s gone very far away,” said Ros the squirrel.

Then a tiny seed spoke from beneath the earth.

“Green can’t return alone. He needs water, light, and someone to care for the earth.”

The animals set to work. The Mole turned over the soil. The Swallow carried drops of water in her beak. The bees scattered pollen. The squirrel planted acorns, and the fox moved the stones.

The yellow sun warmed the clearing. The blue sky let fall a fine rain. After a while, a green shoot emerged from the earth.

Then another.

And another.

The green spread through the grass and climbed the tree trunks until it filled the treetops.

When all the colors returned, the forest was even more beautiful than before. The blue had green highlights. The yellow made the red shine. The fox’s orange seemed born from an embrace between the sun and the poppies.

“Which is the most important color?” asked the oak tree.

The animals looked at each other.

“All of them,” they answered at the same time.

From that day on, whenever someone boasted about their color, Ros the squirrel reminded them of that gray morning.

Because a single color can be beautiful, but it is when it coexists with others that the world becomes a landscape.