

The Story of the Wise Wall and the Little Field Mouse

In the centre of a vast valley, skirted by boundless fields of brilliant green, there was a hill. Upon that hill, surrounded by tall, luscious green blades of grass, there stood, tall and firm, a Wise Wall. The large stones that fashioned the Wall's sturdy form were adorned by hints of ancient moss and lichen, testaments to the Wall's long lived years. It had never loved anyone, nor had anyone loved it. No creature relied upon it, nor was the Wise Wall dependent on any creature. It knew of its place within the valley, and accepted its role as an observer.

The Wall had seen the sun and the moon exchange graceful dances across the sky, turning days into nights and nights into days. It had seen trees sprout, growing to embrace the boundless blue skies, only to be felled by man, who sought to build homes to shelter them from unforgiving climates. Homes turned into villages, villages developed into cities, decorated with golden riches, and time crumbled those cities to rubble. Yet, the Wise Wall stood firm and tall.

The Wall was an astute observer. Perched high upon the hill, the Wall understood the intricate relationships between all creatures great and small. Foxes, with burnt orange coats, blended in elegantly with the darkness of nights, supporting them in their pursuit of small mammals like jumpy, skittish rabbits.

The Wall's favourite thing to observe was a kindly Robin's fondness toward a red tulip, who sat under a large oak tree. Though the oak tree cast a considerably wide shadow over the surrounding area, the tulip lay in a small patch of grass that was positioned so perfectly that, each day, at exactly midday, the sun shone to illuminate her beauty through a cluster of leaves. The Robin was quite smitten.

"Such a foolish devotion" The swallows would say as they fluffed their feathers with bitter distaste.

"She has no means to leave where she is, she cannot afford such an expedition. How could they possibly travel beyond this valley with no money to their name?". The Robin paid no heed to these disapproving taunts, for he was in love. He stood by the flower every day and protected her from the harshest of weathers. As time marched on, the charming colours of spring came to paint over the valley, matching the light tousled brown coat of a little field mouse that had wandered into the valley. It was filled with an insatiable curiosity about everything it could lay its eyes and ears on. Its family was poor, Little food existed on their dinner table during supper time and their clothes were worn. The Little Mouse was in search of knowledge, as it yearned to teach. Teaching was a job that was sure to provide its family with a stable income. Determined, the Mouse had decided to travel from beyond the lands of its village, in search of anything that may show its wisdom. The Little Mouse had wandered into the Wise Wall's valley, and spotted said Wall perched upon the hill that stood prominently in the centre.

"I will head toward it now," the Mouse squeaked. "Such an old looking thing, it must surely have the knowledge I seek!" So it climbed up the hill to acquaint itself.

The Wise Wall was of a considerable height above the Mouse, towering over it like a large wave over a tiny boat in the sea.

"How might you be on this fine day?" inquired the Little Mouse. The Wall groaned at this disturbance of its immersion in the happenings of the valley.

"I am not quite as well as I was before," grumbled the Wise Wall. "And who, might you be, Little Mouse, to think you can disturb my observations?"

The Mouse shrank in its spot under the intimidating shadow of the Wall.

"I am a traveller, seeking knowledge. I noticed you from afar and presumed you may carry the wisdom of which I seek." the Mouse explained.

Hearing this, the Wise Wall's mood of perturbation softened into one of flattery.

"You have noticed me?" The Little Mouse nodded hurriedly. The Wall was warmed.

"I will teach you what I know of this valley," said the Wise Wall, yielding to the Mouse's request.

The Wise Wall informed the Little Mouse of the workings within the valley. How each creature relied on another to benefit themselves. The rabbits ate the grass and the foxes ate the rabbits. Without the grass, there would be no rabbits, and without the rabbits, there would be no foxes. Everything had a role to play.

"What role do you play in this valley?" questioned the Little Mouse.

"My role is simply to observe and listen." The Wall replied, still standing tall and firm in its place, like a mountain, immune to any gust of wind attempting to knock it down.

"Have you been standing alone here for all of your years?" The Little Mouse pushed.

"Yes, I believe I have" replied the Wall, it had not given it much thought.

"Surely you have felt lonely?" The Mouse mused.

"No, I believe I have not," the Wall said. The stone heart that lay in the centre of the Wall cracked slightly, but the Wise Wall paid no heed.

The Mouse sighed. "I wish to be independent and Wise like you. I would not have had to leave my family then, I could have observed my village and become a teacher myself. No need to rely on anyone".

The Wall felt a seed of hope settle within its cracked heart. "I could teach you to observe. You can learn things about all parts of the world on your own that way. Stay with me. Learn to be independent. Observe my ways."

So, the Little Mouse agreed to live with the Wise Stone Wall.

Over the coming months, the Wall had stood taller than ever, pleased with its new position as a mentor for this Little Mouse. They sat together as the seasons came and went. They looked over to the Robin and its Tulip, the flower's petals lay at the base of her stem, slightly shrivelled. The Robin still loved her though, refusing to leave her side.

The Little Mouse hid from fierce storms and other relentless by climbing into the tiny holes positioned between the Wall's large stones. These tiny holes provided the perfect shelter for the Mouse. Only the bright rays of the eternal sun had come this close, the Wall thought, with sorrowed comfort. A green sprout began to form in the crack in its stone heart.

One morning, when the sun had shined upon the valley, the Little Field Mouse began packing its belongings. Its diaries and books filled with notes, the used paper within them made them appear worn and thick.

“Where ever might you be going?” The desperate Wall cried, a piece of rock had chipped off of one of its mighty stones. The Mouse tilted its head, puzzled.

“Why, I am leaving to head back to my family.” it answered, as if it were the most obvious of facts. “I have mastered the art of observation and independence. I need not to rely on anyone any longer”. It said this plainly, simply. Steadfast in its new found knowledge, it began its descent down the hill, toward its long awaited village.

“Do not go.” The Wall's heart cracked further, the sprout that once grew within fell out. “I do not wish to be alone anymore. You have taught me knowledge too. Stay here with me.”

But the Mouse had already ventured down the hill, and had not heard the Wall's miserable cries. Despite its efforts to hurry after the Little Mouse, it was glued down to its spot upon the hill.

The Wall was alone again, but it did not stand tall and firm. Instead, it stood silent and cracked, high up on the hill, far away from the very one who taught it to love.