

The Sapphire Frog



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Deep in the green heart of the jungle, where vines hang like sleepy snakes and sunlight falls in golden coins, lived a little frog named Sapphire. His skin was glossy sapphire-blue, his belly a lighter turquoise, and his eyes were large and round and amber-gold. He was small enough to sit in a child's palm, but his curiosity was as big as the whole jungle.



Sapphire lived with his mother, Mother May, in a cozy hollow beneath a fern. She was a green tree frog with a soft cream throat and a thin reed bracelet on one leg. Every evening she taught him important things. 'Look before you leap,' she said gently. 'The jungle is full of wonders, but also surprises.' Sapphire nodded, but his golden eyes were already wandering.



One morning, Sapphire hopped farther than ever before. He followed a trail of tiny blue flowers until he heard a soft splash. There, hidden by ferns, lay an ancient jungle pool. Its water was dark and still, and strange shapes danced across its surface. Sapphire's heart went thump-thump-thump. What could those dancing shapes be?



He crept closer. The reflections shimmered and twisted: long silver ribbons, round golden coins, and something that looked like a giant eye. Sapphire wanted to jump right in! But then he remembered Mother May's words. He stopped at the water's edge, his webbed toes curling around a smooth stone. 'Look first,' he whispered to himself.



So Sapphire sat very still and watched. The shapes were not monsters at all. They were leaves and branches moving in the breeze, and sunlight playing on the water. But there was something else too—a slow, mossy shape near the far bank. It was huge, the size of a small boat, with a spiral-patterned shell. Sapphire's amber-gold eyes grew wide.



The shape moved. A wrinkled olive head rose from the water, with kind, half-closed yellow eyes. 'Hello, little blue one,' said a slow, rumble voice. 'I am Old Tutu, keeper of this pool.' Sapphire gulped. 'I—I was just looking,' he said. Old Tutu smiled. 'Looking is good. Jumping without looking is not. Come, sit beside me.'



Sapphire hopped carefully around the pool and sat on a flat rock near Old Tutu. The ancient turtle wore a necklace of smooth river stones, and moss trailed from the edges of his shell. 'This pool is very old,' said Old Tutu. 'It has been a safe home for many creatures for hundreds of years. But now, some of them are endangered.'



'Endangered?' asked Sapphire. 'What does that mean?' Old Tutu sighed softly. 'It means there are very few of them left in the world. They need quiet, clean water to live and grow. This pool is one of the last safe places for them.' Sapphire looked at the water with new eyes. 'Who lives here?' he whispered.



Old Tutu pointed with a slow, wrinkled flipper. 'Look closely.' Sapphire saw tiny shapes darting under the surface: a spotted salamander, a golden-bellied frog, a family of glass frogs with see-through skin. 'They are shy,' said Old Tutu. 'They hide from loud noises and dirty water. But here they are safe.'



Just then, a small orange newt popped out from behind a leaf. He wore a fallen leaf as a little hat and had wide, cheerful green eyes. 'Hi!' he chirped. 'I'm Pip! I live here too. Are you a new friend?' Sapphire smiled. 'I'm Sapphire. I was just curious about the pool.' Pip giggled. 'Curious is good! But Old Tutu says we must be careful.'



Sapphire spent the whole day at the pool. He watched the reflections with Pip and learned the names of every creature. He saw how the water stayed clean because the plants filtered it, and how the mossy banks gave hiding places. 'This is a wonderful home,' he said. 'I wish everyone knew about it.' 'No,' said Old Tutu. 'Not everyone. Secrets keep it safe.'



Sapphire understood. If too many creatures came, the water might get muddy and the shy amphibians might leave. 'I will help protect it,' he promised. Old Tutu nodded slowly. 'That is a wise choice, little guardian.' Pip cheered and did a happy little dance on his tiny clawed feet.



From that day on, Sapphire visited the pool often. He never jumped in without looking first, and he always made sure his webbed feet were clean. He told only his most trusted friends about the secret pool—friends who understood that curiosity must be balanced with caution. Together, they watched over the water and its shy inhabitants.



Mother May was proud of him. 'You looked before you leaped,' she said, smoothing his blue back with her gentle hand. 'And you found a treasure worth protecting.' Sapphire hugged her. 'You taught me well,' he said. 'Now I can teach others.' His amber-gold eyes sparkled with happiness.



One evening, Sapphire sat on his favorite stone and watched the reflections dance. The silver ribbons and golden coins no longer seemed mysterious. They were simply the jungle's way of saying hello. And deep below, the endangered amphibians swam safely in their quiet, clean home. Sapphire smiled. Curiosity had led him here, and caution had kept him—and the pool—safe.



And so the little sapphire frog became the guardian of the ancient pool. He shared its secret only with friends who would listen and learn. For Sapphire knew that curiosity is a wonderful gift—as long as you remember to look before you leap. And sometimes, the best discoveries are the ones you keep safe for others.