

The Little Oasis Keeper



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In the wide, golden desert, where the sun shines hot and the sand stretches far, there was a small spring of clear, cool water. Beside it lived a girl named Amina. She was nine years old, with warm brown skin and black hair in two short braids. Her sky blue tunic had rolled sleeves, and a red headscarf covered her head. A leather water pouch hung from a strap across her shoulder.



Amina was the little oasis keeper. Every morning, she checked the spring and cleared away leaves and sand. She knew that water was precious in the desert. Her grandmother, Nadira, had taught her to care for the spring. Grandmother wore a long indigo robe and carried a wooden walking stick. Her silver hair shone under a cream shawl. 'Small hands can do big things,' she told Amina with a gentle smile.



Around the spring, Amina had planted seeds. She watered them with just enough water, never too much. Tiny green shoots pushed up through the sandy soil. Amina talked to them softly. 'Grow strong, little plants,' she said. 'You will make our oasis beautiful.' The desert wind blew, but the spring stayed cool and clear.



One hot afternoon, a traveler came across the dunes. His name was Samir. He was tall and lean, with a black beard and dusty face. He wore a brown traveling cloak and a wide brimmed hat. Two large clay water jars hung from his rope belt. Behind him walked a calm camel with a red saddle blanket and gold tassels. The camel carried woven bags and moved slowly, its padded feet soft on the sand.



Samir was thirsty. He knelt by the spring and scooped water with his hands, splashing it on his face. He let the water drip onto the sand. 'Ah, that's better!' he said. But Amina saw the wasted drops. 'Please, sir,' she said politely, 'use the water carefully. Every drop is precious here.' Samir looked surprised. 'It's just a little water,' he said.



Amina shook her head. 'This spring is small,' she explained. 'If we waste water, it may dry up. Then no one can drink.' She showed him how to fill a cup and drink without spilling. 'We must share the water and care for it,' she said. Samir felt a little ashamed. He looked at the tiny green plants around the spring. 'I didn't think,' he said quietly.



Samir promised to be more careful. He used only what he needed and gave some water to his camel from a small bowl. The camel blinked its long lashes and drank slowly. Amina smiled. 'Thank you,' she said. 'Now you can rest under the shade of that rock.' Samir sat down, and the camel folded its long legs and rested too.



As days passed, more travelers came to the spring. Some were careful, but some were not. Amina greeted each one with kindness. 'Welcome to our oasis,' she said. 'Please use the water wisely and help keep it clean.' She showed them how to take just enough and how to pour water gently so nothing was wasted. Most travelers listened and thanked her.



Amina continued to plant seeds. She dug small holes and placed each seed inside. Then she gave each one a little water. 'One day, these will be bushes and flowers,' she told Grandmother Nadira. Grandmother nodded. 'Your care will make the desert bloom,' she said. 'And when many hands help, the work is lighter.'



Samir stayed at the oasis for a while. He helped Amina carry water from the spring to the new plants. He used his strong arms to lift the heavy clay jars. 'I want to help,' he said. 'I see now how important this is.' The camel carried bags of seeds and tools. Its slow, patient walk reminded everyone to move gently and share the load.



One morning, Samir called the other travelers together. 'Amina is right,' he said. 'This oasis is a gift. Let's all help take care of it.' The travelers agreed. Some cleared away stones, some planted seeds, and some carried water. Amina showed them how to do it without wasting a drop. Everyone worked together, and the spring stayed clear and cool.



Grandmother Nadira watched from her stool. Her hazel eyes were warm with pride. 'You see, Amina?' she said. 'When everyone shares the work, the desert can bloom.' Amina looked around. The once bare sand was now dotted with green shoots. Travelers laughed and talked as they worked. The camel stood quietly, its red saddle blanket bright against the sand.



Weeks passed, and the oasis grew greener and more beautiful. Bushes with small yellow flowers grew around the spring. Birds came to drink and sing. Butterflies fluttered over the plants. Amina's heart felt full. She knew that the water was safe because everyone cared for it together. Even the smallest traveler helped by not wasting a single drop.



Travelers began to tell others about the little oasis keeper. 'She taught us to share and to care,' they said. More and more people came, and each one promised to protect the spring. Amina gave each a seed to plant. 'Take it with you,' she said. 'Plant it somewhere and care for it. The desert can bloom in many places.'



Samir prepared to leave, but he promised to return. 'I will tell everyone I meet about your oasis,' he said. 'And I will always use water carefully.' He climbed onto his camel. The camel's gold tassels swayed as it stood up. Amina waved goodbye. 'Remember,' she called, 'every drop counts!' Samir nodded and rode away across the dunes.



Amina stood by the spring, her red headscarf fluttering in the breeze. She looked at the green plants and the clear water. She thought of all the hands that had helped. 'Conservation is a shared responsibility,' she said softly. 'Everyone can help.' And she knew that as long as people cared and shared, the desert would always have a little green oasis.