The Lost Laugh

Hyena can’t find her favourite sound.



A short story for reading aloud

AGES 4-7 • Take your time. Enjoy the sounds.

The Lost Laugh

Hyena usually laughed at everything.

She laughed at crooked sticks. She laughed at sneezes. Once, she laughed at a leaf for no clear reason.

But today, nothing seemed funny.

Monkey made a silly face.

Hyena smiled a little.

Elephant balanced a flower on his head.

Hyena said, "That's nice."

"Where has your laugh gone?" asked Monkey.

"I don't know," said Hyena. "I just feel quiet."

Her friends stopped trying to be funny.

They sat beside her under a tree.

Nobody spoke. Wind moved through the grass. A beetle crossed Elephant's foot.

"Would you like company?" Monkey asked.

Hyena nodded. "Quiet company, please."

The Lost Laugh

They spent the morning making shapes with fallen twigs.

Monkey made a star. Elephant made an enormous square. Hyena made a house with a long chimney.

No one asked her to laugh.

At lunchtime, Elephant unpacked three pears.

He counted them carefully.

"One for Monkey. One for Hyena. And one for..."

He looked around.

"Who is the third one for?"

Monkey pointed at him.

Elephant looked down at his own large feet.

"Oh! I forgot I was here."

A small sound escaped Hyena.

It was not her big, bouncing laugh. It was a snort.

Then another came.

Soon she was laughing into her paws.

Elephant smiled. "There you are."

Hyena leaned against his side.

"I was here all along," she said.

They ate their pears in the shade. Sometimes they talked. Sometimes they were quiet.

When Hyena laughed again, nobody made a fuss. They simply laughed with her.

THE END

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