Capybara and the Little Quack

A little river story about asking for help.

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Ages 3–5





Come close, little friend. I have a river story for you.

Capybara squeezed a little toy duck. Quack! She squeezed it again. Quack! There was no duck inside. She had checked.



On the wide, dry part of the dock, Aro was making a boat song with two geckos. The boat stayed tied beside them. Each gecko had a little wooden tapping stick. Capybara had the duck.

“I want to play with you,” Capybara told Aro. “My duck has a very important quack.”

“Come join us,” Aro said. “Our little song goes: tap, quack, tap.”

Capybara hugged the duck. Without her, there would be a hole in the middle of the song. She wanted to fill it.



Aro would walk along their line, starting beside the boat. When he reached a friend, that friend would make a sound.

Capybara took the place nearest the boat. Her important quack would be easy to hear there. The two geckos stood behind her.

“Ready,” she said. “Duck ready. Paws ready. Everything ready.”



Aro started at the boat and walked along the line.

Quack. Tap. Tap.

Capybara squeezed the duck against her tummy without making a sound. Her quack had come first. The song needed a tap before it.

“My duck came too soon,” she said.

Aro settled beside the boat again. “We can try another way.”



This time Capybara walked behind both geckos. Now their taps could come before her quack. She set her paws carefully. The duck was ready too.

Aro began beside the boat.

Tap. Tap. Quack.

Capybara's ears drooped a little. Now her quack came last. There was no tap after it.

“Too soon. Too late,” she murmured. “Oh, duck.”

She put the duck to her ear. It had nothing to suggest.



Aro stayed close. There was room for another try. But Capybara did not move yet. She had tried both ends. Guessing another place felt muddly.

Then she looked up at her friend.

“Aro, will you help me?” Capybara asked. “Can you make our song slowly? I want to hear where my quack belongs.”

“Of course,” Aro said. “Tap … quack … tap.”

This time Capybara listened without squeezing the duck.



“A tap before me,” she said softly. “And a tap after me. I belong between my friends!”

She went back to the boat. The gecko nearest it was first. Capybara stepped behind that gecko. Now she was second. The other gecko stood behind her, third.

Nobody had moved her paws for her. She gave one happy little wiggle and held her duck ready.



Aro walked from the boat.

Tap. Quack. Tap.

The little song fitted!

“Again!” Capybara said. “I found my place!”

Aro returned to the boat. The first gecko tapped. Capybara, second, squeezed her duck. The third friend tapped.

Tap. Quack. Tap.



They played until Capybara knew just when her sound would come. She no longer had to hurry. Her friends left room for her quack, and she left room for their taps.

“Asking helped me hear it,” she told Aro. “Now we can play together.”

When their song was finished, they sat together on the dock's cozy bench. Capybara tucked the toy duck beside her. This sunny river corner was home.



She leaned back, just a little.

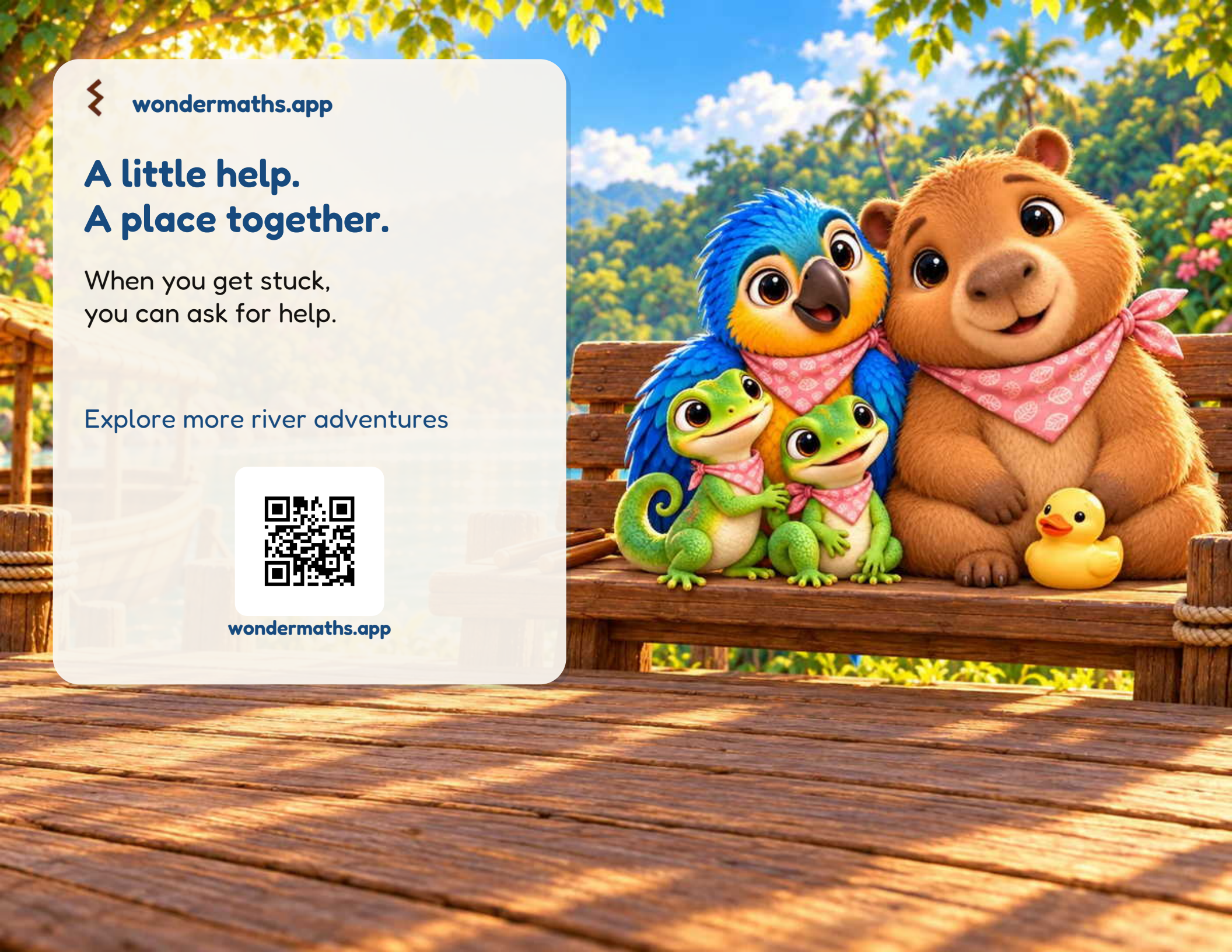
Quack!

Capybara giggled. She had sat on the duck.

“That one was a sitting-down quack,” she said.

Aro chuckled, and the geckos curled their tails beside their tapping sticks.
Capybara settled the duck safely in her lap.

Little friend, when you get stuck, you can ask for help.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