



Otto's River Rescue

by Spriggleberry Books

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Otto the otter loved his home by the Twinkling River. Every day, he splashed and played, feeling the cool water rush around his paws and the soft mud squish beneath his toes. The river was full of fish, frogs, and shimmering stones, but lately, Otto noticed something worrying — the water was getting murkier, and trash floated along the banks where the dragonflies used to dance. Otto's heart sank. He loved his river, and it made him sad to see it hurt.



One morning, Otto sat on his favorite smooth rock, watching the water drift by. He saw plastic bags caught in the reeds and bits of broken bottles glinting dangerously under the sun. "I have to do something," he thought, with a flick of his whiskers. But what? Otto wasn't sure yet, though an idea began to twirl inside his clever mind like a whirlpool spinning in the stream.



Otto decided to build something that could clean the river — a machine that could scoop up the trash but be gentle enough not to hurt the fish or plants. He imagined gears and wheels, paddle-like arms, and maybe a big net that would catch problems before they floated away. Excited, Otto hurried to his den to gather supplies: bits of driftwood, shiny stones, and even some lost fishing line tangled up in the reeds.



As he worked, Otto realized that building a machine was not easy. Some pieces didn't fit, and the wheels kept wobbling. Sometimes, the machine squeaked or tipped over with a splash. Otto's whiskers drooped a little. "Maybe I need help," he murmured. He remembered his friends: Lila the beaver, who was a strong builder, and Pip the duck, who knew all the turns of the river.



Otto paddled upstream to Lila's lodge. "Hello, Lila! I want to build a river-cleaning machine, but I'm stuck. Will you help me?" Lila smiled, showing her big teeth. "Of course, Otto! We beavers love building. Let's make it strong and steady!" Together, they gathered more sturdy sticks and planned how to make the machine stay balanced in the water.



Next, Otto and Lila visited Pip the duck, who liked to fly high and see the whole river. "Pip, can you help us find the best spots where the trash gathers?" Otto asked. Pip quacked happily. "Let's fly over the river and spot where it piles up!" From the sky, Pip pointed out places near the old bridge and under the willow trees where garbage often collected.



Back at the work site, the friends built and tinkered. Otto tightened screws, Lila shaped the frame, and Pip fetched things floating in the water to test the machine. The invention had a big scoop in front and a gentle conveyor belt to carry the trash into a basket. It looked a little wobbly but hopeful. Otto's heart fluttered with excitement — maybe, just maybe, they could save their river.



One sunny afternoon, they pushed the machine into the water. The paddle wheels turned, making soft splashes; the scoop dived under floating papers and plastic; and slowly, the basket started filling up with mess. Otto gasped with joy! "It's working!" Lila cheered, and even Pip bobbed happily on the river surface. The machine was helping to clean the river.



But suddenly, the machine got stuck in a tangle of overgrown roots! The wheels stopped turning, and the basket tilted, spilling trash back into the water. Otto's heart thumped hard. He wanted to give up, but then he looked at his friends. "We can fix this — together," he said. They all nodded, ready to try again.



Lila used her strong teeth to carefully chew the roots away, making a clear path for the machine. Pip flew ahead, scouting for better places to operate, while Otto adjusted the wheels with a special twist to avoid getting caught. Teamwork made the machine stronger and smarter. Otto felt proud and thankful to have friends who cared as much as he did.



After fixing the problem, the machine floated freely again, gliding past the trees and reeds. It scooped up cans, wrappers, and tangled twine. The water began to sparkle more, and the fish swam happily beneath the surface, free from the messy trash. Otto's eyes sparkled with hope — his river was coming back to life.



Word spread along the riverbanks. Other animals heard about the invention and wanted to help! Benny the beaver had found some extra sticks, and Rosie the raccoon brought soft cloths to wipe the machine clean. Everyone wanted to protect their beautiful home, and the river's magic seemed to grow brighter with every helping paw or wing.



One evening, as the sun painted the sky pink and gold, Otto looked across the river, feeling warm and joyful inside. The river was cleaner, full of life again, and the friends had made it happen together. He knew the journey wasn't over — the river needed care every day — but now, he wasn't alone. He had learned that clever ideas, teamwork, and kindness could change the world.



From that day forward, Otto and his friends continued their river-cleaning adventure. Sometimes they found new types of trash or tricky spots to reach. Sometimes the machine needed repairs or new parts. But with each challenge, they grew stronger and happier, proving that when friends come together, even the biggest problems become smaller and brighter.



One morning, Otto woke up to a river so clear he could see his reflection smiling back at him. He ran outside, splashed into the water, and shouted happily, “We did it! Our river is healthy again!” Butterflies fluttered above, dragonflies zipped around, and the whole forest seemed to hum with gratitude. Otto’s heart glowed with pride, knowing that every little otter — and friend — can make a big difference.



The story of Otto and his clever machine spread beyond the river valley. Animals from far away came to see the clean water and learn how to care for their homes too. Otto loved sharing his story and teaching others about teamwork, invention, and love for nature. His river was no longer just home — it was a symbol of hope and friendship.



And so, every day, Otto and his friends played beside the sparkling Twinkling River, grateful for the clear water, the happy fish, and the clean mud beneath their paws. Their hearts were light, their smiles wide, and their river was a place of magic once again. Because with cleverness and kindness, even the smallest otter can help save the world.



The end.





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