

Storytime with Dad

The Tiny Cheetah

Welcome to Storytime with Dad! Today we will be reading The Tiny Cheetah.

Far across the golden grasslands of Africa lived a cheetah cub named Chiku.

Chiku was not like the others in his pack. While his brothers and sisters grew tall and sleek, Chiku stayed small - so small that when he crouched in the grass, even the meerkats sometimes tilted their heads and whispered, "Is that one of us?"

The other cubs loved him, but oh, how they teased him.

"You're too small to chase zebra," his sister giggled.

"You're too small to leap across streams," his brother teased.

"You're too small for almost everything," the eldest declared with a sigh.

Chiku tried to laugh along, but inside his chest, his little heart whispered: Maybe I'm small... but maybe I can do something big.

One bright morning, the pack decided to practice pouncing. The eldest lined them up, tails twitching. "Watch me," he said proudly, and with one graceful leap - pounce! - he landed on a tall tuft of grass. His siblings cheered. One by one they tried, each landing right on target. Then it was Chiku's turn. He crouched low, wiggled his tiny booty, and... boing! He jumped - but landed upside-down, paws sticking in the air. The others rolled in the grass laughing, and even Chiku laughed until his whiskers tickled.

Another day, the pack tried sneaking up on guinea fowl. They crept slowly through the grass, heads low, tails swaying. "Silent as shadows," whispered the eldest. Chiku was silent - until he stepped on a dry twig. CRACK! The guinea fowl squawked and flapped into the sky in a cloud of feathers. "Oops," Chiku muttered, his ears burning. "Don't worry, little one," said his sister kindly. "You'll find your way." Still, that whisper in his heart returned: Small can still be mighty.

That afternoon, the pack napped in the shade of an acacia tree. The air was hot and heavy, and even the cicadas buzzed lazily. But then came a sound that shook the ground. ROOAR! Out of the tall grass stomped the lions. Not silent or sneaky - oh no, these lions were noisy, grumpy, and loud. One tripped on a log and growled at it. Another flicked his tail in annoyance at a buzzing fly. "Time for a cheetah chase!" one of them grumbled.

The eldest cheetah's eyes went wide. "Run!"

The pack shot off like arrows, spots blurring across the grass. Chiku sprinted too, his little legs moving like a blur. The lions gave chase, panting and puffing, their big paws thudding clumsily. "Faster!" shouted Chiku's brother. "They're catching up!" yelled his sister. The cheetahs darted toward the hills, aiming for a narrow path between two rocky ridges. It was the only way to reach the safe, open plain. But the lions were stumbling closer, huffing and puffing. Still - if they kept going - the lions would block the path.

Chiku's sharp eyes spotted something no one else noticed: high on the ridge, a massive boulder wobbled in the wind. It looked ready to roll with just the tiniest push. His heart leapt. If I can move that rock, I can block the lions and save my family. Without a word, Chiku veered off the path and scrambled up the rocky slope. His siblings gasped. "Chiku, come back!" "It's too dangerous!" But Chiku didn't stop. His paws scrabbled against the hot stone, claws scratching, tail swishing for balance. Below, the lions puffed and grunted, arguing about who would get dinner first.

"I saw the little one trip on a twig yesterday," one lion said. "I call dibs!"

"Bah, you always get the easy meals," another grumbled.

Chiku reached the boulder. It was enormous - bigger than ten Chikus stacked on each other. He pressed his tiny shoulder against it and shoved. Nothing. He dug his claws into the dirt, pushed again. Still nothing. His paws burned. His legs shook. His chest ached. I'm too small... I can't... Then he heard his family's voices below. "Chiku, hurry!" "We believe in you!" His heart blazed. "I may be small," he whispered, "but I will not let you down."

With one last, mighty push, he shoved. The boulder wobbled. It tilted. And then - RUMBLE... CRASH! Down it rolled, bouncing and booming until it landed smack in the middle of the narrow path. THUD! Dust billowed everywhere. The lions skidded to a stop, eyes wide, tails twitching. "Well... that's inconvenient," one muttered. "Now what?" asked another. "I'm too tired for this," sighed the third. And with a lot of grumbling, they plopped in the grass, flicking their tails in defeat.

On the far side of the rocks, the cheetah pack froze in amazement. Then, without waiting another moment, they dashed across the plain to safety. Chiku climbed down from the ridge, his fur dusty, his paws scraped, but his eyes shining bright. "You saved us," breathed his sister. "You outsmarted the lions," said his brother. And the eldest bowed his head. "Chiku... today you were the biggest of us all."

Chiku's whiskers twitched, his chest swelled. For the first time, he didn't feel small at all.

That night, under a sky filled with twinkling stars, the pack curled up together in the tall grass. The eldest spoke for everyone: "From this day on, we'll never call you too small, Chiku. You are our hero."

Chiku flicked his tail, snuggled into the warmth of his family, and whispered with a smile, "Small can still be mighty."

Far away, three very tired lions were still sitting in the grass, scratching their heads and muttering, "How did that tiny cheetah trick us so easily?" And if you listened closely, you could almost hear Chiku's laughter floating on the night breeze.

The end.



Oh my gosh - my heart is beating out of my chest! I am so proud and happy for Chiku! He is right, you know, small can be mighty. Sometimes it's not about how big or strong you are, being brave or being smart are also ways to be mighty.

Now, it's taken me far too long, but Benny - this was your story idea. It's a story about a tiny cheetah, so I hope you loved hearing about Chiku as much as I loved writing about him. I know this little guy has a lot more adventures to have with his family, too. So thank you for the wonderful message and story idea. This was a lot of fun to put together.

For everyone listening, Chiku is a very special cheetah. Did you see that even though he was small he always knew he could do important things - or mighty things as he would put it. This is true for all of you listening. You will do amazing things, just keep showing up day after day. Focus on loving the people around you, and hopefully you won't have to save anyone from a pack of lions, but I know you have what it takes to face any challenge in life.

What challenges have you faced? Let me know at hello@storytimewithdad.com! You can email me there, or go to the website to send me a message.

Also, I'm going to be doing a lot more things for you all. One of my 3 kids favorite things that I've been doing, are the short, 1-2 minute long videos on Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, so come find me on those platforms to hear more. And I have even more ideas to get more engagement with you.

One of those ideas was to publish a kids coloring book! So many cool things are happening, and it's going to be available any day now. It's called Dad's Favorite Coloring Book. You can get it on Amazon in paperback, I'll have signed hardbacks to give away, and even a digital eBook that you can download, print, and color on your own. It's more than a coloring book, it's based on 15 of my most popular stories. There will be a short version of the story your adult can read out loud while they color on their own side of the page, and a full page picture based the story that you can color at the same time.

Keep a look out, I'll be posting on all the social media sites, and I really look forward to seeing your creative works soon. So I'm really excited about this, it's great stuff... but it is a;sp time for me to say, as always:

Thank you for listening, and I'll see you again soon.

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