

Rena the Relationship Badger



Rena the Relationship Badger is a team player and a good friend. She loves to learn with other people. Rena the Relationship Badger will congratulate others on their ideas and ask if she can help them. She can put herself in someone else's shoes, so her classmates love to work with her.

The sun beamed through the opening to her sett, and Rena the Relationship Badger stretched out happily.

Today was the day she'd been waiting for: the day she'd spent months organising, the day that the animals of the Malvern Hills would talk about all year – the annual Summer Fayre.

The fayre brought everyone together to celebrate the beginning of summer and the end of the perilous winter season. The person in charge of this joyous occasion; Rena.

When Rena's mother announced that last year's fayre would be her last and handed over the reins to her eldest daughter, Rena thought her heart would burst with happiness. It was the highest honour within the badger community, and she was determined to make her whole family proud and make sure that every animal - from the ancient owl, Arnold, to the youngest cricket, Molly - had a wonderful day.

As she brushed her fur and prepared a hearty breakfast of worms and berries, Rena thought back to last year's event. It had been a perfect summer's day, all of the stalls were a sold-out success – Mrs Hedgehog's fried bug stall was a particular hit – and as the afternoon wore on, everyone danced to the live music until the sun went down.

This year's fayre, she thought, needed to be the best one yet.

A loud hooting interrupted Rena's daydreaming.

She opened her front door to see her friend Rory the Owl waiting with a panic-stricken look on his face.

'What's got your beak in a twist?' she asked him.

'I'm so sorry to disturb you so early Rena, especially when I know you've got so much to do this morning. I can't even imagine your list! I feel rushed and...'

Rena interrupted him: 'Rory, just tell me! What's wrong?'

'It's Percy! He's woken up this morning and has lost his voice! He can't even manage a single hoot!' Rena felt her stomach drop. Percy was the best singer on the Hills, and lead singer of the band, The Owl and the Pussycats.

'Oh no, that's terrible!' she gasped. 'How did this happen? Who's going to sing now? Everyone will be so disappointed!'

Rory looked anxious: 'Well, the thing is Rena - that isn't all! I think you should come with me...'

Rena followed Rory and, as they approached the clearing, Rena's heart dropped. 'The Bee's Knees', the caterers with whom she'd spent months developing the perfect menu, were nowhere to be seen; the bouncy castle was in a crumpled mess on the floor and, just as Rory said, Percy was attempting to hoot without success.

Just as she felt the scene couldn't get any worse, the heavens opened and the rain began to hammer down.

Rena took a deep breath – she would not allow her first year in charge of the fayre to be remembered as a disaster.

'Right! No-one panic! Meet at my sett in five minutes. We'll have a cup of nettle tea and get everything sorted.'

Back in Rena's sett, whilst nursing a hot drink, Percy squawked out an apology.

'Oh Rena, I'm so – cough! cough! – sorry! I have been looking forward to this performance all year, and now I've let everybody down.'

'Now Percy, don't be silly', Rena said gently, 'it's not your fault at all.'

Rory interrupted. 'Maybe we should just postpone the fayre until next week, when Percy is better and it's not raining?'

'No! We can't postpone it. Everyone's been looking forward to this all year. We've got a whole hill full of talent, so we will be able to find a replacement band. I'll find out where the caterers are, and if it carries on raining, well then we will get wet! We've all got waterproof fur anyway, haven't we? We just need to pull together.' Rena's determination and belief in her friends shone through her words.

'Rory, please could you fly over to Worcester and see where The Bee's Knees are? And, whilst you do that, I'll organise another band. I've got just the right one in mind...'

Rena set out into the rain and headed towards the cluster of logs she knew to be home to some of the best (and oldest) singers in Worcestershire – the five piece big band, The Crickeys!

When she explained her plight to the band's lead singer and head of the cricket clan, Croucher, he wasn't too enthusiastic about performing again.

'But please Croucher, you're so talented! My mother always spoke of how brilliant you and your brothers were... this could be your big comeback gig!'

'Oh Rena dear, I don't know if us old boys will be able to entertain you young folk.'

'Of course you will! It will be brilliant! Croucher, I know you can do it. If you do, I'll throw in ten of Mrs Hedgehog's fried bugs...'

'Hmm. Well we wouldn't want to let you down... and, um, can we have ten scorpions instead, please? The cockroaches just don't have that same crunch!'

As she left Croucher and The Crickeys warming up and dusting off their old costumes, Rena smiled. She knew the old boys were the talk of the hills in their day, and all of the animals would be overjoyed to see them perform again. That was the first problem solved.

Now a trip to the pond to (hopefully!) sort out the deflated bouncy castle.

'Fred? Frankie? Tim? Are any of you around?' Rena called out over the lily pads.

Tim hopped up from around the corner: 'Rena? What are you doing here? I thought you'd be getting ready for this afternoon!'

'Well, I was hoping you'd be able to help me actually... you see the thing is, the pump for the bouncy castle has broken and we can't fix it. I was thinking that, as you're all so brilliant at breathing heavily, you'd get it blown up in no time!'

The frogs didn't take as much persuading as Croucher and, without hesitation, said: 'Of course we'll help you Rena – we'll do anything to make sure that your first fayre is a success.'

'RENA? REEEEEENNNNNA?'

Rena looked through the clouds to see Rory scanning the hills looking for her, his face a picture of worry.

'Rory! Where are the caterers?'

'The Bees can't make it Rena – someone broke into their stores last night and ate all their honey. They haven't got any reserves left! They said to send their most sincere apologies and – wait, why are you smiling?'

'Well, it's disappointing', said Rena, 'but it's not the end of the world. What really matters is that we're all together and luckily, I know just the lady to help us...'

As the sun went down, and Croucher and The Crickeys sang their first harmonious note, Rena felt joy spread throughout her body. Tim, Fred and Frankie had blown up the bouncy castle faster than any human pump would have been able to. Mrs Hedgehog sent the foxes out to fetch more bugs for extra fried bug sandwiches, and about half an hour before the first guests arrived, the rain had stopped completely.

Rory landed next to her. 'Oh Rena, this is perfect. You've done such an incredible job, in the most trying of circumstances – this is all thanks to you! Your mother would be so proud of you.'

Rena looked at him and smiled gratefully. 'Thank you my dear friend, but actually, none of this is thanks to me. It's everyone else who saved the day. They're the ones with the true talent. Now, come on - let's go and dance!'