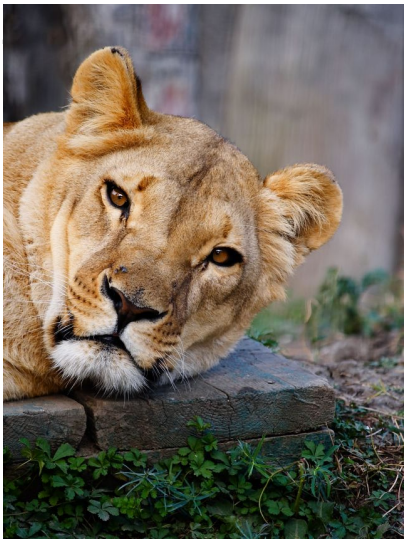
The African Serengeti is vast and dry, miles of sandy earth stretch out, broken up by tall grasses and brushy little trees. It was in this Serengeti that little Leo was born.

Leo was a young lion. He was born on a fine spring day when the tall grasses were in bloom. Leo and his mother were hidden away in a grouping of trees when he was born



That first day he and his mother were both very tired. As the days went on, Leo got bigger and stronger and soon he was able to follow his mother out of the trees.

One day he and his mother left the trees and she told him it was time for him to be introduced to the pride, who would be his extended family.

Leo met Golden Fur, the great male lion who was head of the pride. Golden Fur gave Leo a great sniff and nodded his head that Leo was a fine young lion indeed. Then Leo met the other lionesses, Abby and Sara. They would take care of him when his mother was out hunting. With all adults around though, Leo started to become bored. He wanted to play with other young lions, but there were no other young lions in the pride.



As Leo got bigger and stronger, he ventured out of the pride and went for a walk. As he walked, he saw many kinds of plants and animals. He came upon a group of giraffes in the sun. He saw there were two young giraffes about his age.

He approached them carefully. When he came up to them, the giraffes jumped.

“I’m Leo, can I play with you?” he asked.

The giraffes looked at one another. “You cannot play with us”, one of the giraffes said, “In fact, if my Mom sees you, we’ll have to run away.”

“How come?” Leo asked.

“You are a lion and you will eat us up”, the other

giraffe said.

“I will not eat you up!” Leo said. “I’m just trying to make friends. What are you playing?”

“We are Scouts”, the giraffes said, “We are exploring the Serengeti. We’re all planning a camping trip.”

“What is a Scout?” Leo asked

“A Scout participates in activities that support the development of a way of living one's life and leading one's life. Being a Scout is not about a specific set of rules or facts which one must know. The principles embraced by all Scouts are a desire to improve life long, service to others, and a belief in something greater than oneself”, they answered.

“I want to be a Scout!” Leo said.

“You cannot be a Giraffe Scout”, they pronounced, “Now go away before our mother sees you.”

Leo hung his head and walked away. As he continued to walk, he went up to a stream to drink some water. In the water, he saw crocodiles. Near him in the water were some young crocodiles.

“Want to play?” he asked.

“We cannot play with you”, the young crocodiles said. “We are Crocodile Scouts. We play in the water.”

“But you can come out on land for activities”, Leo said wisely.

“We are practicing our swimming lessons”, the crocodiles said.

“I can swim”, Leo offered.

“Not like we can”, they can. “Sorry, you cannot be a Crocodile Scout.”

Leo walked away unhappily. As he walked, he came upon a group of antelope. He saw several young antelope about his age. Leo walked up.

“Oh no, it’s a lion!” they cried and started to run off.

“Wait, wait, I just want to play!” Leo said.

“You want to play with us?” one of the antelopes asked suspiciously.

“Yes, I just want to play Scouts.” Leo said.

“We are playing Scouts now”, one of the antelopes said, “But you cannot play; you run faster than we do.”

“I’m sure there are things you do better than I do too”, Leo said.

“You cannot be an Antelope Scout; you are not an antelope”, they said and ran off.

Leo was very sad. He could not understand why no one wanted to be his friend.

He walked back to the pride and his mother noticed that Leo looked very sad.

“What is wrong?” she asked.

“No wants to be my friend”, he said. “I tried to play with giraffes, crocodiles, and antelopes, but they all said I could not be a Scout.”

“Antelopes play with antelopes and lions play with lions”, his mother said.

“But there are no lions my age!” he cried.

His mother gave him a hug, but she did not know what to tell him.

Leo went to sleep that night very sad.

That night as Leo slept, he dreamed. In the dream, he imagined that all the Scouts could play together, and could agree that everyone was equal.

When he awoke, Leo was very excited. He went for a walk again.

He came upon the giraffes and walked up to them.

“Hi, I want to invite you to a Scout meeting”, he said.

“A Scout meeting?” they asked.

“Yes, all the Scouts will play together and we agree that all members are equal, though we are all different. We meet by the boar’s wallow. Will you come?”

“We will try to be there”, the giraffes said.

Leo then came upon the water hole and the crocodiles.

“I want to invite you to a Scout meeting”, Leo said.

“A Scout meeting? What kind of Scout meeting?” they asked.

“All the animals play Scouts together. We meet at the boar’s wallow so you can be in the water if you need to be” he said.

“We will ask our mother if we can come”, they said.

Leo walked on. He came upon the antelope.

“We said you could not be an Antelope Scout”, they said.

“I want to invite you to a Scout meeting”, Leo said. “All the animals play together as equals.”

“That sounds fun; we will come”, they said.

Leo was happy. He thought that they would h ave the best Scout meeting ever.

Leo walked back to the pride.

“Mom”, he said, “Will you come to a Scout meeting and be a Counselor for our new team?”

“You found some young lions?” his mother asked.

“No, but all the animals my age are meeting together”, he said.

His mother agreed to come.

Leo and his mother walked to the boar’s wallow as the sun was beginning to set. They waited, and then they waited some more.

“No one is coming”, Leo said, a tear in his eye.

Just then they saw the crocodiles arrive with their mother, followed by the giraffes, and the antelopes.

“You came!” Leo cried with joy.

“We’re here for the Scout meeting!” they said.

At first, they were wary of Leo’s mother, but soon found they had nothing to fear.

They planned trips and decided to meet for a camping trip and because Leo was the one who thought of the idea, he was elected Team Leader.

“Now we can all be Scouts!” Leo said.

At the end of the meeting, the animals went home.

“I’m very proud of you, son”, Leo’s mother said.

They walked home together with a spring in their steps.

As Leo snuggled down next to his mother that night, he was the happiest young lion in the world because now he had friends and he was finally a real Scout.

