

The Banana Tree

a tale of self-discovery



Benny Banana Tree didn't think he was all that worthy of being in the jungle...

...Until something happened that changed his mind completely.

The Banana Tree

short story.

Benny Banana Tree was a majestic tree. But it seemed to him that the other plants in the jungle were all better.

The other flowers had enormous, gorgeous, and fragrant blooms. His flowers were insignificant compared to theirs. And his branches were shorter than a lot of the other trees. All Benny noticed were his shortcomings.

Ophelia Orchid always seemed to be making fun of Benny. *"Oh, look at my newest flower," she said. "And smell the delicious aroma – so sweet and luscious! I can't wait until my other buds open! Yours will never be this amazing!"*

Manny Mangrove Tree was always bragging, too. *"Just look how my tremendous roots grace the earth below and my limbs climb high in the sky, spreading out ever more beautifully each year. I'm a perfect tree of life, providing shelter for untold numbers of creatures!"*

Even the vines were mean to Benny. *"We're the glue that holds the jungle together," they exclaimed. "What good are you?"*

Benny just sighed and wished he had some redeeming quality that the jungle needed.

One day, a whole colony of monkeys arrived. No one in the jungle ever heard such a clatter and chatter as when the monkeys spotted Benny!

"Oh, look at the treasure we've found! These are the biggest, sweetest bananas in the world! Thanks to this banana tree, tonight we feast!" said the head monkey.

From then on, as Benny gave out all the bananas the monkeys could desire, Ophelia gave up on her attempts to get them to notice her. Manny was in awe at how Benny provided for them. And the vines stopped bragging, too.

Finally, Benny's inner beauty shone through bright and clear. *"Well, what do you know?"* he said, beaming with pride. *"I AM here for a reason and I'm special too!"*



MORAL: Accept yourself for the beautiful person that you are.

The Banana Tree

personal reflection.

Like Benny, we are all unique. We may be darker, lighter, taller, shorter, bigger, smaller, or poorer than others, but **we each have our own special beauty!**

Have you found yours?

No one is just like you. You have unique talents that others don't have. You've gained wisdom that others seek. And your experiences from the day you were born have combined to produce the wonderful person you are today.

There will always be Ophelias and Mannys in the world to let you know how they excel in their own areas. But that doesn't mean you're of any less value than they are.

What you have is just as marvelous!

It's up to you to find your inner beauty and let it shine! If it helps,

spend some time in reflection and make a list of your unique talents to show yourself how special you really are.

You can even continue to discover new talents throughout your life. Maybe you'll be the best grandparent the world's ever seen! Or maybe you'll be the most talented artist in your city!

By exploring new hobbies, taking a class, or traveling to new lands, you can awaken new passions and find hidden talents you never knew existed.

As long as you continue to learn and grow, your inner beauty will sparkle brighter and brighter. **And it all starts with accepting yourself for who you are** – appreciating your special beauty that no one in this world has except for you!

Self-Reflection Questions:

- Do I have a strong self-concept?
- What do I have that no one else has?
- How can I use my special talents so my inner beauty shines?