



The hundred and
thirty-seventh leg



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It was a new day.

The sun shone softly on the forest.

The birds woke up.



A millipede lay curled under a big brown leaf.

The twittering birds woke her up.



“Go away! Let me sleep!” she grumbled.

“I know it is morning. You don’t have to make a fuss about it every day,” she told the birds.



The millipede crawled out from under the leaf.

She stretched her first fifteen pairs of legs.

Then she let out a giant yawn.



"I am starving!" said the millipede and set out to look for food.

In her hurry, she stumbled over a rock.

"Oh my gosh! Oh my gosh! I have broken a leg!" she shouted.





A little sparrow was busy picking grains nearby.

“Ha! You have broken a leg? I would break one too, if I had so many! Look at me! I have two legs. One follows the other. No problem! Easy!” she said smugly.

“And what is all this hurry for?”



“Could you please help me?” asked the millipede.

“This early in the day? No ma’am, sorry! I have work to do,” said the sparrow and flew away.



The millipede asked the honeybees for help.

But they were busy collecting honey from the flowers.

The dragonflies did not even look at her, and buzzed on.



“You have so many legs!” said the butterfly.

“Why would you care if one breaks? Stop it with all the drama!”

The snail had advice.

“You are so careless! You should learn to walk like this. S-L-O-W-L-Y.”



By now the millipede was feeling very sad.

“Sniff! Sniff! No one wants to help me!

I do want to walk well again,” she sobbed.



A spider was merrily swinging on his web.

He saw the millipede crying.

“Hey there little friend! What makes you cry so early in the day?” he asked.

“I broke a leg and it hurts. Could you please help me?” asked the millipede.



“Oh yes, I can help you. But how do I find the broken leg from all these legs?”

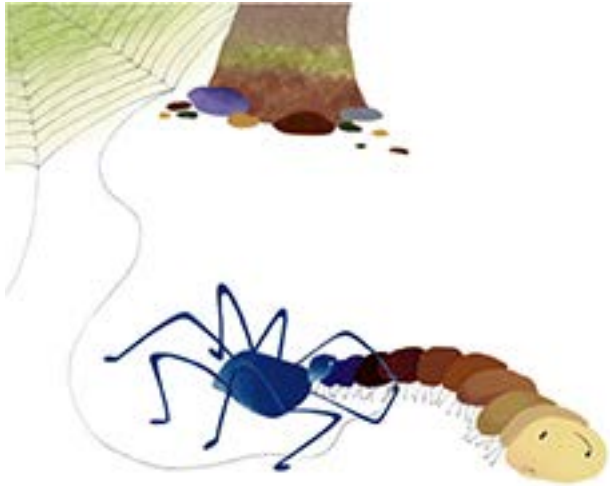
I can only count up to eight,” said the spider.

“Okay, count with me,” said the millipede.

“One...seven...twenty-three...fifty-eight...
ninety-two...one hundred and fifteen...

one hundred and OUCH! There it is!

My one hundred and thirty-seventh leg!”

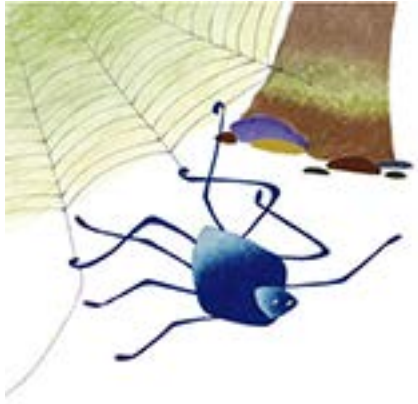


The spider swung down to the millipede.

He went round and round the leg,
wrapping it with the silk threads from his
web.

“Do you feel better now?” he asked.

The millipede smiled happily.



“Thank you, dear spider. I don’t know what I would have done without you.”

Take care now, little millipede. Don’t trip over something again. Bye bye!” said the spider.

“Bye!” said the happy millipede.



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