

I AM TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

The words below from Wangaari Maathai were shared by Nikki before Nikki took her first pebble.

Wangaari Maathai is a Kenyan activist who founded the Green Belt Movement, planted thousands of trees and became the first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize for her contribution to sustainable development, democracy and peace.



"There was once a beautiful forest, a paradise, almost a magical place, so amazing. There were beautiful trees and many animals lived in this beautiful place. One day, a fire broke out. Huge forest giants were suddenly engulfed by a sea of fire.

Frightened and running for their lives, all the animals fled from their homes out of the forest. Exhausted from running, they arrived at the lake. There, the animals stopped to look at the huge fire. Sad and overwhelmed by the enormity of the situation, all the animals watched helplessly.

But a strange thing happened. A tiny hummingbird kept flying up and down adrift. Back and forth from the water back to the forest which was on fire. Nobody understood, until at one point one of the animals said, "Little hummingbird, what are you doing?"

The hummingbird kept busy with her task and without losing any time she said, "I am bringing a drop of water to the fire" and flew on again. Up and down the little hummingbird kept flying, again and again.

In disbelief, all the other animals watched. Some even tried to dissuade the little hummingbird.

"Don't bother, the fire is too big, you're too small, it's too little water, your wings will catch fire, it's just one drop, you can't put out the fire!?!!"

When the hummingbird flew back from the forest, she saw how hopeless and desolate they looked. Then one of the animals called out in a mocking voice: "What do you think you are doing?"

The little hummingbird looked back, and without missing even a wing beat, she said, "I am doing what I can, and I am taking responsibility."

-Wangaari Maathai

