

The Tortoise's Flying Shoes



Ebru Mina TOMURCUK

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On a sunny morning, a young tortoise named Tilly was walking slowly through the meadow. She had a domed brown shell patterned in honey and dark amber, and big friendly hazel eyes. Tilly loved to explore, but her stubby legs made everything take a long time. 'I wish I could go faster,' she sighed, watching a butterfly flutter by.



Just then, Tilly spotted a bright red box near the old oak tree. Inside were shiny red shoes with tiny white wings on each heel and gold laces. 'Wow!' she gasped, slipping them on. The shoes fit perfectly. She wiggled her toes, and suddenly her feet lifted off the ground. Tilly was flying!



Tilly zoomed over the daisies, her heart racing with joy. 'This is amazing!' she shouted, doing a loop around a bush. But she flew so fast that she didn't see a branch ahead. She swerved just in time, her shell scraping the leaves. 'Whoa!' she cried, wobbling in the air. Flying was fun, but maybe not as easy as it looked.



A small sparrow with soft brown and cream feathers and a little blue scarf around her neck watched from a fence post. Her quick black eyes followed Tilly's wobbly flight. 'You're fast, little tortoise!' chirped the sparrow. 'But you're flying a bit wild. Would you like to learn some safe flying tricks?' Tilly landed with a bump. 'Yes, please!' she said eagerly.



The sparrow introduced herself as Pip. 'First rule,' Pip said, 'start slowly. Don't zoom off like a rocket. Flap gently and get a feel for the air.' Tilly nodded. She took a deep breath and lifted off slowly. Her red shoes hummed softly. 'That's better!' Pip cheered. 'Now you're in control.' Tilly smiled, feeling proud of her gentle takeoff.



Next, Pip taught Tilly to watch where she was going. 'Keep your eyes on the path ahead,' Pip said. 'Look for trees, branches, and other flyers.' Tilly practiced flying in a wide circle, carefully looking left and right. She spotted a caterpillar on a leaf and waved. 'I see everything!' she called. Pip nodded approvingly from a nearby twig.



The third trick was landing gently. 'Don't drop like a stone,' Pip said. 'Slow down, hover, and touch down softly.' Tilly tried it. She came in too fast and tumbled into a soft patch of clover. 'Oops!' she giggled. 'Try again,' Pip encouraged. Tilly focused, slowed her wings, and landed like a feather. 'Perfect!' Pip chirped.



Tilly practiced every day. She flew over the pond, around the berry bushes, and through the tall grass. Each time, she remembered Pip's rules: start slowly, watch where you're going, and land gently. Her flying shoes felt less like a wild rocket and more like a helpful friend. Tilly was becoming a safe flyer, and she loved it.



One afternoon, Tilly saw a group of field mice having a picnic. They were waving at her to come down. Tilly wanted to zoom right in, but she remembered Pip's lessons. She slowed down, checked the area for obstacles, and landed softly beside them. 'That was a beautiful landing!' squeaked a mouse. Tilly beamed with pride.



Tilly's friends began to notice her careful flying. 'You're so smooth now!' said a rabbit. 'Can you teach us?' Tilly thought about it. She remembered how Pip had helped her. 'I can try,' she said. She started with the basics: slow takeoff, watchful eyes, gentle landing. Her friends listened closely, and Tilly felt a warm glow inside.



One windy day, Tilly's shoes lifted her higher than ever before. The wind pushed her toward a tall tree. Tilly remembered Pip's voice: 'Watch where you're going. Stay calm.' She steered away from the branches and glided back to the meadow. 'I did it!' she cheered. Pip, watching from above, gave a proud chirp. Tilly had learned to be responsible.



Tilly realized that her flying shoes were a special gift. They were fun, but they needed care. She promised Pip she would always fly safely. 'I'm so glad you taught me,' Tilly said. Pip smiled. 'You were a quick learner. Now you can enjoy flying without any worries.' Tilly nodded, her hazel eyes sparkling with gratitude.



From that day on, Tilly became known as the safest flyer in the meadow. She shared her tricks with anyone who wanted to learn. 'Start slowly, watch where you go, and land gently,' she would say. Her red shoes with tiny wings became a symbol of fun and responsibility. Tilly was happy, and her friends felt safe flying with her.



Tilly and Pip often flew together in the evening sky. The sparrow's blue scarf fluttered in the breeze, and Tilly's gold laces sparkled. 'You've become a wonderful flyer,' Pip said. 'Thank you for teaching me,' Tilly replied. They soared side by side, two friends enjoying the freedom of the air, careful and joyful.



Tilly learned that new abilities are a gift, but they come with responsibility. She never forgot Pip's lessons: start slowly, watch where you're going, and land gently. With practice and care, her flying shoes brought her joy and adventure. And she always remembered to share her knowledge with others, just as Pip had shared with her.



And so, the tortoise with the flying shoes lived happily in the meadow, ready for any adventure but always flying safely. Her red shoes with white wings carried her high, but her heart stayed kind and careful. Tilly knew that the best way to enjoy a new ability is to use it wisely. And she did, every single day.