

The Puffin's Winter Postcards



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Pip the puffin lived by the cold winter sea. The water was grey and the wind was sharp. He wore a tiny red scarf around his neck and carried a small canvas satchel. Inside the satchel were postcards, blank and waiting. Pip missed his friends who lived far across the water. "I wish I could hear from them," he sighed.



Pip waddled to the edge of the cliff and looked out at the waves. He thought of Granny Gull, who always had a kind word, and Little Finn, who made him laugh. The sea was wide and icy, and the days were short. Pip felt a little lonely. "How can I reach them?" he wondered. "The water is too cold to swim across."



Just then, Tilly the tern swooped down. She had a black cap on her head and a forked tail that danced in the wind. A small blue postbag was strapped across her chest. "Hello, Pip!" she chirped. "You look thoughtful. What's wrong?" Pip told her about his friends far away. Tilly's dark eyes sparkled. "I can fly over the waves!" she said. "I'll take your postcards to them."



Pip's round amber eyes grew wide with joy. He opened his satchel and pulled out a postcard. On it, he wrote: "Dear Granny Gull, I miss you. The sea is cold, but I am warm in my red scarf. I hope you are well. Love, Pip." He wrote another card for Little Finn: "Dear Finn, I hope your green hat keeps you cozy. I think of you every day. Love, Pip."



Tilly took the postcards and tucked them into her blue postbag. "I'll be back soon!" she called, and off she flew over the icy waves. Pip watched her go until she was a tiny speck in the grey sky. He felt a little flutter of hope in his chest. The winter sea seemed a bit less lonely already.



Tilly flew for a long time. The wind was cold, but her long narrow wings carried her swiftly. She passed over white-capped waves and rocky islands. At last, she saw Granny Gull's cozy nest on a cliff. Granny Gull was wrapped in her lavender shawl, her round spectacles perched on her beak. "A postcard for me?" she said, delighted.



Granny Gull read Pip's card and smiled. She pulled out a piece of paper and wrote back: "Dear Pip, thank you for your lovely card. My shawl keeps me warm, and I think of you often. The winter is long, but your words brighten my days. Keep writing! Love, Granny Gull." She gave the card to Tilly, who tucked it safely away.



Then Tilly flew to find Little Finn. He was a tiny puffin chick with fluffy grey down and a green woolly hat with a pom-pom. When he saw the postcard, he jumped up and down. "A card for me!" he squeaked. He wrote back: "Dear Pip, your card made me so happy! I wear my green hat every day. I wish we could play together. Love, Finn."



Tilly flew back across the sea, her blue postbag full of replies. Pip was waiting on the cliff, his red scarf flapping in the wind. When he saw Tilly, he waved his wings. "You came back!" he cried. Tilly landed and gave him the postcards. Pip's heart felt warm as he read them.



First, Pip read Granny Gull's card. He smiled at her kind words. Then he read Little Finn's card and laughed out loud. "Finn's green hat!" he chuckled. The postcards made him feel close to his friends, even though they were far away. He decided to write back right away.



Pip wrote two more postcards. To Granny Gull, he wrote about a funny wave that splashed his beak. To Little Finn, he drew a picture of a snowflake. He gave the cards to Tilly, who promised to deliver them the next day. "You're a wonderful messenger," Pip said. Tilly chirped happily. "I love helping friends stay in touch!"



All winter long, Tilly flew back and forth over the icy sea. Each week, Pip sent postcards and received replies. Granny Gull wrote about her knitting, and Little Finn wrote about a new shell he found. Pip's satchel was always full of cards. Even when the days were short and the sea was icy, the postcards kept the puffin and his friends close.



One day, a fierce winter storm blew in. The wind howled and the waves crashed. Tilly could not fly. Pip worried about his friends. But then he remembered all the postcards he had received. He read them again, and they made him feel brave. He wrote a special card to Tilly: "Thank you for being our messenger. You are a true friend."



When the storm passed, Tilly delivered Pip's card to Granny Gull and Little Finn. They both wrote back quickly. Granny Gull sent a lavender-scented card, and Little Finn sent a drawing of Tilly flying over the waves. Pip smiled so wide his beak hurt. The postcards were like little hugs from across the sea.



Pip learned that sharing messages helps friends stay together all winter long. Even when the sea is icy and the days are short, a postcard can bring warmth and cheer. He sat on the cliff with his red scarf and his satchel, watching Tilly fly off with a new batch of cards. The winter sea no longer felt lonely.



And every evening, Pip would read his postcards by the light of the moon. He thought of Granny Gull's wise words and Little Finn's happy drawings. Tilly would visit and share stories of her flights. The little puffin knew that no matter how far apart friends are, a few kind words can keep them close. And that made the winter wonderful.