

The Otter's Flying Boat



Ebru Mina TOMURCUK

The Otter's Flying Boat

Ebru Mina TOMURCUK



On a bend of the wide, slow river, where willows dipped their toes in the water, lived a young otter named Ollie. Ollie had warm brown fur, a cream chest, and bright amber eyes that sparkled with ideas. In his faded blue work apron, with a red pencil behind one ear, he was always building something new. Today, a wonderful surprise sat on the riverbank: a boat like no other.



This was no ordinary boat. It had wooden wings and a little fan that hummed. Ollie called it his flying boat, because it floated above the water! He had worked on it all spring, with tiny wrenches and wooden pegs from his apron pockets. The flying boat bobbed gently, waiting. But Ollie knew a secret: before anyone could ride it, he had to test it first.



Just then, a flash of blue and orange zipped over the river. It was Pip the kingfisher, wearing a little green scarf tied at his neck. 'What a strange and wonderful boat!' Pip chirped. Ollie explained his plan. 'I need a guide for the very first journey,' he said. 'Someone with sharp eyes to watch for trees and rocks.' Pip puffed out his orange breast. 'I'm your bird!'



So the testing began. Ollie climbed aboard and gripped the wooden steering wheel. The little fan spun, the wings tilted, and with a soft whoosh, the flying boat rose above the water. Pip flew beside it, his bright blue wings catching the sun. 'Straight ahead!' he called. The river stretched out below them, wide and shining. Ollie's heart thumped with excitement.



For a moment, everything was perfect. They glided over the water like a dragonfly. But then a gust of wind pushed the flying boat sideways. It wobbled! Ollie held tight and turned the wheel. 'Whoa there!' he cried. Pip darted around the boat. 'Lean left, Ollie! Lean left!' The boat tipped, then steadied. Ollie let out a big breath. 'That was close!'



Pip kept his sharp eyes on the river ahead. 'Tree branch on the right!' he sang out. Ollie steered quickly, and the flying boat swooped past the leaves. 'Rock below!' Pip called. Ollie pulled a lever, and the boat rose higher, just in time. They were a team now, guide and pilot, working together over the sparkling water. The adventure was just beginning.



But the flying boat still had a problem. Whenever it went too fast, the little fan sputtered and coughed. 'We're slowing down!' Ollie cried. The boat dipped toward the water, wobbling again. Pip fluttered close. 'Can you fix it?' he asked. Ollie pulled a tiny wrench from his apron. 'I can try!' he said. He tightened a loose peg, and the fan hummed back to life.



They flew on, past tall reeds and sleepy turtles sunning on logs. Pip called out warnings and cheers. 'Clear sky ahead! You're doing great!' Ollie smiled and wiped his brow with his paw. But then the boat wobbled again, harder this time. The wings tipped, and the fan whirred. Ollie had to think fast. He turned the wheel and steadied the boat with his strong tail.



'That was a big wobble!' said Pip, fluttering beside him. 'But you fixed it!' Ollie nodded, but he knew the boat needed more work. 'Let's land on that sandy bank,' he said. 'I have an idea.' They glided down, and the flying boat settled softly on the sand. Ollie pulled out his red pencil and made a sketch in the sand. 'We need bigger wings,' he said.



Back in the air, the new wings made a difference. The flying boat soared smoothly, and the fan hummed a happy tune. Pip looped and cheered. 'You did it, Ollie! You really did it!' They flew over the river, watching for trees and rocks. Ollie felt proud. But he knew that testing meant trying again and again, and he was ready for anything.



Suddenly, a dark shape loomed ahead: a tall willow tree with branches hanging low over the water. 'Tree ahead!' Pip called. 'It's blocking the way!' Ollie turned the wheel hard, but the flying boat was too close. The wings wobbled. 'Hold on!' Ollie cried. He pulled a lever, and the boat leaped upward. They skimmed over the leaves, barely touching the top. Pip let out a cheer.



'You made it!' Pip sang, his green scarf flapping. 'That was the best flying I've ever seen!' Ollie laughed, his heart still pounding. 'I couldn't have done it without you, Pip,' he said. 'You're the best guide on the river.' They flew on, the flying boat steady and true. Ollie knew the test wasn't over yet, but he felt braver with his friend beside him.



The sun was sinking low when they turned for home. The flying boat glided over the water, smooth as a swan. Pip flew close, his blue wings glowing in the golden light. 'We tested it well,' he said. 'It wobbled, and you fixed it. That's what inventors do.' Ollie nodded. 'And friends help,' he said. 'Testing is always better with a good friend.'



They landed softly on the riverbank, right where they had started. The flying boat sat quietly, its wings folded. Ollie climbed out and patted its wooden side. 'You did well,' he whispered. Pip landed on a reed and untied his scarf. 'So, what's next?' he asked. Ollie grinned, his amber eyes twinkling. 'Maybe a boat that can dive underwater!'



News of the flying boat traveled fast. Soon, other animals came to see it. The turtles poked their heads from the water, and the frogs croaked with wonder. 'Can we ride it?' they asked. Ollie nodded proudly. 'Yes,' he said. 'It's been tested.' And one by one, the animals took turns, gliding over the river with Ollie at the wheel and Pip flying beside them, cheering.



As the stars came out, Ollie sat with Pip on the riverbank. The flying boat rested behind them, and the red pencil was tucked behind Ollie's ear. 'New inventions need testing,' Ollie said. 'And a good friend to help.' Pip nodded, his green scarf warm around his neck. 'Any time,' he chirped. And they watched the river, happy and ready for the next adventure.