

The Girl and the Little Swan



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On a bright Saturday morning, a girl named Mia puts on her yellow rain boots and her red T-shirt. She tucks a snack into her little green backpack and heads to the lake near her home. The sun sparkles on the water, and the air smells fresh and clean. Mia loves coming here to watch the birds and listen to the gentle lapping waves.



At the edge of the lake, Mia spots a beautiful swan gliding slowly through the water. The swan has pure white feathers and a long, graceful neck curved like an S. Her beak is black and orange, and a slim silver band circles one leg. Mia sits quietly on a flat rock, careful not to make a sound.



Then Mia sees something tiny and fluffy paddling behind the mother swan. It is a little cygnet with soft grey down and tiny stubby wings. Its short neck stretches up as it peeks at the world. Mia smiles. The cygnet stays close to its mother, safe and warm. Mia feels lucky to see such a special family.



The mother swan leads her baby toward a quiet patch of reeds. The cygnet paddles hard, its little black beak just above the water. When they reach the reeds, the mother swan settles down, and the cygnet nestles beside her. Mia watches them rest together, feeling calm and happy. She knows this is their quiet time.



Suddenly, Mia hears footsteps on the path. A tall visitor in a green jacket and glasses hurries toward the water. He has a camera on a strap and wants a closer look. He steps right up to the edge, and the mother swan lifts her head. Her dark eyes watch him, and her wings twitch just a little.



Mia's heart beats fast. She knows the swans need space to feel safe. She stands up and walks over to the visitor. 'Excuse me,' she says politely. 'The swan family needs privacy, just like people do. If we come too close, they might get scared.' The visitor lowers his camera and listens to her kind words.



The visitor looks at the swans, then back at Mia. 'I didn't think of that,' he says. 'I just wanted a good picture.' Mia points to a bench a little farther back. 'We can watch from there,' she says. 'They will stay calm if we keep a respectful distance.' The visitor nods and follows her to the bench.



From the bench, they can see the whole swan family without disturbing them. The mother swan relaxes and tucks her beak into her feathers. The little cygnet peeks out from under her wing, curious and playful. It paddles a tiny circle and then returns to its mother's side. Mia smiles at the visitor. 'See?' she whispers.



The visitor takes a few photos from the bench. 'This is much better,' he says. 'The pictures will be lovely, and the swans are not worried.' Other people walk by and see Mia and the visitor sitting quietly. They stop and ask what they are watching. Mia explains that the swans need space and privacy.



One by one, the visitors move back to the bench. They speak in soft voices and point at the swans. The mother swan glides slowly along the reeds with her cygnet following close behind. Everyone watches with wide eyes and happy smiles. Mia feels proud that she helped the swan family stay safe.



The little cygnet climbs onto a small grassy bank and shakes its fluffy down. It looks like a tiny grey puffball. Mia whispers, 'It's learning to be a swan.' The visitor with the camera smiles. 'Thank you for teaching me,' he says. Mia feels warm inside. She knows that respecting nature makes a big difference.



As the sun climbs higher, more people come to the lake. Mia stands up and speaks to them gently. 'Please stay behind the bench,' she says. 'The swans need quiet and space.' The people listen and sit down. The mother swan stretches her long white neck and looks around. She seems calm and content, and the cygnet rests beside her.



Mia sits back on the bench and watches the swan family. The mother swan glides in a slow circle, her broad wings folded neatly. The cygnet paddles after her, tiny wings flapping. They look peaceful and safe. Mia feels happy that she could help protect them. She knows that wildlife families need privacy, just like people.



The visitor packs up his camera and thanks Mia again. 'I'll remember this,' he says. 'Wild animals need their space.' Mia waves goodbye as he walks away. She stays on the bench a little longer, watching the swans. The lake is quiet, and the air is warm. Mia feels glad she spoke up kindly.



Mia takes a small notebook from her green backpack and draws the swan family. She draws the mother swan with her curved neck and the little cygnet with its fluffy down. Under the drawing, she writes, 'Keep a respectful distance.' She plans to show it to her friends at school so they can help too.



As Mia walks home, she thinks about the swan family. She knows they are safe and calm because everyone kept a respectful distance. She smiles, feeling proud of what she did. The sun shines on her red T-shirt and yellow boots. She will come back tomorrow to watch the swans again, from her quiet bench by the lake.