

The Girl and the Little Goat



Aysel Banu YAVUZAL

The Girl and the Little Goat

Aysel Banu YAVUZAL



Maya lived on a small farm with a big red barn and a garden full of sunflowers. She was seven years old, with warm light-brown skin, a loose black braid, and freckles across her cheeks. In her green satchel, she kept supplies for games. Maya loved to watch the animals and learn what made each one happy. She often said, "Every animal has its own personality."



One sunny morning, Grandma Rose brought home a baby goat named Pip. Pip was knee-high to Maya, with a cream-white coat and a brown patch over one eye. His floppy ears wiggled, and a small brass bell jingled on his red collar. Pip hid behind Grandma Rose and peeked out with his amber eyes. "Let's give him time to feel safe," Grandma Rose said softly.



Maya sat quietly on the grass and watched Pip. Grandma Rose explained, "See how his ears lie flat when he's nervous? And how he sniffs the air? That's his way of asking, 'Is it safe?'" Maya nodded, noticing how Pip's tiny budding horns barely showed. She whispered, "I'll be patient." She wanted to be a good friend, so she decided to let Pip set the pace.



Pip took a small step toward Maya, then another. His little bell went jingle, jingle. Maya stayed very still and held out a leaf of lettuce. "Here you go, little one," she said gently. Pip sniffed the leaf, then nibbled it. His floppy ears lifted just a little. Maya smiled but didn't move too fast. She knew trust takes time.



The next day, Maya tried a game. She rolled a soft ball gently across the grass. Pip jumped back at first, then stretched his neck to sniff it. When the ball stopped, he tapped it with his nose. Maya laughed softly. "You like that?" she asked. Pip did a tiny hop, and his bell jingled. It was the first time he looked bold and playful.



Maya noticed Pip loved gentle chase. She walked slowly in a circle, and Pip followed, kicking up little puffs of dust. When she stopped, he stopped. When she peeked around a hay bale, Pip peeked too. Peekaboo made his floppy ears bounce. "You're a playful goat!" Maya said. She wrote in her notebook: Pip likes peekaboo and gentle chase.



But Pip was also shy with new things. When Maya brought a bright ribbon, Pip skittered away and hid behind the watering can. Maya didn't chase him. She remembered Grandma Rose's words: let him set the pace. She put the ribbon down and sat quietly. After a while, Pip crept out to sniff it. "Good choice," Maya whispered.



Maya wanted more safe games. She gathered smooth stones and made a little maze on the grass. Pip watched from a distance. Then he stepped closer, curious. He nudged a stone with his nose. Maya clapped softly. "You're brave, Pip!" she said. Pip wagged his tiny tail and tried again. The game was simple and quiet, just right for a shy goat.



Grandma Rose came out with her apron pocket full of apple slices. "I see you're reading his body language," she said. "When his ears are forward, he's curious. When they're flat, he needs space." Maya nodded and offered Pip a slice. He took it gently, and his bell chimed. "Kindness and understanding," Grandma Rose said, "make every friendship special."



Maya and Pip played gentle chase around the sunflowers. Then they played peekaboo behind the hay bales. Pip hid behind a bucket and popped out, making Maya giggle. His brown eye patch made him look like a little pirate. Maya invented a new game: she hid apple slices under cups, and Pip nudged the right cup. He was bold and clever now!



One afternoon, a gust of wind blew Maya's hat across the yard. Pip got startled and ran to the corner. Maya didn't rush him. She sat down and sang a soft song. Slowly, Pip came back, step by step. "It's okay," Maya said. "You're safe." Pip leaned against her knee, and his bell gave a tiny jingle. Maya felt warm inside.



Maya realized that Pip's personality was like a puzzle. Some days he was shy; some days he was bold. She made a chart of his favorite games: gentle chase, peekaboo, and the stone maze. She also learned what he didn't like—loud noises and fast moves. "You're a good friend," Maya told him. Pip blinked his amber eyes and nibbled her shoelace.



Grandma Rose watched them from the porch. "You've learned to pay attention to what Pip needs," she said. "That's the secret to any friendship." Maya beamed. She and Pip had built trust with kindness and patience. Now every morning, Pip waited by the gate, jingling his bell. Maya would open her satchel and say, "Ready for our games?"



The two friends played all summer. They invented new games, always safe and gentle. Pip grew a little bigger, but he still loved peekaboo. Maya learned that animals have feelings and personalities, just like people. She wrote in her notebook: "Pip is shy and bold, curious and cautious. And he is my friend."



One evening, Maya sat with Pip on the porch. The sun set behind the sunflowers, and Pip's bell chimed softly as he shifted. "I'm glad I waited for you," Maya said. Pip rested his chin on her knee. Grandma Rose brought out apple slices, and they shared them in the golden light. It was a happy, quiet moment.



Maya learned that kindness means paying attention. When we notice what animals need, we can build trust and share happy times. Every goat—and every friend—has a special personality. Maya smiled at Pip, and Pip blinked back. "You're my best friend," she whispered. And with a jingle of his bell, Pip seemed to say, "You're mine, too."