

The Boy and the Little Gecko



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Miles loved the little geckos that lived near his home. Every morning, he watched them climb the warm garden wall. Their tiny toes stuck to the bricks like magic. He wore his mustard-yellow T-shirt with a green gecko print, grabbed his red backpack, and whispered, 'Good morning, little friends.' The geckos blinked their big dark eyes and scurried into the sunshine.



At school, Miles told his teacher, Ms. Park, about the geckos. She wore round glasses and a teal cardigan, and she listened with a kind smile. 'Geckos are amazing reptiles,' she said. 'Would you like to learn more and share it with the class?' Miles nodded so fast his curly black hair bounced. He couldn't wait to find out everything about these tiny creatures.



After school, Miles sat quietly by the wall with a notebook. He watched a gecko hunt a bug. Zap! Its tongue shot out, quick as a blink. He saw another gecko hide in a warm crack and press its speckled tan body flat against the stone. Miles drew pictures and wrote notes. 'Geckos are patient hunters,' he wrote. 'They love warm spots.' His gap-toothed smile grew wider with every discovery.



The next day, Miles brought his notebook to class. He showed Ms. Park his drawings of sticky toe pads and big dark eyes. 'I want everyone to see how gentle geckos are,' he said. Ms. Park clapped her hands. 'Let's build a classroom habitat exhibit!' she said. 'We can make a safe home for a little gecko to visit.' Miles's eyes sparkled. This was going to be the best project ever.



Miles and Ms. Park planned the exhibit. They would need a glass tank, warm rocks, and plants for hiding. 'Geckos need places to climb and hide,' Miles explained. Ms. Park wrote a list on the board. 'You're the expert,' she said. Miles felt proud. He drew a big poster with a gecko on it and wrote: 'Native Geckos: Our Gentle Helpers.' He couldn't wait to show his friends.



At home, Miles found a smooth rock and a small branch for the tank. He cleaned them carefully. His mom helped him carry them to school. 'You're taking good care of the geckos,' she said. Miles nodded. 'They're not scary,' he said. 'They're helpers. They eat bugs that bother people.' He placed the rock in the tank and imagined a gecko resting there, warm and happy.



In class, Priya gasped when she saw the empty tank. Her high ponytail swung as she leaned closer. 'Are we getting a real gecko?' she asked. Miles nodded. 'A little one will visit,' he said. 'But we must be gentle and quiet.' Priya's star earrings twinkled as she bounced on her toes. 'I can't wait!' she said. 'I've never seen a gecko up close!'



Ms. Park brought the little gecko in a safe container. The class sat in a circle, quiet as mice. She gently placed it in the tank. The gecko was tiny, about as long as a finger. Its sandy tan skin was covered in soft brown speckles, and its big dark eyes looked around. It pressed its sticky toe pads against the glass and climbed up, up, up!



Priya gasped. 'It's climbing the wall!' she whispered. Miles smiled. 'Geckos have special toes,' he explained. 'They can stick to almost anything.' The little gecko reached the top and hung upside down. The class laughed softly. 'Look at its cream belly!' said Priya. The gecko blinked and then scurried to a warm rock. 'It's hiding in its warm spot,' Miles said.



Miles pointed to the gecko's big eyes. 'Geckos hunt at night,' he said. 'Their eyes help them see in the dark.' Just then, a tiny bug flew into the tank. The gecko's head turned. Zap! Its tongue shot out and caught the bug. 'It's a helper!' Miles said. 'Geckos eat pests. They keep our gardens healthy.' The class watched in wonder.



Priya raised her hand. 'I thought reptiles were scary,' she said. 'But this gecko is cute and gentle.' Miles nodded. 'Many people think that,' he said. 'But geckos are shy. They just want to hide and stay warm.' Ms. Park smiled. 'Reptiles deserve understanding,' she said. 'They are important parts of our world.' The class nodded together.



Miles showed his poster. 'We can help geckos by leaving warm spots in our gardens,' he said. 'And we shouldn't chase them or hurt them.' Priya jumped up. 'Let's promise to look out for geckos!' she said. Everyone raised their hands. 'We promise!' they said. The little gecko blinked as if it understood. Miles felt warm inside. His exhibit was a success.



The class made a list of ways to help geckos. They would keep cats away from gecko spots. They would not use bad chemicals in gardens. They would tell others that geckos are helpers. Priya drew a poster with a big gecko and a red heart. Ms. Park hung it on the wall. 'You've all learned so much,' she said. Miles beamed.



At the end of the day, Miles said goodbye to the little gecko. 'You helped us understand,' he whispered. The gecko blinked its big eyes and pressed its sticky toes against the glass. Miles knew it would be safe. He felt happy that his friends now saw geckos the way he did: as gentle, helpful creatures. He couldn't wait to watch them again at home.



Ms. Park put the gecko back in its safe container. 'We'll release it near the garden,' she said. The class walked outside. The little gecko scurried onto a warm rock and disappeared into a crack. 'It's home,' Miles said. Priya smiled. 'We'll look out for it,' she said. Everyone waved goodbye. Miles knew they would always remember the tiny reptile.



Back in class, Ms. Park gave everyone a sticker with a gecko on it. 'You are now Gecko Guardians,' she said. Miles looked at his sticker and smiled his gap-toothed smile. He had shared what he loved, and his friends understood. Reptiles deserve kindness and care, and Miles knew he would always watch over the little geckos near his home.