

The Girl and the Little Duck



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On a bright sunny morning, Maya pulled on her yellow rain boots and blue overalls. Today was a special day. She was going to help at the duck sanctuary for the very first time. Maya loved animals, and her heart felt light as she walked down the path. She carried a small bucket and a net, ready to help in any way she could.



The sanctuary was a peaceful place with tall green trees and a sparkling pond. Ducks of all sizes quacked and waddled around. Maya's eyes opened wide with wonder. A friendly woman named Mrs. Lee greeted her with a warm smile. 'Welcome, Maya! We're so glad you're here,' she said. Maya smiled back, excited to begin her day.



Mrs. Lee showed Maya around the sanctuary. 'Ducks need clean water to stay healthy and happy,' she explained. 'Our pond is their home, and we must keep it fresh.' Maya nodded seriously. She wanted to do a good job. Mrs. Lee handed her a small net and showed her how to scoop out leaves and twigs. Maya felt proud to help.



As Maya worked near the pond, she heard a tiny 'peep, peep.' She looked down and saw a little duck sitting alone on the grass. It was fluffy and yellow, small enough to fit in two hands. Its tiny orange beak and round dark eyes looked up at her. One of its wing feathers was slightly floppy, which made it look extra cute. 'Hello, little one,' Maya whispered softly.



The little duck tilted its head and waddled closer. Maya sat very still so she wouldn't scare it. The duck pecked gently at her boot and then at her net. Maya giggled. 'You're curious, aren't you?' she said. She reached out slowly and the duck let her stroke its soft down. Its round dark eyes blinked happily. A new friendship was beginning.



Maya noticed the little duck's feet were a bit muddy. She looked at the pond and saw some old leaves floating on the surface. 'Your water should be clean,' she said. 'Let's make it nice for you.' She picked up her net and began scooping out the leaves. The duck watched with interest, peeping now and then as if to cheer her on.



Each day after school, Maya came to the sanctuary. She cleaned the pond carefully, removing sticks and old plants. She also brought fresh water for the smaller pools where the ducklings played. The little duck followed her everywhere, waddling behind her yellow boots. Maya tied a tiny blue ribbon around its neck so she could spot it easily. 'Now you look extra special,' she said with a smile.



One afternoon, Maya saw that the pond was getting murky again. Some bigger ducks had splashed mud into the water. The little duck looked at the dirty water and let out a sad little quack. Maya frowned. 'Don't worry,' she said. 'I'll fix it.' She worked hard, scooping and cleaning until the water sparkled again. It took a long time, but she didn't give up.



Mrs. Lee came to see how Maya was doing. She smiled when she saw the clean pond. 'You've done a wonderful job,' she said. 'Clean water is so important for our ducks. They need it to stay healthy and happy.' Maya beamed. She felt proud of her hard work. The little duck quacked loudly, as if saying thank you. Maya laughed and gave it a gentle pat.



Maya and the little duck spent every afternoon together. She would sit by the pond and the duck would swim close to her. Sometimes it would splash its tiny orange feet, making little ripples. Maya would tell it about her day. The duck would tilt its head and listen, as if it understood every word. They were becoming the best of friends.



One day, the little duck seemed a bit quiet. It didn't want to swim. Maya looked closely and saw that the water had some old food floating in it. She knew that wasn't good for the duck. 'You need clean water,' she said. 'I'll make it fresh for you.' She grabbed her bucket and net and got to work right away.



Maya cleaned the pond from edge to edge. She scooped out every bit of old food and stirred the water gently so it would stay fresh. The little duck watched from the bank, waiting patiently. When Maya finished, the water was clear and cool. The duck waddled to the edge and slipped in with a happy splash. It swam in circles, quacking with joy.



The little duck splashed and dove, its fluffy yellow down glistening with water droplets. It flapped its slightly floppy wing and paddled in happy circles. Maya clapped her hands. 'You're so happy now!' she cheered. The duck swam to her and shook its tail, sending tiny splashes onto her boots. Maya laughed out loud. Her hard work had made a big difference.



From that day on, Maya took extra care of the pond. She checked the water every morning and cleaned it whenever it needed it. The little duck grew stronger and happier. Its feathers became smooth and bright. Other ducks came to the clean pond too, and they all seemed to smile. Maya knew that clean water was the key to their health.



Mrs. Lee gave Maya a special badge with a duck on it. 'You're an official duck helper now,' she said. Maya wore it proudly on her green apron. The little duck swam close, showing off its blue ribbon. Maya felt a warm glow inside. She had learned that animals need the right home to feel safe, and that kindness makes a big difference.



As the sun set, Maya sat by the pond with the little duck resting beside her. The water sparkled in the golden light. 'We'll always be friends,' Maya whispered. The duck quacked softly and snuggled against her boot. Maya smiled, feeling happy and proud. She knew that with clean water and lots of love, her little duck would always be safe and joyful.