

The Boy and the Little Butterfly



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Every morning, before school, a boy named Sam ran into his garden with a round magnifying glass in his hand. He loved watching the butterflies flutter from flower to flower. His yellow t-shirt and blue shorts were always dusty from kneeling in the dirt. Sam had warm light-brown skin, curly dark-brown hair, and big round brown eyes that noticed every tiny wing.



Sam sat very still beside the pink roses and waited. A tiny orange butterfly landed on a leaf near his green sneakers. It had black edges on its wings and little white spots, like tiny stars. Sam held his breath and looked through his magnifying glass. "Hello, little butterfly," he whispered. The butterfly opened and closed its wings, as if it were waving back.



All spring, the little butterfly came to visit Sam's garden. Sam drew pictures of it in a small notebook from his canvas satchel. He counted the flowers it liked best and wrote down every one. "Butterflies need flowers," he told his mom at dinner. "And flowers need bees and butterflies too." His freckled nose wrinkled as he thought hard about this.



One sunny Monday, Sam's teacher, Mrs. Lee, showed the class a picture of a pollinator. She wore her green cardigan and thin glasses, and she smiled warmly. "Pollinators are bees, butterflies, and other little creatures," she said. "They carry pollen between flowers so plants can make seeds and fruit. But they need healthy places to live, with lots of flowers."



Sam's hand shot up. "What happens if there are no flowers?" he asked. Mrs. Lee put down her watering can. "Then the pollinators have nowhere to find food," she said gently. "Many gardens are disappearing." Sam looked out the window at the plain, dusty schoolyard. It was gray and empty, with not one single flower in sight.



After school, Sam walked home slowly, kicking a small stone. He thought about the little butterfly and its white-spotted wings. Where would it go if all the flowers were gone? In his own garden, the roses were blooming bright, and the little orange butterfly was fluttering happily. But the schoolyard had nothing to offer a hungry pollinator.



At dinner, Sam pushed his peas around his plate. "Mrs. Lee says pollinators need healthy habitats," he said. "Our schoolyard is just dirt and old pavement." His big brown eyes lit up suddenly. He sat up straight and nearly knocked over his cup. "What if we plant flowers at school?" he said. "Lots and lots of colorful flowers!"



The next morning, Sam hurried to Mrs. Lee before class even started. "Can we make a flowering garden in the schoolyard?" he asked, holding his magnifying glass tight. Mrs. Lee smiled her friendly smile. "That is a wonderful idea, Sam," she said. "A pollinator garden. The whole class can help, and I have seeds and a watering can."



Sam told his best friend Maya at recess. Maya had deep brown skin, black hair in two puffy buns, and a wide happy grin. "A butterfly garden?" she cheered, hopping on one sneaker. "I love it! I have a small trowel at home. I can dig the holes!" She laughed her funny laugh, and Sam laughed too. They shook hands on the plan, fingers dusty and dirty.



That afternoon, the whole class marched outside with shovels and seed packets. Maya dug little holes with her trowel, her denim overalls getting muddy. Sam's green sneakers were soon covered in soil. Mrs. Lee walked between the children, pouring water from her watering can. "Pat the soil gently," she told them. "Seeds need care, just like tiny friends."



Day after day, the children watered and waited. Sam checked the garden every morning with his magnifying glass, hoping to see a green sprout. Some days he felt worried. What if nothing grew? Maya brought extra water and told silly jokes to cheer him up. "Plants are slow," she said. "Like my little brother." Then one morning, tiny green leaves pushed up through the dirt.



The sprouts grew taller, and soon buds appeared. Then one bright day, the first flower opened wide, a happy yellow bloom. Sam gasped. "It worked!" he shouted. The children ran to the schoolyard to see. There were red flowers, purple flowers, and orange flowers, nodding in the breeze. Mrs. Lee clapped her hands together, her glasses shining in the sun.



That afternoon, something wonderful happened. A tiny orange butterfly with black edges and white spots fluttered over the school wall. It landed on a yellow flower right beside Sam. "It's you!" Sam whispered, his heart thumping. The little butterfly waved its delicate antennae. It seemed to say hello to every single bloom, one after another, as if it had found a treasure.



Then more visitors came. Bees buzzed in, fuzzy and busy.
Another butterfly arrived, then another, wings bright as paint.
The little orange butterfly fluttered from flower to flower,
leading the way. Sam and Maya stood very still and watched
the busy, buzzing, fluttering garden. "Our little butterfly
brought its friends," Maya whispered, grinning her wide grin.



The whole school came out to see the new garden. Children pointed at the bees and butterflies, and everyone smiled. Sam held his magnifying glass up to a white-spotted wing. "Pollinators just need flowers and a healthy place to live," he told the class. "And we made one!" Mrs. Lee beamed at him. "You did," she said. "Small hands can do big things."



Now Sam and the little butterfly share a garden at home and a garden at school. Maya waters the flowers every week, and the children keep planting more. Sam still draws butterflies in his notebook, one after another. Sometimes he watches the tiny orange wings and smiles. "Even kids can help nature," he says. "One flower at a time."