

# The Boy and the Puffins



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Finn stood at the edge of the boat, his red raincoat flapping in the salty wind. His green rubber boots tapped the deck as the island grew closer. Puffins! Hundreds of them! They bobbed on the waves like little orange-beaked clowns. Finn grinned, his gap-toothed smile wide. Today was going to be the best day ever.



A friendly ranger named Mrs. Tamsin met Finn at the dock. Her silver bun was neat under her wide-brimmed hat, and her round glasses sparkled. 'Welcome to Puffin Island!' she said. 'I'm here to guide you and keep the wildlife safe.' Finn nodded, his ginger hair sticking out from under his hood. He couldn't wait to explore.



Mrs. Tamsin pointed to a sandy path lined with small wooden posts. 'Puffins nest in burrows all over this island,' she explained. 'We must stay on the marked paths so we don't step on their homes.' Finn looked at the puffins waddling nearby. One had a silver ring on its leg. He didn't want to hurt them. 'I'll stay on the path,' he promised.



As they walked, Finn saw a puffin peeking out of its burrow. Its orange beak was striped with yellow and blue-grey, and its round white face patches made it look like a clown. 'Hello, little puffin,' Finn whispered. The puffin tilted its head, calm but wary. Finn kept his distance, remembering the rule. It felt good to watch without scaring it.



Further along, Finn noticed a family stepping off the path to get a closer look. The puffins fluttered nervously. 'Oh dear,' said Mrs. Tamsin, hurrying over. 'Please stay on the path! The birds get scared.' The family apologized and stepped back. Finn thought, 'Some kids just don't know. Maybe I can help.'



Back at the visitor center, Finn had an idea. 'Mrs. Tamsin, could I make a guide for kids?' he asked. 'Something fun that shows how to watch puffins without disturbing them.' Mrs. Tamsin's eyes crinkled with a smile. 'What a wonderful idea, Finn! I'll help you.' She handed him paper and crayons.



Finn drew a puffin with a big orange beak. He wrote simple tips: 'Stay on the path,' 'Watch quietly,' 'Don't feed the birds.' He added friendly pictures of kids with binoculars and smiling puffins. Mrs. Tamsin helped with the words. Soon, they had a colorful guide. Finn's backpack, with its puffin sticker, held the first copy.



The next day, a girl named Lila arrived on the boat. She wore a yellow raincoat and her hair in two puffy buns. Finn handed her his guide. 'This shows how to keep the puffins safe,' he said. Lila read it carefully, her dimpled smile growing. 'Cool! I'll follow the paths!' she said. She tucked the guide into her pocket.



Lila walked along the path, pointing out puffins to her little brother. 'Look, but stay here,' she said. 'The guide says so.' Other kids saw Lila and asked for guides too. Finn handed them out, feeling proud. The puffins stayed calm near their burrows, and everyone got to see them up close—from the path, of course.



Mrs. Tamsin watched the children following the paths. 'You've made a real difference, Finn,' she said. 'Responsible tourism helps wildlife, and you've taught that to others.' Finn's freckled cheeks turned pink. He looked at the puffin with the silver ring, still near its burrow. It seemed to nod at him. Finn felt a warm glow inside.



That afternoon, a puffin waddled right up to the edge of the path. It was so close Finn could see its dark eyes and the blue-grey stripe on its beak. The puffin didn't seem scared at all. It just stood there, calm and curious. Finn held his breath. 'Hello again,' he whispered. The puffin blinked and stayed put.



Finn realized that when kids stay on the path, the puffins feel safe. They don't fly away or hide. That means everyone can enjoy watching them. Finn smiled. His guide was working! More and more children were using it, and the puffins were happy. Finn felt like a real wildlife protector.



Mrs. Tamsin gave Finn a special badge. 'For helping protect our puffins,' she said. Finn pinned it to his raincoat. It showed a puffin on a path. Lila and the other kids clapped. 'You're a hero!' Lila said. Finn shook his head. 'No, we all are—because we followed the paths.' Everyone cheered.



On the last day, Finn stood at the dock, looking back at the island. The puffins were bobbing on the waves, their orange beaks bright against the blue sea. Finn felt proud. He had helped protect the puffins and their island home. And he had made new friends, too. His guide would keep helping kids even after he left.



Mrs. Tamsin waved goodbye. 'Come back anytime, Finn. And thank you for making our island a better place for puffins and people.' Finn waved back, his green eyes shining. He knew he would never forget the puffins—or the lesson he learned. Responsible tourism helps wildlife, and even kids can make a big difference.



As the boat sailed away, Finn opened his notebook to a new page. He drew a puffin and wrote: 'How to help wildlife wherever you go.' He couldn't wait to share it. The puffins on the island would always be safe if visitors followed the paths. And Finn would always remember that small actions can make a big difference. The end.