

The Parrot's Quiet Day



Çınar BİBER

The Parrot's Quiet Day

Çınar BİBER



In the green heart of the forest, morning light spilled through the leaves like golden honey. A small parrot with emerald feathers and a scarlet chest perched on a branch, chattering to everyone and everything. He greeted the bees, the breeze, and every passing butterfly. His name was Pip, and his voice was the loudest, happiest sound in the whole forest.



Pip's very best friend was Tuck, a tortoise with a domed shell patterned in olive and brown. Tuck wore a little straw hat with a red band and carried a small satchel of drawing sticks. He moved slowly and spoke softly, but his amber eyes always sparkled. Every morning, Pip zipped down to Tuck's favorite sunny stone to share all the news.



On this particular morning, Pip woke with a tickle in his throat. He opened his beak to sing his usual sunrise song, but only a tiny squeak came out. He tried again. Nothing but a raspy whisper. Pip's dark-brown eyes went wide with worry. He flapped his emerald wings and hurried to find Tuck, a blue ribbon fluttering on his leg.



Tuck was munching a leaf beside the pond when Pip landed on his shell, trembling. Pip opened his beak, but only a sad little croak came out. 'Oh dear,' said Tuck gently. 'Your voice has gone quiet.' Pip nodded, his long tail drooping. He had never felt so small and lost in all his life.



Tuck smiled his slow, kind smile. 'Do not worry, little friend. There are many ways to talk without a voice.' He tapped his shell with one sturdy foot. Pip tilted his head, curious. He had never thought about talking without words. It seemed impossible. How could anyone share anything without a voice to carry it?



Tuck picked up a thin stick from his satchel and drew a round shape in the soft sand. Then he added little wings and a tail. Pip blinked. It was a picture of himself! Pip hopped with excitement, his yellow wing tips flashing. He grabbed another stick and drew a wobbly circle with a shell. Tuck laughed warmly.



Next, Tuck showed Pip how to speak with gestures. He lifted one foot high and pointed toward the pond. Pip understood at once. He flapped one wing and pointed at the tall mango tree. Tuck nodded and slowly turned that way. Pip's dark-brown eyes sparkled. This was like a game, a secret language just between the two of them.



They walked to the pond together, Tuck slow and steady, Pip hopping alongside. At the water's edge, Tuck tapped his hat twice and pointed at a dragonfly. Pip watched closely. The dragonfly hovered, dipped, and skimmed the surface, leaving tiny rings. Pip had seen dragonflies a hundred times, but he had never really watched one.



Pip realized something strange and wonderful. Without his own chatter filling the air, he could hear so much more. He heard the frogs croaking softly among the reeds. He heard the wind whispering through the tall grass. He heard the gentle plip-plop of water drops falling from a leaf. The forest was full of quiet sounds he had never noticed.



Tuck drew more pictures in the sand. A fish, a flower, a wiggly worm. Pip guessed each one, and when he guessed right, Tuck clapped his sturdy front feet. When Pip guessed wrong, he shook his head and tried again. They laughed without a single word being spoken. Pip's blue ribbon bobbed as he hopped with joy.



As afternoon warmed the forest, Pip spotted something new: a tiny bird he had never seen before. It had soft gray feathers and a speckled belly. Usually Pip would have squawked a loud hello and scared it away. But today he stayed perfectly still and watched. The little bird hopped closer, pecking for seeds.



Pip wanted to tell Tuck about the gray bird, but he had no voice. So he did something clever. He fluttered his wings in tiny flutters and pecked gently at the ground. Tuck's amber eyes crinkled with delight. 'A new bird is pecking for seeds,' he said softly. Pip nodded so hard his tail fanned out like a fan.



Then the little gray bird did something surprising. It hopped right onto Tuck's shell and sang a tiny, tinkling song. Pip held his breath. The song was small and sweet and clear, and it filled the quiet afternoon like a gentle breeze. Pip listened with his whole heart. He had never heard anything so lovely in his life.



Tuck smiled wisely. 'You see, Pip? When we are quiet, we hear the most beautiful things.' Pip looked at his friend, then at the little gray bird, then at the golden forest around them. Being quiet was not so bad after all. His voice was gone, but the world was still singing, and now he could truly hear it.



As the sun sank low and painted the sky pink and orange, Pip felt a warm glow inside his chest. He had drawn pictures, told stories with his wings, and watched the world more closely than ever before. He had shared a whole day with his best friend, and not one word had been needed.



Pip perched on Tuck's shell as the stars began to twinkle. He leaned his head against his friend's warm, wrinkled neck. Tuck hummed softly, and Pip listened. Then, deep in his throat, a tiny sound bubbled up. It was small, but it was his voice, slowly coming back. Pip smiled. Tomorrow he would talk and talk. But today, the quiet had been a gift, and listening had been just as important as speaking.