

The Boy and the Starling



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On a windy hill at the edge of town, a boy named Sam stood very still. He wore a mustard-yellow jumper with a tiny silver bird pin on it. His dark brown eyes watched the sky. Every evening, starlings came to dance above the trees. Sam loved how they swirled and swooped together, like one big team.



Sam's short curly black hair bounced as he ran up the hill after school. He always carried a little notebook. When the starlings flew, he drew their shapes. One bird dipped, and another rose. They turned and twisted, making patterns in the sky. Sam smiled his gap-toothed smile. 'How do they all know where to go?' he wondered.



At school, Sam told his best friend Mira about the starlings. Mira had two puffy hair buns with a daisy clip and a dimpled grin. 'They move like a dance!' she said. Sam nodded. 'They fly together, turning and swooping as one big team.' Mira twirled around. 'Can we do that?' she asked. Sam's eyes lit up. 'Maybe we can!'



The next morning, Sam brought his notebook to class. Mrs Pelt, the teacher, wore her long teal cardigan and round green glasses. 'What have you got there, Sam?' she asked. Sam showed his drawings of the starlings' patterns. 'They dance together,' he said. 'Can we try?' Mrs Pelt smiled warmly. 'What a lovely idea!'



The children pushed the desks to the sides of the classroom. Mira jumped up first. 'Show us, Sam!' she said. Sam stood in the middle. 'First, we spread our arms like wings,' he said. Everyone spread their arms. 'Then we swoop down low.' The children dipped. 'And then we swirl around.' They spun. It was fun, but a bit messy.



Toby, the smallest in the class, was clumsy. He wore a green hoodie with a starling print and yellow wellington boots. He tried to swoop, but he tripped over his own feet. 'I can't do it,' he mumbled. Mira gave him a big smile. 'You can! We'll help you.' She took his hand. Sam showed him how to bend his knees. 'Try again, Toby.'



Mrs Pelt clapped her hands. 'Let's be like the starlings,' she said. 'They all move together, not on their own.' She blew her wooden bird whistle. The children listened. 'When I whistle, we all swoop at the same time.' They practiced. At first, some went left and some went right. But they kept trying, and soon they began to move as one.



Sam watched his friends. 'Starlings make shapes,' he said. 'Let's make a big circle.' The children held hands and swirled into a circle. Then they dipped and rose, like a wave. Toby forgot to be shy. He swooped with everyone else. 'I did it!' he shouted. His cowlick of blond hair bounced. Everyone laughed and clapped.



Mira had an idea. 'Let's make a star shape!' she said. The children stood in a circle and stretched their arms up and out. They made a star with their bodies. Then they spun and swooped again. Sam felt happy. 'It's like the starlings in the sky!' he said. Mrs Pelt watched from the corner, her kind green eyes shining.



The children practiced every day. They learned to twist and turn together. When one child dipped, the others dipped too. When one swirled, the others swirled. They were like a big team. Toby was no longer clumsy. He moved with the group. 'This is the best dance ever!' he said. The classroom was full of joy and beautiful patterns.



One rainy afternoon, Mrs Pelt said, 'Let's show the whole school our starling dance.' Sam felt nervous. 'What if we make a mistake?' Mira squeezed his hand. 'We're a team. We'll do it together.' The children practiced one more time. They swooped and spun and made shapes with their arms and feet. Sam took a deep breath. 'Together,' he said.



The other classes came to watch. Sam stood in front. He raised his arms like wings. The children followed. They swooped low, then rose high. They swirled and twisted, making a star, then a circle, then a wave. Toby moved perfectly. Mira giggled with delight. The teachers clapped. The children bowed, their faces shining with pride.



Mrs Pelt blew her bird whistle. 'You were wonderful!' she said. 'You moved together like real starlings.' Sam looked at his friends. 'We made something beautiful,' he said. 'Because we worked together.' Mira hugged him. 'Cooperation creates extraordinary patterns!' she said. Everyone cheered. The classroom was filled with happiness.



After school, Sam ran up the hill to watch the real starlings. This time, Mira and Toby came too. They watched the birds swirl and dance across the sky. 'They're just like us,' Toby said. Sam smiled his gap-toothed smile. 'Yes,' he said. 'They fly together, and we dance together.' The three friends stood hand in hand, watching the starlings.



That night, Sam lay in bed and thought about the day. He touched his silver bird pin. He remembered how everyone helped each other. Toby learned to swoop. Mira led the swirls. Mrs Pelt guided them. And Sam shared his idea. Together, they made a dance full of joy and teamwork. He felt warm inside.



The next morning, Sam brought a new drawing to class. It showed the children dancing like starlings. Mrs Pelt put it on the wall. 'Let's remember,' she said, 'that when we work together, we can create something truly wonderful.' The children nodded. They knew it was true. And every day, they danced like starlings, together.