

The Boy and the Toad



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In a little house with a big garden, there lived a boy with a wide red sun hat. His skin was warm light-brown, and his dark brown eyes were always wide open, watching everything. He wore a moss-green t-shirt and small brown rubber boots. Every morning, he ran outside to see what was new in the garden. Most of all, he loved the pond at the bottom of the garden, where the toads lived.



The boy had short wavy dark brown hair and a few freckles across his nose. He smiled a small gap-toothed smile whenever he saw a toad. He would kneel by the pond for a long time, very still and very quiet. The toads had bumpy olive-brown skin and plump round bodies. Their golden eyes with horizontal pupils blinked slowly at him. They were shy, but they did not hop away.



All spring, the boy watched the toads. He saw them hop out of the pond and hide under wet leaves. He saw them dig into the soft mud. 'Where do you sleep?' he whispered. The toads did not answer, but they seemed to be looking for something. The boy decided to find out what they needed. He put on his red hat and went to explore.



One warm afternoon, the boy noticed the toads hopping around the garden, looking restless. The sun was hot, and the ground was dry. The toads needed a cool, damp place to rest. 'You need a shelter,' the boy said softly. 'A safe place to hide and sleep.' He looked around the garden and thought about what he could build.



The boy walked to the pond and found a quiet corner beside it. 'This is the perfect spot,' he said. 'It's close to the water, and it's shady.' He began to gather things he would need. He collected smooth stones from the path, dry leaves from under the bushes, and soft green moss from the old tree stump. His red hat bobbed as he worked.



First, the boy piled the stones into a low wall. He left a small opening at the front. 'That will be the door,' he said. Next, he laid the dry leaves on the ground inside to make a soft floor. Then he pressed the soft moss on top of the stones. The moss made a cozy roof. The shelter looked like a little green hill beside the pond.



When the shelter was finished, the boy sat back and smiled. 'It's small,' he said, 'but it's just right for toads.' He hoped the toads would like it. He waited and watched. The garden was quiet. A dragonfly zoomed over the pond. The boy did not move. He just watched and waited.



The first toad came at dusk. It hopped slowly across the grass, its golden eyes blinking. It stopped at the opening of the shelter. The boy held his breath. The toad looked inside. Then it hopped in! The boy's heart thumped with joy. 'It works!' he whispered. 'The shelter works!' He felt proud of his little corner.



Soon more toads came. They hopped out of the pond and crossed the garden. One by one, they found the shelter. Some hid under the moss. Some dug into the soft leaves. The boy watched them settle in. 'You are safe now,' he said. 'You can sleep here whenever you need.' The toads seemed content. Their bumpy skin glistened in the evening light.



Every day after that, the boy checked the shelter. He made sure the moss was damp and the leaves were dry. He added a few more stones to keep the walls strong. Sometimes he found a toad sleeping inside. He never touched it. He just smiled and tiptoed away. His garden was becoming a happy home for many creatures.



One morning, the boy saw something new. A tiny toadlet, no bigger than his thumbnail, sat on a stone near the shelter. It was a baby toad! The boy's eyes opened wide. 'You were born here,' he whispered. 'This is your home.' He felt a warm glow inside. His small shelter was helping the toads in a big way.



The boy told his friends about the shelter. 'You can make one too,' he said. 'All you need are stones, leaves, and moss.' His friends wanted to help. They built shelters in their own gardens. The boy felt happy. He had learned that even a small wildlife-friendly space can make a difference. And he had made a difference for the toads.



The boy sat beside the pond, wearing his red hat and moss-green t-shirt. He watched the toads hop in and out of the shelter. They were no longer shy. They seemed to trust him. He felt proud of the cozy corner he had made. 'Thank you for letting me help,' he said to the toads. The garden buzzed and hummed around him.



As the sun set, the boy went inside. He knew the toads were safe in their shelter. He dreamed of the pond and the garden. He dreamed of bumpy olive-brown toads with golden eyes. He dreamed of helping more creatures. In the morning, he would check on his shelter again. He would always watch over his garden friends.



The boy learned that wildlife-friendly spaces matter. A few stones, some leaves, and soft moss can make a big difference. The toads thrived in the garden, and the boy felt proud of his small part in it. He knew that even a little kindness can help nature grow. And he smiled his gap-toothed smile, happy to have made a home for the toads.



And so, beside the pond, the little shelter stood. The toads hopped in and out, finding rest and safety. The boy watched them with joy, knowing he had helped. He learned that even a small space can be a home. And he learned that caring for wildlife makes the whole garden a happier place. The end.