

The Girl and the Rescue Goat



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Mia loved helping at her gran's farm. One sunny morning, Gran led her to a small pen. Inside stood a little goat with creamy white fur and soft grey patches. The goat had floppy ears, amber eyes, and one black spot on his nose. He wore a blue collar with a round brass tag. "This is Pip," Gran said. "He's a rescue goat, and he's very shy."



Mia's eyes grew wide with wonder. She wanted to hug Pip right away. But Gran gently held her back. "Not yet," Gran said. "Pip needs to feel safe first. Trust takes time." Mia nodded. She pulled on her green garden gloves. Her yellow rubber boots squished in the mud. "I can be patient," she said. "I'll show him."



Gran showed Mia how to stand still and quiet. "Move slowly," Gran said. "Stay calm. Let Pip come to you." Mia practiced safe handling. She held her hands low and didn't reach out. Pip peeked from behind a hay bale. His floppy ears twitched. Mia waited. She didn't rush. Pip took one tiny step closer.



Pip sniffed the air. He looked at Mia with big amber eyes. Then he turned and trotted away. Mia felt a little sad. "He doesn't like me," she said. Gran smiled. "He doesn't know you yet. That's all." Mia thought for a moment. "Then I'll find a way to show him I'm friendly," she said. "Something fun!"



Mia had an idea. She filled a sturdy bucket with hay and hid apple slices inside. She set it in the pen and stepped back. Pip watched from afar. Slowly, he crept closer. He sniffed the bucket. Then he nibbled the hay and found a sweet apple slice. His ears perked up. Mia clapped her hands softly. "Enrichment games!" she whispered.



The next day, Mia made a puzzle. She hung a rope from a post and tied a cabbage leaf to it. Pip had to stretch and nudge to reach the treat. At first, he was unsure. Mia stayed calm and still. She moved slowly, never crowding him. Soon Pip was batting the cabbage leaf with his nose. He looked almost happy.



Mia also played hide-and-seek with treats. She placed apple slices under small piles of straw. Pip loved searching for them. His little tail wagged. He even gave a tiny hop. Mia laughed. "You found it!" she cheered. Gran watched from the gate. "You're doing great," she said. "Safe handling and fun games—that's the way."



Each day, Mia visited Pip. She always moved slowly and spoke in a soft voice. She wore her green gloves and stood quietly. Pip began to expect her. He would look up when he heard her boots. One afternoon, he walked right up to her. He sniffed her glove. Mia held her breath. Then Pip licked her hand.



Mia's heart felt warm and bubbly. "He licked me!" she whispered to Gran. Gran nodded. "He's starting to trust you," she said. Mia wanted to hug Pip, but she remembered safe handling. She didn't grab him. She just stood still and let Pip decide. Pip stayed close for a long, quiet moment.



Mia invented a new game with a big cardboard box. She cut holes in it and dropped treats inside. Pip had to poke his nose through the holes to find them. It was like a puzzle box! Pip loved it. He nudged and nuzzled and wiggled his ears. Mia giggled. "You're so clever, Pip!" she said. Pip looked up and blinked his amber eyes.



One windy day, a loose gate banged loudly. Pip got scared. He dashed to the far corner and trembled. Mia didn't run after him. She stayed calm. She crouched down low and waited. "It's okay, Pip," she said softly. "I'm right here." Slowly, Pip lifted his head. He took a shaky step toward her. Then another.



Pip came close and pressed his nose against Mia's shoulder. She felt his warm breath. She stayed perfectly still. "That's it," she murmured. "You're safe." Pip let out a little sigh. His floppy ears relaxed. Mia's green glove rested gently on her knee. She didn't grab him. She just let him lean. And Pip chose to stay.



From that day, Pip followed Mia everywhere. He trotted behind her yellow boots. He nibbled her overall straps. He even tried to climb into her lap. Mia laughed. "You're my friend now," she said. Gran brought apple slices for a treat. "Trust takes time," Gran said. "And you gave him all the time he needed."



Mia and Pip played enrichment games every day. They did the puzzle box and the cabbage swing. Mia made a maze of hay bales for Pip to explore. Pip hopped through it with joy. He wasn't shy anymore. He was playful and curious. And he always came running when he heard Mia's voice.



One evening, Mia sat in the pen with Pip. The sun was setting gold. Pip rested his head on her knee. Mia stroked his soft grey patches. "I'm glad you're here," she whispered. Pip gave a tiny bleat. It sounded like he agreed. Mia smiled her gap-toothed smile. She felt proud and happy.



Gran came to sit beside them. "You learned something important," she said. "Safe handling, patience, and play can help a shy animal feel at home." Mia nodded. She looked at Pip, who was now dozing peacefully. "And trust takes time," she said. "But it's worth it." Pip opened one amber eye and flicked his floppy ears, as if to say yes.