

**Lily and the Butterfly Bush (FK 3.6)**

When I was four, I saw my mom swat a fly.



“Stop!” I shouted. “That fly might have a family!” After that, my mom caught flies with a cup and let them go outside. Her friend told me I was practicing “kindness,” which means not hurting any living thing. She said that in many places, even small insects matter.

One sunny day, Mom and I went to a garden store. I spotted a butterfly bush with bright purple flowers. “Can we get it?” I asked. “We can attract butterflies!”



Mom looked a bit unsure. “Where would we plant it? We live in an apartment.”

“We can use a big pot!” I replied, pulling out my allowance. I had saved it for a toy, but I wanted the butterfly bush more.

Mom sighed. “Okay, but you have to take care of it.”

At home, we planted the bush in a big pot. I tied some bamboo sticks together to make a little trellis. By the end of summer, the bush grew tall, and everyone

noticed the butterflies dancing around it.

In the fall, we trimmed the bush a little, just like the gardening book said. It looked small, but I knew it would grow back.

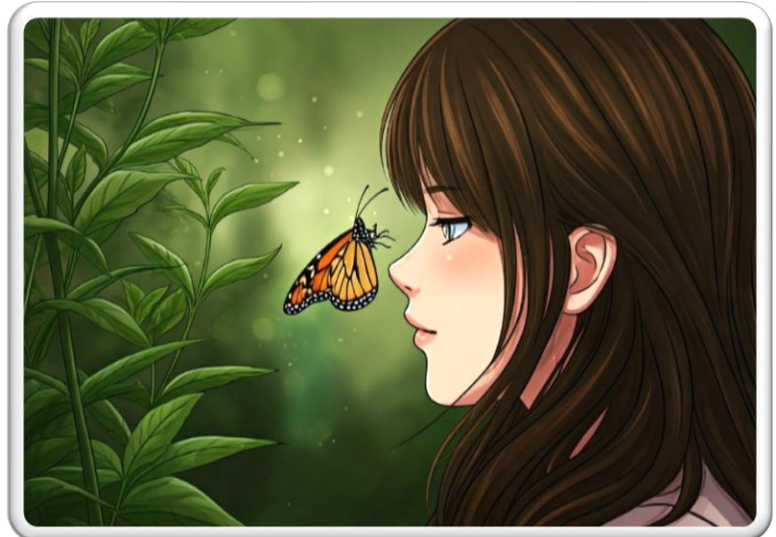
In spring, bright green leaves sprouted. The bush grew quickly, and soon it was full of flowers. One day, a beautiful orange butterfly landed on my nose. I whispered, “Hello, lovely friend.” She stayed for a moment, and I felt so happy.

Later, I told Mom about the butterfly. “What a sweet story!” she said.

One morning, I noticed that the leaves looked chewed and ragged. I ran to Mom. “Something’s wrong with the bush!”

We called the gardening expert. He said caterpillars were eating the leaves. He suggested using a spray to get rid of them.

“No way!” I said.



I looked up the caterpillars online. I found a picture of the orange butterfly. She had laid eggs on my bush!

I felt sad. I didn't want to hurt the caterpillars, but I wanted to save my bush. Mom and I decided to carefully remove the caterpillars and place them in a safe spot.



A week later, new green leaves began to grow. One day, I saw the orange butterfly again. She landed on the bush, ready to lay more eggs.

I found a jar and gently caught her. I added some leaves to keep her happy. That day, I caught two more butterflies.

The next morning, I took the jar to a nearby park. I opened the lid and let the butterflies go. "Be free," I whispered.

Back home, I kept moving the caterpillars to the park. The flowers bloomed beautifully, and I sat under the bush, thinking of the butterflies and hoping they liked their new home.

As the days went by, I kept caring for the bush. Each time I saw a caterpillar, I gently placed it in a jar and took it to the park. I imagined the butterflies fluttering happily, far away from my bush.

The butterfly bush grew stronger, and soon the flowers were bright and fragrant. I picked some blooms and shared them with Mom. "They smell wonderful!" she said, smiling at me.

One afternoon, while I was sitting under the bush, I noticed something special. An orange butterfly fluttered by and landed softly on a flower. I watched her for a moment, feeling

peaceful. I knew she was one of the butterflies I had helped.



I realized that by caring for the bush and the butterflies, I was practicing kindness, just like Mom's friend had said. I learned that sometimes, we must find ways to help all living things, even when it's tough.

As summer turned to fall, I continued to care for the butterfly bush. It became my favorite spot, a reminder of the butterflies and the kindness we can show to all creatures. Every time I saw a butterfly flutter by, I smiled, knowing I had made a difference.

