

Tania's New Bicycle



By Kanika G

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Tania was now quite adept at riding her tricycle. Unfortunately, she was getting a little too big for it. Mama and Papa thought it was time for her to graduate to a bicycle. On Sunday, Mama and Papa took Tania to the cycle store.



It was a huge store, with a large selection of cycles. There were big cycles and small cycles of many different colors. Some had bells, and some had pretty bicycle baskets attached.



Tania and her parents looked around the store for a while. Tania tried out a few different cycles. They all finally agreed on a very cute, blue, small children's bicycle. It was perfectly suited for Tania.



Mama also bought some training wheels and a helmet, so Tania could use the bike safely. When they got back from the store, Tania helped Papa attach the training wheels to the cycle with a screwdriver. Then she put on her helmet and got on the bike.



With the training wheels on, the bicycle was no harder to ride than the tricycle she had before. Tania had a wonderful time riding around the housing society. The bike had a bell that would make a loud **RRRINNG!** sound, and Tania enjoyed using it before turning a corner.

After about a week, Tania seemed quite comfortable with the new bike, and Mama thought it was time to take off the training wheels. When Tania got on the bike without any training wheels, it wobbled a lot. Mama assured her that she would hold on behind. But once Tania seemed to have got her balance, Mama let go.

Unfortunately, it was a big step, and as soon as Tania realized Mama was not holding, she got scared, lost her balance and fell off. The area in the

housing society where she was riding, was a hard paved surface. Tania bruised her arms and her knees were scraped and bled. But worse than the pain from the wounds, was the fright and shock. Tania cried miserably. She felt betrayed by Mama and the cycle she had grown so fond of.



Mama took her upstairs, cleaned her wounds, and put band-aids on them. The wounds healed over the next week, but Tania would not touch her bike again.

Mama realized she had pushed Tania too hard and felt really bad about it. She wondered what she should do. She gave it some thought and came up with an idea. But first she let a week pass by to give Tania some time to recover.

Then one day, Mama took Tania to a nearby park for a picnic. It was a lovely park with beautiful trees and wide expanse of grass for Tania to run around on.



Mama played a lot of ball and Frisbee with Tania, and Tania had a great time running around on the grass. She fell down a few times, but she barely noticed.



Then Mama and Tania spread out a table cloth on the grass and enjoyed a tasty snack-lunch. During lunch Mama said, "Tania, I am proud of you.

You fell down a few times today, but you did not cry."

"I know, Mama. The grass is so soft and springy. I didn't get hurt. I had a lot of fun. Thanks for bringing me. The lunch is delicious too."



Mama said tentatively, "Tania, you think you could try riding your bike on the grass. It won't hurt if you fall. And this time, I promise I won't let go without telling you. It was wrong of me to do that. I am really sorry, Baby."

Tania looked doubtful. But a part of her really wanted to learn to ride that lovely blue bicycle. She said,

"You promise not to let go till I say it is okay?"

"Yes, Honey. I promise. What do you say? Should we give it another shot?"

A couple of days later, Mama took Tania back to the park, and Tania got on her bicycle. After a few minutes, she gathered the courage to ask Mama to let go. Mama did. Tania fell again, but she did not hurt herself much, and she had braced herself for it, so it was not a nasty surprise. She got back on the bike.

On the third attempt, she was able to go a few meters without falling. It gave her a sense of achievement.



Encouraged by her progress, she was eager to keep trying till she got reasonably good at it. In about an hour, Tania could ride quite well. Mama brought her back to the park for the next couple of days. By day three, Tania was confident and ready to try the paved trail in the park. She rode beautifully. Mama was so proud of her. Tania now felt ready to ride with her friends in the housing society. Good going Tania!

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