The Stubborn Shoelace



A small skill grows one try at a time.

A short story to enjoy together

The Stubborn Shoelace

Sam's red shoes were ready for the park. Sam was ready too. His shoelaces had other ideas.

He crossed them. He pulled them. He made one loop, and the other lace slipped away.

"They are too wiggly," he told Mum.

Mum sat beside him on the hall bench.

"Would you like me to show you slowly?"

Sam nodded.

Mum used her own shoe. She moved her fingers a little at a time and paused whenever Sam asked. Then Sam tried on his shoe.

The first loop disappeared. The next loop grew as long as a rabbit's ear.

Sam let his hands rest on his knees.

"I know what I want them to do," he said. "My fingers don't know yet."

"They are learning," Mum replied.

They took one slow breath. Sam tried again. This time he watched where the lace went instead of looking at Mum's finished bow.

The Stubborn Shoelace

Over, around, and through.

He pulled gently. Two loops stayed in place.

One was bigger than the other. The knot sat a little to the side.

"Is that a bow?" Sam asked.

Mum checked that it was secure and that the loose ends would not trip him.

"It is."

Sam smiled down at it. He asked Mum to help with the second shoe because his fingers were tired.

At the park, he ran to the climbing steps. Before he climbed, he looked at his feet.

The small, uneven bow was still there.

"You learned something," he whispered to his fingers.

Then he wrapped them around the rail and climbed.

THE END

LET'S TALK

What helped Sam keep trying? What new skill are your hands learning?

Original story and illustration created with AI assistance. MimoMango, 2026.