

Tula’s Turning Dance

An original MimoMango story



At the village dance pavilion, Fen could leap, Bea could bounce, and Tula could turn very carefully. Tula wished her feet would do something more exciting.



Fen showed her a springy step. Tula lifted one foot, then the other. By the time she finished, Fen had already sprung halfway across the floor.



Bea showed her a bouncy step. Tula bent her knees. Her shell dipped a little, but the bounce stayed somewhere inside and would not come out.



'Maybe dancing is not for tortoises,' Tula said. She sat beside a flowerpot while her friends practised. Her toes still moved whenever the little music box played.



A breeze moved through the flowers. Their stems swayed slowly, even when the music hurried. Tula watched one red blossom make a beautiful, unhurried circle.



She stood and stretched her arms wide. Then she turned as slowly as the flower. Her shell turned too, carrying its golden pattern around with her.



Fen stopped springing. Bea stopped bouncing. 'What is that step?' they asked. Tula looked at her feet. 'I think it might be my turning dance.'



Fen tried it but spun too quickly. Bea tried it and wobbled. Tula showed them how to look ahead and take small steps around a circle.

Soon three friends were turning, each at a different speed. Fen's tail swept softly. Bea's dress rippled. Tula's shell shone like a small and cheerful sun.



'Could we put our dances together?' Bea asked. They tried a spring, a bounce, and a long slow turn, leaving room for everybody's favourite movement.

Tula still could not leap like Fen. She did not bounce like Bea. But when her turning part arrived, the whole dance opened like a flower.



That evening, Tula walked home slowly, as tortoises do. Every few steps, she made a little turn. Her feet had known a lovely dance all along.

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Which part made you smile?

How did our friend feel at the end?

What do you think might happen next?

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All story scenes feature individually created illustrations.