

The Mirae Tales

A Heartful Series for Kids Learning to Love Who They Are

Tale 4

Mirae and the Turtle Who Moved at Her Own Pace

On a day like any other, when the world feels both big and small, this story begins...

It was a soft, sleepy morning in the whispering woods — the kind where sunlight took its time to reach every leaf. The air smelled of pine and morning dew, and somewhere nearby, a woodpecker tapped a gentle rhythm.

Mirae sat on her favorite mossy log, hugging her knees. The breeze moved unhurriedly, tracing quiet patterns through her hair. But her thoughts were somewhere else. She thought of school — how the other children zipped through tasks while she lingered in her thoughts; how hands shot up with quick answers while hers hovered, ideas swirling; how feet tapped impatiently behind her in line, and how Emma’s sigh felt like a gust of wind pushing her to hurry.

“Why can’t I be faster?” Mirae whispered to the morning air, her heart heavy. “Maybe then I’d fit in better.”

Just then, a rustle in the ferns made her look up. Out stepped a turtle with a shell dappled in warm browns and greens — like the forest floor after rain. Her eyes sparkled with quiet kindness.





“Good morning, Mirae,” the turtle said in a voice slow and sweet as honey. “I’m Elda. May I join you?”

Mirae nodded, surprised but comforted by Elda’s gentle presence. The turtle settled beside her on the moss, moving with such calm that it made Mirae’s own breathing slow down.

“You’re always watching the forest so carefully. That’s a wonderful gift,” Elda said softly. “Careful eyes see things others miss – the way leaves tremble before it rains, or how the tiniest flower opens. You notice the magic most hurry past.”

Mirae looked down, fidgeting with her sleeve. Elda’s words felt kind, but inside she worried that *careful* was just another way of saying *slow*.

“But I’m too slow,” she whispered. “Everyone at school finishes before me. They get impatient. They wish I’d hurry up.”

Elda was quiet for a moment, watching a small caterpillar inch along a nearby branch. “Look there,” she said softly.

Mirae followed her gaze. The little caterpillar moved even slower than Elda, stopping often to munch on leaves.

“She’s not worried about being slow,” Elda observed gently. “She knows something wonderful – that when her time comes, she’ll have wings. Not because being a caterpillar was wrong, but because growing happens in its own perfect rhythm.”

Just then, a butterfly danced past them – bright orange with black dots. It settled near the creek for a drink.



"Was she once slow too?" Mirae asked, watching the butterfly's delicate movements.

Elda nodded. "Very slow. Very hungry. Very focused on becoming — just like you are now." She paused, then added with a twinkle in her eye, "And look at this forest — slow earthworms making rich soil, quick hummingbirds spreading flower seeds, steady old trees giving everyone shade. Each one needed, each one belonging."

Mirae felt something ease in her chest as she watched the butterfly, the caterpillar, and Elda all existing peacefully in the same moment — each perfect in their own time.

But even as she watched them, a small worry lingered. "What if people think something's wrong with me?" she whispered. Her voice grew even softer. "Maybe... I think that too. Because everyone else seems so much faster than me."

Elda was quiet for a moment, then turned to Mirae. "Would you like to try something with me?" she asked gently.

Mirae nodded, curious.

The Quiet Noticing

"Let's sit very still," Elda said gently, "and simply notice. Notice what's happening in the forest around us — and what's happening inside you too. No need to do anything. Just... watch. Listen. Feel."

Mirae settled deeper into the moss, letting her body relax. At first, her mind buzzed with thoughts — worries about school, about being too slow, about fitting in.

But then, as she sat quietly beside Elda, something began to shift.

She noticed the warmth of the sun finding its way through the leaves to touch her shoulder.

She heard the creek's gentle song — water moving over smooth stones. A tiny wren hopped closer, curious and unafraid, pecking at seeds near their feet. It stayed for a long moment before flying away on silent wings.

"How did you feel just now?" Elda asked softly. "Inside, I mean."

Mirae thought about it. "At first... busy. My thoughts were racing. But then..." — she searched for the words — "...it was like everything got quieter. Calmer. And I could feel my own heart beating, slow and steady."

She looked at Elda with surprise. "And when I sat very still, that little bird came so close! I hardly dared to breathe — I didn't want to scare it away. I loved it. It nearly jumped on my shoe! Before it flew away, it looked right at me."

"Exactly," Elda said with a gentle smile. "Slowness and stillness invite the world to come closer. They let you notice not just what's outside — but what's inside too: your own feelings, your own knowing. When you use your slowness to notice like this, it helps you feel calm inside — steady and completely yourself. That's a rare gift, Mirae."

Mirae felt a warmth spreading through her chest. Maybe being slow and careful wasn't the same as being wrong.

"I once knew someone," Elda continued, "who rushed everywhere, always in a hurry. One day, they ran right past a baby bird that had fallen from its nest. They didn't see it. Didn't hear its small chirps." She paused. "But I was moving slowly — as is my habit — and I noticed. I was able to help the little one back to safety."

"Because you took your time," Mirae said softly.

“Because I took my time,” Elda confirmed. “There are moments when slowness saves lives. When noticing changes everything. When patience is exactly what the world needs.”

Mirae paused, remembering. “Yesterday in art class, everyone was rushing to finish their paintings before recess. I was still working on mine when the bell rang. But...” — she tilted her head, a thoughtful look on her face — “I was the only one who noticed that Maya looked sad. While I was painting slowly, I saw her wiping her eyes. So I stayed with her during recess instead. We talked, and she felt better.”

Elda nodded slowly, her eyes soft with understanding. “You see? Your pace gave you the gift of noticing what matters. Sometimes the most important things can only be seen when we move slowly enough to truly look.”

Mirae thought about Maya again — how she’d noticed her sadness because she’d been moving slowly through her day. She would have missed it if she’d rushed to finish her painting. And how staying with her had mattered so much.

Growing at Your Own Pace

“But what if I want to change? I’d like to be faster...” Mirae asked quietly, her voice small but honest.

Elda smiled warmly, as if she’d been waiting for this question. “Then you will grow, little one,” she said warmly. “It’s wise to notice what would help you. When you see that finishing faster gives others more time to play, and you think ‘I’d like that too’ — that’s your heart showing you where you want to grow. And it will happen, gently, when you’re ready.”

She gestured to the caterpillar beside them, still munching contentedly on its leaf.

“Every caterpillar grows in its own way — some become butterflies, some become moths with their own beautiful patterns. Some flowers bloom early in spring, others wait for summer.”

Elda’s voice grew softer, more thoughtful.

“That’s the wonder of growing — it happens in your own rhythm, not anyone else’s.”

Mirae tilted her head, listening carefully.

“You’ll feel it inside,” Elda continued. “Growing feels like becoming more of who you already are — like that caterpillar finding her wings when she’s ready. The trouble starts when we try to become someone else entirely, instead of growing in the way that fits us.”

She chuckled gently. “A turtle trying to become a rabbit — I tried that once. It didn’t work out well for anyone.”

Mirae almost smiled. “So... I can want to be faster sometimes, but still be okay being slower other times?”

“Exactly,” Elda said. “You might sometimes wish you could finish things faster, and that’s okay. Taking your time can be helpful too. Sometimes it lets you see what others might miss — maybe that’s noticing Maya’s feelings, or simply being yourself, lost in your own thoughts and world. You can practice moving faster when it helps you, without ever giving up who you are.”

She paused, letting this settle.

“What matters is knowing your pace isn’t wrong. It’s yours. And you can always grow and change without trying to become something you’re not.”

Elda’s voice softened.

“You’re not someone who needs fixing. You move gently through the

world, sometimes seeing things others miss, sometimes dreaming things that don't exist yet."

Mirae felt something click into place.

"Like... I can practice getting faster at some things, but it doesn't mean being slow was bad?"

"Yes!" Elda's eyes lit up. "Being your slow, thoughtful self — sometimes that's your gift. And when you're just dreaming away, that's okay too. If you also want to finish your math work a bit quicker so you have more time to draw, that's growing. Both can be true."

They sat quietly together, listening to the forest's morning song — the distant chatter of squirrels, the soft whoosh of wings, the quiet drip of dew from leaf to leaf.

Mirae noticed how peaceful the forest felt when every creature moved in its own rhythm. The breeze carried the scent of wild honeysuckle — sweet and patient.

"Maybe," Mirae said softly, "I don't have to be like everyone else. I can just be me."

Elda nodded. "Exactly. Fast is wonderful. Slow is wonderful. Your pace is part of what makes you, you. And if your pace changes as you grow, that's wonderful too."

Elda nudged a small, smooth stone toward Mirae — one shaped by the patient river's flow.

"This wasn't rushed into its shape," Elda said softly. "It was formed by time, care, and the river's own rhythm. The water never hurried or tried to change its pace. It simply kept flowing — and look what a beautiful thing it created."



Mirae closed her fingers around the warm stone. It felt solid and real — perfectly at home in her palm.

“Thank you, Elda,” she whispered.

The turtle’s eyes crinkled with gentle affection.

“Thank you for sitting with me — for noticing, for being exactly who you are. The forest is gentler because you move through it so carefully.”

That night, Mirae placed the stone beside Bria’s petal and Sage’s heart-shaped pebble on her windowsill. Three quiet reminders: that she was already whole, that mistakes could bloom into learning, and that her pace was just right for her — able to grow in its own rhythm too.

She curled into bed, whispering to the stars, “My rhythm belongs. And I can grow at my own pace.”

... and in the quiet, something small had bloomed and settled.



Bedtime Reflection:

A few gentle questions you can explore together — to help your child know their pace is theirs and they're not less valuable for being different.

(These questions build on each other, following your child's story.)

Has anyone ever made you feel bad for being a little different — maybe for being slower, quieter, or just not like everyone else?

After listening — or to encourage an answer — share your own moment:

“I remember when someone got impatient with me because I... and it made me feel...”

OR let them share first, depending on their mood.

Then acknowledge:

“That can really sting. When people are impatient with us or judge us for being different, it can

make us feel like something's wrong with us. But here's the truth: who you are doesn't change based on how fast you move or how you compare to others. You're completely okay, exactly as you are."

To normalize it, you might add:

"You know what? People still get impatient with me sometimes too, or wish I was different. And I have to remind myself: being different from others doesn't make me less valuable. It's just who I am."

What in nature would represent you best?

"Maybe it's an animal that moves at your pace, or a flower that blooms slowly, or a river that flows gently, or a tree that stands steady. Maybe it's something that notices quietly, or dreams under the stars." After your child shares, tell them what in nature represents you too.

If you had free wishes just for yourself, what would you wish for? What would make things easier, more fun, or just feel good?

This opens everything – they might wish to be faster, or braver, or better at math, or have more friends, or be able to fly.

After they share, you might say:

"Wishes can tell us so much – what we hope for, what we miss, what we love, and what we dream about. Every wish shows something beautiful about your heart."

Or you might practice together:

The Quiet Noticing (from Elda's practice):

Sit together somewhere comfortable. Close your eyes or look softly at something peaceful. For a few minutes, just notice:

What do you hear? (maybe the hum of the house, a car outside, your own breathing)

What do you feel? (maybe the softness of your seat, warmth or coolness, your heartbeat)

What's happening inside you? (maybe your thoughts racing, or everything getting quieter and calmer)

There's nothing to do or fix. Just notice. This is how you find your own steady rhythm inside.

(Elda taught Mirae this when she was feeling overwhelmed - and it helped her feel calm and completely herself.)

Parent Tip:

When your child shares their wishes, listen carefully — they're telling you something important.

If they wish to *"be like everyone else"* or *"be normal,"* that's pain talking. Gently remind them: *"You don't need to be like everyone else. What is it about being different that feels hard right now?"* Address the hurt, not the wish to conform.

If they wish for practical skills — like *"finish homework faster so I can play more"* — that's healthy, adaptive desire. Affirm it: *"That's wise. You can grow in that direction, at your own pace."*

If they wish to be invisible or disappear, pay close attention. Sometimes that's playful imagination — but sometimes it means they feel overwhelmed, judged, or want to hide from pressure. Ask gently: *"What would being invisible help you do? What would feel better?"* This opens the conversation about what's really weighing on them.

If they wish for fantastical things — like *"fly like a bird"* — that's imagination at play. Enjoy it with them. Sometimes wishes are simply wonder.

But if their wishes reveal longing — *“have more friends,” “not feel left out”* — that deserves your attention and care. Ask gentle questions. Listen deeply.

Their wishes reveal their dreams, pressures, pain, and joy.
Honor every part — even those carrying emotional weight.

Journal Page Prompt:

What in nature would represent you best?

Maybe it’s an animal that moves at your pace,
a flower that blooms slowly,
a river that flows gently,
or a tree that stands steady.

Maybe it’s something that notices quietly,
or dreams under the stars.

Draw or write about it.
Give it a name if you like.

This is your **nature-self** — the part of you that reminds you:
being exactly who you are is always enough.

*From my heart to yours — may this story bring light to the
quiet places.*

The Mirae Tales Blessing Cards

A heartfelt collection for kids learning to love who they are

MIRAE BLESSING CARD

From Story 4 • Card 4 A

Growing takes the
time it takes —

That's part of
the magic

*"She's not worried about being
slow... because growing happens
in its own perfect rhythm."*

— Wisdom from Elda (Mirae Tale 4)



MIRAE BLESSING CARD

HOLD THIS WHEN...

...you feel slow, behind, or
different from everyone else.

Grow at your own pace —
you're not late.

You're becoming you,
and that takes its own kind
of time.



From "Mirae and the Turtle Who Moved
at Her Own Pace"

The Mirae Tales Wisdom Cards

A heartfelt collection for kids learning to love who they are

MIRAE WISDOM CARD

From Story 4 • Card 4 A

Growing takes the
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That's part of
the magic

*"She's not worried about being
slow... because growing happens
in its own perfect rhythm."*

— Wisdom from Elda (Mirae Tale 4)



FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

THE GIFT OF RHYTHM

*"Everyone grows in their own
perfect timing."*

— Elda

Sometimes it's daydreaming.
Sometimes it's just taking longer.
Sometimes there's no special reason at all.

That's okay.

It's their rhythm right now —
and rhythms can change as they grow.

Your patience reassures them that they are
completely alright, eases their fear of being
wrong or behind, and shows them they're
growing in their own way and pace.

And until they can trust that rhythm
themselves, they borrow your calm faith —
the steady reassurance that becoming who
they are takes the time it takes.

*From "Mirae and the Turtle Who Moved
at Her Own Pace"*

A Note for Parents, Caregivers, and Educators

The Mirae Tales are designed to nurture connection, confidence, and self-awareness in children — whether shared as bedtime stories, daytime reading, or during quiet moments of togetherness.

The bedtime reflections, parent tips, and journal prompts included with each tale can be used at night or revisited anytime during the day. There is no “right” moment — only the one that feels right for you and your child.

Let these tales become gentle companions, helping you build meaningful conversations and celebrate every child’s unique light.

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*The Mirae Tales is a heart-born series created to nurture self-love, quiet courage, and the joy of becoming who you are meant to be.
Thank you for reading and respecting the spirit of this work.*