

The Mirae Tales

A Heartful Series for Kids Learning to Love Who They Are

Tale 3

Mirae and the Red Marks That Turned into Flowers

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

Mirae sat at her wooden desk in the sunny classroom, her heart doing tiny somersaults as Mrs. Light walked between the rows, handing back the math tests.

"Good work, Emma." Smile.

"Nice job, Alex." Smile.

"Here you go, Mirae." Pause. Gentle look.

Mirae's stomach dropped. She knew that look.

She turned the paper over slowly, and there they were: two bright red X's staring at her like disappointed eyes. Her throat felt tight.

8 out of 10.

But all she could see were those two red marks, bold and embarrassing, whispering that she had messed up.

She quickly folded the paper and tucked it deep into her backpack, her cheeks warm. Around her, other kids were smiling at their papers, whispering about their scores. Mirae just wanted to become invisible.

At lunch, she sat quietly at her usual table, picking at her sandwich. The folded test paper felt heavy in her backpack, like it was glowing red through the fabric.

I'm bad at math, she thought. I got it wrong. I should have done it all right. I should have been more careful.

By the time school ended, Mirae felt small and heavy, like a grey cloud had settled inside her chest.

On the Familiar Forest Path

On her way home, Mirae followed the familiar path through the tiny forest, where the trees always seemed to listen. She paused at her favorite thinking spot – a smooth boulder beside a babbling creek.



She finally pulled out the crumpled test paper.

"Stupid mistakes," she whispered, smoothing out the wrinkles. "Stupid, stupid me."

"That's interesting," came a familiar voice. "What makes a mistake stupid? And why (or how) does a mistake make you stupid?"

Mirae looked up to see Sage, a young fox sitting on a fallen log next to the creek. His russet-red fur with cream patches shone bright in the afternoon light, and his eyes sparkled with curiosity.

"Because... because I got it wrong," Mirae said, as if it was obvious. "I should have gotten it right."

The fox tilted his head. "I've been thinking about that word 'should' a lot lately. Want to see something?"

Before Mirae could answer, Sage stood up and aimed carefully at a cluster of nuts hanging from a low branch. He leaped — and missed completely, landing in a pile of soft leaves.

Mirae almost smiled despite herself. "Are you okay?"



Sage brushed off his fur, grinning. "Better than okay. Watch this."

He stood up and leaped again toward the nut branch. He missed it again — but this time, his shoulder brushed the berry bush beside it. The branches shivered, and three perfectly ripe berries tumbled down, landing right next to his paws.



"I used to think missing meant failing," Sage said, crunching on a berry. "But every miss taught me something new. That 'miss' just gave me a snack."

Mirae blinked. "But... you were trying for the nuts."

"Exactly!" Sage's tail swished with excitement. "Sometimes what we aim for isn't what we actually need. And sometimes the best discoveries happen when we don't hit our target perfectly."

The Learning Collection

Sage led Mirae to a small clearing where smooth stones were arranged in careful patterns.

"My Learning Collection," he announced proudly. "Every stone represents something I discovered from not getting it right the first time."

He picked up a grey stone with silver flecks. "This one taught me patience when I kept missing the fireflies I was trying to catch. But when I slowed down, I realized I didn't want to catch them — I just wanted to dance with their light."

A dark, smooth stone caught Mirae's eye. "What about this one?"

Sage's eyes twinkled. "That one helped me discover I was aiming for the wrong thing entirely. I thought I wanted to be the fastest fox in the forest. But all those 'failed' tries taught me I actually love being careful — and noticing what others miss."

Mirae looked down at her crumpled test paper, then back at Sage's collection.

"What if..." she said slowly, "what if my red marks are trying to show me something too?"

The Red Marks Transform

Mirae sat down in the soft grass and spread her test paper in front of her. Instead of seeing the glaring mistakes, she tried to see them the way Sage saw his learning stones: as quiet guides, pointing to what to look at again.

And then she noticed something else: Eight green checkmarks. Eight problems she had solved correctly, eight moments where her thinking had worked just right.

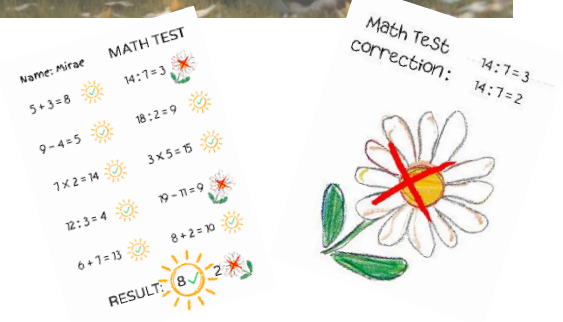
"I got eight right," she whispered, like discovering treasure.

Sage nodded. "The red marks are like my stones — they're showing you exactly what to practice. And the green marks? Those are proving you already know most of it."

Mirae pulled out her colored pencils from her backpack. Carefully, gently, she drew tiny wildflowers around each red X — one that looked like a daisy, one like a little star.

"Thank you," she whispered to the marks, "for showing me what to learn next."

Then she drew small suns around each green checkmark. "And thank you for reminding me what I already know."



"You know that word 'should' I mentioned?" Sage said. "I'm learning it's okay to stop worrying about how things *should* be — and just see how they really are. Your paper shows what you know and what you're still learning. And that's perfect, just as it is."

Mirae started smiling again. "I'm not bad at this at all," she said. "I got eight right — that's pretty clever!"

"You got it!" Sage grinned.

Just like Sage's stones helped him remember, Mirae wanted her own way to keep track of her learning.

The Practice Book

That evening, Mirae sat at her bedroom desk with a brand-new notebook. On the cover, she wrote: *Mirae's Practice Book*.

Inside, she made two columns:

Getting Better At... (things to practice)

Already Good At... (things she understood)

She thought about the day and wrote:

<i>Getting better at:</i> Checking my work more carefully before finishing.	<i>Already good at:</i> Solving most of the math problems — I got 8 right!
--	---

The next day at school, when Mrs. Light announced a test, Mirae didn't feel the familiar knot in her stomach. Instead, she felt curious.

What will I learn today?

Later, as she quietly circled what was right with suns or stars and put flowers beside what she wanted to practice, Mrs. Light passed by.

"That's a beautiful way to see your learning, Mirae," she said gently. "Always celebrate what you already know, and what you're still discovering — because mistakes help you see what doesn't work, and that's just as important as finding out what does."

Bedtime... just before falling asleep

That night, as Mirae nestled into her soft blankets, she looked at her test paper on the nightstand. The red X's surrounded by little wildflowers looked gentle now, like quiet teachers showing her the way.

She thought about Sage and his Learning Collection. Tomorrow, she decided, she would remember that every learner needs both mistakes to learn from and discoveries to celebrate — just like her Practice Book with its two columns.

"Every mark on my paper is helping me grow," she whispered to the stars outside her window.

Mirae drifted off to sleep, dreaming of treasures collected and lessons discovered, learning that felt as natural as breathing. And just as she drifted into dreamland, she thought she saw the stars gently winking at her, as if they agreed.

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



Bedtime Reflection:

A few gentle questions you can explore together — to help your child separate mistakes from who they are, and discover the treasures hidden in every miss.

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

Is there anything weighing on your heart tonight — maybe something that didn't work out, or someone said you got it wrong?

Depending on how they seem, either let them share first, or you go first with your own moment:
"Today I... and it didn't work out the way I wanted."

Then acknowledge their feeling: *"It's okay to feel upset about that. That's completely normal. But here's something important: getting something wrong doesn't mean YOU are wrong. YOU are completely alright! It just means that way didn't work this time."*

Then normalize it continuing: *"You know what? I'm still learning too. Every day I make mistakes, I choose wrong, I make the wrong decision. It never stops — and that's how we keep growing."*

So when... the specific thing they mentioned... didn't work, what did that help you figure out? Let's look for the treasure in that mistake together.

Like Sage missing the branch — it showed him that path wouldn't work, but it helped him find the berries instead!

What's one thing you got right or felt proud of today — even a tiny thing?

After they share: *"See? Learning isn't just about what didn't work — it's also about the things that went right. Both matter."*

Celebrate all the things that you can see in them which are perfectly alright: they know how to tie their shoes, they know how to get dressed, to take care of their teeth etc.

Parent Tip:

When your child brings home work with corrections or talks about something that went wrong, first acknowledge that it genuinely hurts to see red marks, to hear you got it wrong, to feel judged. That sting is real, and it's okay to feel it.

Then help them separate the action from who they are:

"Getting this wrong doesn't mean YOU are wrong. You're completely okay. This just shows which way didn't work – and that's actually useful information."

Show them how to look for the treasure:

"So what did this mistake help you figure out? What does it tell you about what to try next, or what you need to practice?"

Then share your own recent miss:

"You know what I got wrong today? I... It felt frustrating, but it helped me figure out that... I'm still learning every day, just like you."

The gift you're giving: when you acknowledge the pain, separate their worth from their performance, and normalize your own ongoing mistakes, you teach them that getting things wrong isn't failure – it's how humans learn and grow at every age.

Journal Page Prompt:

Create your own Practice Book — just like Mirae's.

On one page, write or draw the things you're getting better at.

On another, the things you already do well and feel proud of.

You can use words, doodles, or little symbols — whatever helps you remember that learning and growing never stop. Both pages are treasures.

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 3 • Card 3 A

There's always
more good to find
than things
going wrong

*The good grows when you
notice it.*

— Wisdom from Sage (Mirae Tale 3)



MIRAE BLESSING CARD

HOLD THIS WHEN...

...you only see the mistake.

Look again —
there's so much you did well.

The good parts are always
bigger.



From "Mirae and the Red Marks
That Turned into Flowers"

The Mirae Tales Wisdom Cards

A heartfelt collection for kids learning to love who they are

MIRAE WISDOM CARD

From Story 3 • Card 3 A

There's always
more good to find
than things
going wrong

*The good grows when you
notice it.*

— Wisdom from Sage (Mirae Tale 3)



FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

THE GIFT OF PERSPECTIVE

*"I missed plenty of times...
but far more often, I didn't."
— Sage*

Children often only see the one thing
that went wrong and miss all the things they
did well.

Your gentle guidance helps them see
mistakes not as something to feel ashamed of,
but as a normal part of learning —
small course corrections
that help them find their way forward.

When they understand that everyone
adjusts, learns, and tries again each day,
the pressure softens
and their confidence begins to bloom.

*From "Mirae and the Red Marks
That Turned into Flowers"*

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.

© 2026 Tanja May / The Mirae Tales

All rights reserved. No part of this tale may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the creator, except in the case of brief quotations used in critical reviews or articles.

*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.*