

The hedgehog who wanted a hug

In a quiet forest full of life lived Piquet, a little hedgehog with a big heart. Piquet was kind and always helped his friends, but there was one thing that made him sad: he couldn’t hug anyone.

Every time Piquet tried to hug one of the forest animals, his quills would prick them, and they would move away—even though they knew he meant no harm. One day, while watching the leaves fall beneath an old oak tree, he saw Llampec, a playful rabbit, doing somersaults.

“Hello, Llampec,” said Piquet. “How do you manage to always be so happy?”

“It’s easy! I feel loved by my friends,” replied Llampec with a smile.

Piquet lowered his head, feeling sad.

“I’d like to feel that way too, but no one wants to hug me.”

Llampec fell into thought and then had an idea.

“Perhaps you can’t hug the way you’d like to, but you can certainly make others feel loved in other ways! Come on, let’s go find our

friends.”

Piquet and Llampec traveled through the forest, speaking with Buf, the wise owl; Toqueta, a mischievous squirrel; and Flora, a kind fox. Whenever they met someone, Piquet offered his help. He brought nuts to Toqueta, gathered leaves for Buf’s nest, and guided Flora to a hidden spring.

As the sun set, Piquet realized he was surrounded by his friends—all of them smiling. “You’re our favorite hedgehog!” said Flora. “You don’t need to give hugs to show that you love us.”

“That’s true!” added Buf. “Your kindness and your actions are like a big hug for us.”

Just then, Toqueta had a brilliant idea. She ran to her tree and returned with a pile of soft leaves. She placed them around Piquet, like a cloak.

“Now you can hug us without pricking anyone!” she exclaimed.

Carefully, Piquet gave Llampec a hug for the very first time. It was a magical moment. From that day on, Piquet learned that there are many ways to express love, and the forest became filled with soft hugs, smiles, and a great deal of happiness.

Questions for discussion with children

Why do you think the hedgehog wanted to hug his friends, but couldn’t? How do you think he felt when he realized there was a problem?

His friends found other ways to show their affection without hugging him. What would you like to do to show your friends and family that you love them?

How do you think the other animals felt when they saw that the hedgehog was sad? What would you do to help someone who isn’t feeling well?

The story shows us that there are many ways to love and be loved. What other ways of showing affection do you know, besides hugs? If you were a friend of the hedgehog, how would you explain to him that the way he is is also special, and that he doesn’t need to change in order to be loved?