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ONE BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL MORNING, ELEVEN-YEAR-OLD FOTINI WAS ON HER WAY TO SCHOOL. SHE HAD TO WALK A LITTLE OVER TWO MILES, AND THE JOURNEY WAS EXHAUSTING. THE STATE OF HER BOOTS MADE FOTINI EVEN MORE MISERABLE. THEY WERE OLD AND SQUEAKED WITH EVERY STEP SHE TOOK.

"SQUEAK-SQUEAK! SQUEAKY SQUEAK!"



SHE FLINCHED EVERY TIME SHE HEARD THAT SOUND. OH, HOW SHE WISHED SHE HAD BRIGHT, COMFORTABLE NEW BOOTS LIKE THE ONES HER CLASSMATES WORE!

BUT FOTINI'S FAMILY WAS NOT WELL-OFF, AND THE SQUEAKY BOOTS WERE THE BEST HER MUM COULD AFFORD.

FOTINI FELT AS IF THE SQUEAKY BOOTS WERE MAKING  
HER LIFE UNBEARABLE.

HER CLASSMATES BULLIED HER RELENTLESSLY, TEASING  
AND MOCKING HER AT SCHOOL. THEY HAD EVEN  
GIVEN HER A CRUEL NICKNAME: "MISS SQUEAKY-  
BOOTS."







FOTINI WAS LOST IN HER SORROW WHEN SHE  
SUDDENLY HEARD SOMEONE SPEAKING.

SHE STOPPED IN HER TRACKS AND LOOKED AROUND.  
THERE, BY THE ROADSIDE, SHE SPOTTED AN OLD  
WOMAN SITTING ON A BENCH.



THE OLD WOMAN WAS STRUGGLING TO BEND DOWN AND TIE HER SHOELACES. "OUCH!" SHE EXCLAIMED. "MY POOR BACK! I WISH I WERE YOUNG AGAIN SO I COULD TIE MY SHOELACES MORE EASILY."

BEING A KIND-HEARTED GIRL, FOTINI QUICKLY DECIDED TO HELP HER.



FOTINI QUICKLY RAN OVER AND TIED THE WOMAN'S SHOELACES.

"WHAT A KIND LITTLE GIRL YOU ARE!" SAID THE OLD WOMAN WITH A WARM SMILE. "HERE, LET ME REWARD YOU!"

FOTINI WATCHED IN AWE AS THE OLD WOMAN REACHED INTO HER CROCHETED BAG AND PULLED OUT A BRAND-NEW PAIR OF BOOTS, HANDING THEM TO HER.

FOTINI STARED AT THE BOOTS FOR A FEW SECONDS, HER HEART RACING WITH EXCITEMENT.

HER MOTHER HAD ALWAYS TOLD HER NEVER TO ACCEPT GIFTS FROM STRANGERS. JUST AS SHE WAS ABOUT TO POLITELY REFUSE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL BOOTS SHE HAD EVER SEEN, THE OLD WOMAN VANISHED INTO THIN AIR.