

a book by MitchZee

The illustration shows a young girl with orange hair and pointed ears, wearing a red dress, standing with her eyes closed and arms outstretched in a grassy field. In the foreground, a young boy with orange hair and pointed ears, wearing a green shirt and blue pants, is crawling on all fours, looking up with a wide smile. The background features rolling green hills, trees, and a blue sky with white clouds and several birds flying. The title 'FINDING THE MIDDLE' is written in large, bold, yellow and white letters across the center of the scene.

**FINDING
THE
MIDDLE**

Friends are Found in Unexpected Places



In a magical place called Middleground
and flowers bloomed in every color, tw
But here's the funny thing – they didn't ev



Meadow, where the grass tickled the sky
two groups of people lived side by side.
They even know each other existed!



First, there were the Handsandkneesians. They crawled all day long. Their world was full of wiggly tunnels under bushes.

Everything they did – eating, playing, even sleeping – was up to about three feet high.



They crawled on their hands and knees
y worms, shiny pebbles, and secret

n sleeping – happened from the ground

Then, there were the Tippi
tippy toes, stretching up

Their world was all about
and twinkling stars. They
picked fruits from the trees
whispered to the



pytoesians. They stood tall on their
as high as they could.

out fluffy clouds, singing birds,
They danced on rooftops,
n tall branches, and
e wind.





Even though they shared the same meadow, streams, and cozy hills – the Handsandkneesians got into each other.



w – the same sunny fields, bubbly
eesians and Tippytoesians **never** bumped



If the crawlers saw the standers' legs zooming by, they just thought, "Oh, just another tree trunk or bush swaying in the breeze!"



And the standers were too busy looking up to notice anything below their waists. No fights, no arguments – just peaceful, unknown and unknowing neighbors.

Hank was a young Handsandkneesian with messy hair and a big smile. He loved racing snails and building tiny forts from sticks.





Tilly was a bubbly Tippytoesian with a ponytail and sparkly eyes. She loved chasing butterflies and waving at airplanes way up in the sky.

One sunny morning, Hank was crawling along, sniffing a daisy.

High above, Tilly was tiptoeing through the meadow, humming a tune, eyes glued to the sky.

But oh no! Tilly's toe caught on a sneaky rock.

"Wobbling and tumbling forward. To catch herself, she bent down lower than she ever had before.

And there, right in front of her, was Hank, staring up with wide eyes.





"Hello?" Tilly said, tilting her head.

"Who are you? I've never seen anyone like you!"

Hank blinked in surprise. "Me? I'm Hank. And you're... you're one of those moving trees? Wait, no – you have a face!"

Tilly laughed. "A tree? Silly! I'm Tilly. What's it like down there on the ground?"

They started talking, right there in the middle of the meadow. Hank told Tilly about the tickly grass and hidden treasures like sparkly dewdrops.

Hank said, "Everything's an adventure when you're close to the earth!"

Tilly shared stories of the vast sky and soaring eagles. "From up here, the world feels so big and free!"

But talking wasn't easy at first. Hank had to shout up, and Tilly had to bend way down.

"This hurts my neck," Tilly said with a giggle.

"And my voice is getting tired," Hank added.



That's when they had an idea. "What if we meet in the middle?" Tilly suggested.

Hank stood up on his knees a little taller. Tilly crouched down, not quite on tiptoes. Suddenly, they were eye to eye!

"Wow!" Hank said. "Now I can see the clouds you love!"

"And I can spot those wiggly worms!" Tilly cheered.

From that day on, Hank and Tilly became the best of friends.





They showed their groups how to find the
just right.

The Handsandkneesians learned to peek u
discovered the wonders down below.



middle – not too low, not too high, but

up sometimes, and the Tippytoesians



In Middleground Meadow, everyone starts together. No more hidden worlds – just ordinary life made even more fun.



ed chatting, sharing, and playing
ne big, happy place where differences



And they all lived curiously ever after, remembering that a simple stumble and a friendly "hello" can help you find the middle.

Finding the Middle was inspired by my experiences as a volunteer board member and occasional tutor at the non-profit **Flickinger Learning Center (FLC)** in Muscatine, IA. FLC provides an after school program for K-6 grade kids of all backgrounds whose families want to give them extra help with reading, math and spelling. Besides those subjects, I learned that regardless of who you are and where you come from, it is absolutely necessary to meet all people in the middle.



This book is my free gift to the kids for welcoming me into their after school world.



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