



# A Different Sunday

Yesterday, as we were leaving school, Anita proposed a great idea that has had us making plans all day. On Sunday, we will go on an excursion. Let's go to the field on our bicycles.



"Since we use our bikes a lot, we should take them to be checked at my dad's workshop. It is better to avoid accidents," said Anita, who is always thinking of all the details.

We got our bikes and went to Don Antonio's workshop immediately. He kindly attended to us and said to his assistant, "Simon, check that the tires are inflated, that the frame is in good condition, and that the brakes, pedals, and handlebars are in perfect condition." He also asked him to adjust the seat to the right height because we were growing.

Simon examined each of the parts carefully while advising us, "Don't forget guys, safety is very important. Remember to wear your helmets and take bottles of water to stay hydrated. We all know that our body is fundamentally made up of water, so it is very important to stay hydrated, especially when doing physical exercise. When you get hot and sweat, this accumulated water in our bodies is lost, and it can cause headaches, dizziness, and fatigue."

With our bicycles inspected, we only had to think about what we would take to eat. "I'll make sandwiches for everyone," said Miguel.

"And, I'll tell Mom to make us cookies," Rosita said cheerfully. We were all left thinking about how delicious they are.

I remembered that Mom had been given juicy green apples in the hospital, and I offered to take them on the trip while Anita was screaming happily, "I have some delicious peanut nougats that they gave me!"

We were meeting by the fountain in the park at 8:00 am. That night, I got everything ready and went to bed. I could hardly sleep because of the excitement of thinking about our bicycle ride.

We all arrived punctually. How happy we were!

"Ready?" asked Anita. We all shouted, yes, together.

At first, we went slowly while riding through the streets of the neighborhood. We went north on San Jose Street, and we turned west on Spring Road. As we crossed in front of the Lopez family's house, one of them yelled at us, waving his hand as if saying goodbye, "Be careful, guys." We shouted again all together, "Yes!" which made us laugh a lot. We passed the fire station, crossed Main Street, and began to smell the fresh air. How lucky we are to live near the field! While we were pedaling, Miguel and Rosita were singing happily, but Anita and I wanted more excitement and shouted at them, "Faster, faster!" How fun it is to feel the wind on your face!

We were going down the hill faster and faster. I advanced to Miguel, who yelled at me, "Juan, don't pedal so fast; you could have an accident." I slowed down a bit.



The excitement of going fast disappeared when the slope came. Anita continued on her pink bike, and the rest of us followed in single file. The four of us pedaled hard while we contemplated the landscape. We could hear the sounds of the countryside so different from those of the city, the sound of the water in the stream, the wind whistling in our ears, and the birds singing, How calm! I could hear even my heartbeat!

We headed towards a huge tree that seemed perfect to us because it gave a lot of shade. Next to it was a short concrete bridge surrounded by thickets, which allowed us to cross over the stream. Agitated, we arrived at the place we had chosen. Anita, always thinking of everything, held out a red checkered tablecloth. We left the bikes, we sat under the tree, we took water from our canteens, and after a moment of rest, we went to the stream to wash our faces and hands. We ended up in the river, happily throwing water at each other. How nice to see that that stream was still pure and clean! In its clear waters, you could see small colored fish and some frogs in bright tones that amused us with their long jumping legs.

Wetter than fish, we lie in the meadow. I took out the apples and ate them while the squirrels looked enviously at the juicy fruits from the top of the huge tree.

"Look," Miguel shouted, "Someone is watching us from the bushes!"

Frightened, we ran to see who it was. We felt his presence, but after much searching, we did not know who was spying on us.



We climbed, rolled, and ran until lunchtime came. Beneath the tree, we enjoyed the tasty sandwiches that Miguel prepared, the delicious cookies from Rosita's mother, and the delicious nougat that Anita brought. We tried to guess what Miguel had seen. Suddenly a friendly raccoon came up to us and extended his hand, asking for food. We gave him a piece of an apple, and he ran off into the stream. He dipped it, smelled it, and ate it. We found it very funny that he washed his food. Rosita then told us that this is why, in some places, they are called clean bears or washers. A few minutes had passed when the same raccoon returned with three others asking for food. Since we were so amused to see the whole family, we gave them other pieces of apple. They left quickly, and in an instant, there were already ten more raccoons around us. Now we knew who was watching us.

Harassed by the raccoons, we gave them what we had to make them leave before even more returned. We gathered our things, we mounted our bikes, and we fled from the cunning animals with their masks and striped tail. When we finally got home, the neighborhood seemed to be sleeping. Sunday afternoon was at its most quiet time, but we were still excited. Our Sunday had been different!

When I got home, I told my mom everything we had done, and our experience with the raccoon family. She calmly said to me, "Juan, never forget that raccoons are wild animals, and they don't depend on humans to survive. If we feed them, instead of doing them good, we harm them because we change their life habits. Now that you know, I hope that if it happens to you again, you know how to act responsibly."

That is a lesson I will never forget. Neither will I forget that Sunday in the field with my best friends!

