

SATURDAY'S SURPRISE

Hal Ames



Carlos woke up late that Saturday. As he opened his eyes, he could hear the sounds from the street coming through his open window. He could hear people talking loudly. He heard laughter and mothers calling for their children. He heard kids playing, and yelling. There was music coming from someone standing on the corner. He heard the cars and buses as they passed by his apartment. These were all the normal sounds he heard every day, but something was wrong.

When he listened for the sounds that normally came from his apartment, everything was silent. He did not hear his mother cooking in the kitchen. She always made a big breakfast on Saturdays. He did not hear his sister Maria jumping up and down or fighting with their brother José. He did not hear his brother screaming for her to stop. Even the dog was quiet. What was wrong? The house was completely silent. The only noise was coming from outside his window.

Carlos looked at the clock across the room. It said ten o'clock. Something was very wrong!

Carlos quickly got up and got dressed. He looked out of the window and saw everyone walking and talking. That was all normal. What was not normal was how quiet it was inside of his apartment.

He put on his shoes, and made his bed. He put his dirty clothes away, and then sat on his bed thinking, "Why is it so quiet? Is everyone still sleeping? Is my clock wrong?"

He went slowly to the door and listened. He still did not hear anything. He opened

the door to his room a little and looked around. He looked down the hallway toward the living room. He did not see anything. His heart was pumping. He could feel it pounding in his chest. He was nervous and scared.

He was wondering, “What was going on?”

Slowly he walked out of his room and into the hallway. His stomach was making noise since he was so hungry. He started toward the kitchen. His feet moved slowly as he walked, not knowing what to expect.

“Mom? José? Maria? Where are you?” he called out, but no one answered.

“Where is everyone?” he thought to himself.

Just then, he thought he heard a noise coming from the kitchen. It sounded like someone was there. He moved slowly toward the kitchen doorway.

He thought to himself, “What’s going on? Why is everything so quiet? Who is in the kitchen?”

When he got to the kitchen door, he looked inside and to his surprise, he saw there were many people there.

He walked into the kitchen, and all his family was there. He was even more surprised when he heard them singing, “Happy birthday, to you, happy birthday to you!!!”

His parents, his brother, his sister, his aunt and uncle, his cousins and even his grandparents were in the kitchen singing ‘Happy Birthday’ to him.

Carlos smiled from ear to ear.

His mother let the dog loose, and the little terrier jumped into Carlos’ arms. Carlos just stood in the doorway of the kitchen not knowing what to say or do. He was totally surprised.

Their plan had worked.

Sitting in the middle of the kitchen table was a small box. The giftwrap was bright red. It had a silver ribbon on top.

His mother told him to open the box. Carlos walked over to the table, picked up the

box, and slowly opened it. Inside he found some keys.

“What are these for?” he asked.

“Look outside the window,” his mother replied.

Below the stairs, was a yellow motorcycle, and on the seat, was a black helmet. Carlos was unable to speak.

After he ran down the stairs, on the walk below, he found the bike. The motorcycle was not new, but it was his! Everyone had given money to buy it.

Soon, his friends came to see his new birthday present. They stood on the sidewalk whistling and screaming as Carlos rode his new bike up and down the street for them.

Carlos could not hear them. The sound of the motor on his bike was sweet music to his ears. He had all day to hear it.

VOCABULARY (*Match the word to its definition*)

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. normal _____ | a. no sound |
| 2. kitchen _____ | b. beating sound |
| 3. silent _____ | c. covering for the head |
| 4. pounding _____ | d. music from the lips |
| 5. nervous _____ | e. room to cook food |
| 6. giftwrap _____ | f. a colored tied bow |
| 7. ribbon _____ | g. bicycle with a motor |
| 8. motorcycle _____ | h. paper on a gift |
| 9. helmet _____ | i. usual, regular, common |
| 10. whistling _____ | j. afraid, unsure |

TRUE / FALSE

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. When the story began, Carlos was asleep. | T / F |
| 2. Cars and buses passed by Carlos' apartment. | T / F |
| 3. The time was eight o'clock. | T / F |
| 4. Carlos went to school that day. | T / F |
| 5. Carlos' sister's name was José. | T / F |
| 6. Carlos' grandparents arrived late. | T / F |
| 7. The house was always very noisy on Saturday morning. | T / F |
| 8. Carlos received a new car for his birthday. | T / F |
| 9. Carlos' cat jumped into his arms. | T / F |
| 10. It was Sunday morning. | T / F |

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. Why did Carlos go to the kitchen? ____
 - a) his mother told him to go.
 - b) he was hungry.
 - c) he was looking for his dog.
 - d) he heard his family singing.

2. What time did his clock say it was when he woke up? ____
 - a) eight o'clock
 - b) seven o'clock
 - c) ten o'clock
 - d) noon

3. What did Carlos get for his birthday? ____
 - a) bicycle
 - b) motorcycle
 - c) new car
 - d) dog

4. What did Carlos do after he went down to see his new gift? ____
 - a) rode it around the street
 - b) hugged his family
 - c) crashed his new gift
 - d) cried

COMPREHENSION: *(Write a complete sentence to answer the question.)*

1. What were the sounds Carlos heard outside of his window?

2. Why was Carlos scared?

3. What did Carlos do after he got up?

4. Who was usually fighting in the morning?

5. What kind of dog did his family have?

6. What color was Carlos' motorcycle?

7. Who was in the kitchen when Carlos walked in?

8. What color was the giftwrap on the box?

9. What did the family sing to Carlos?

10. What was inside of the box?
