

The Rainy-Day Picnic

by RV Staff Writer J.C.

It was Saturday, and Adam was wide awake. The house was quiet, so he knew his parents were still sleeping. They always slept late on the weekend. He could hear his father snoring. Even the cat was still asleep on the rocking chair with her tail curled over her nose.

His mother had promised that they would go on a picnic in the park today. He had been looking forward to it all week. He liked the peanut butter and banana sandwiches she made. She even cut the crusts off the bread for him. They would have other yummy food to eat at the picnic too. They would play catch and maybe fly a kite if the wind was strong. Adam thought maybe he should wake his parents up now.

He looked at the clock in his room. The little hand was pointing to the 7 and the big hand was near the number 12. He wasn't sure, but he thought that was the time his family usually woke up when they went to work and school. So it was probably time for everyone to get up.

However, it still looked dark outside. Usually by now the sun was shining through the windows. Maybe it was cloudy, Adam thought. He got out of his bed and went to his parents' room. He climbed onto their bed and got in the middle between them. His father groaned and turned over. His mother opened one of her eyes and saw Adam there.

"Hello!" said Adam, cheerfully. "It's time to get up and go to the park!"

His mother yawned. She rubbed her eyes. "Hi," she whispered. "What time is it?"

"I don't know," replied Adam.

"Oh, Adam," said his mother, looking at the time on her phone. "It's too early. Let's go back to sleep." She closed her eyes again.

"But it's morning. And you promised a picnic today!"

"Ugh," said Mom. "I guess you aren't going to go back to bed. Okay, give me a few minutes."

Adam waited. He waited until his mother had taken a shower. He waited until she came out of the bathroom in a robe with her hair wrapped up in a towel. The small boy followed her downstairs and watched her turn on the coffee pot. His mother went to the glass door that led to the backyard. She looked out. The leaves on the trees were blowing, and the glass was covered in tiny, clear drops of water. "It's raining!" She turned to her son. "Adam, it's raining. We can't go on a picnic today."

Adam's lip began to quiver. His eyes got misty. He sat down on the floor and held his chin in his hands.

This was not the news he wanted to hear.

“I’m sorry,” said his mom. “Let’s get some cereal and watch some cartoons for a while.” They sat together on the couch. They snuggled, and it was cozy. Adam’s father came down to have some coffee, too. He listened to the bad news about the rain and the picnic.

“Hmm,” he said. “Rain might spoil a picnic in the park, but it can also be fun sometimes.” He finished his drink and asked Adam to go find his raincoat and rubber boots. “Let’s go for a walk.”

Adam put on his yellow boots and coat with a hood. His dad grabbed an umbrella. They went outside, and the rain was still coming down. “There are so many things to do in the rain,” said his dad. “Watch me!” And his father started jumping over the puddles in the driveway. Adam jumped too, but he jumped into the puddles, splashing water everywhere, including on Dad. Laughing, his father picked up some leaves and sticks and showed Adam how to make little boats with them. They raced their boats, watching them float down the stream of rainwater rushing along the street.

“I’m singing in the rain,” called his father, holding the umbrella as he did a funny dance around the streetlight. He smiled and turned in a circle, kicking up water as he danced and sang. Adam did a little tap dancing of his own.

Next, they lifted their heads back and tried to catch the raindrops as they fell into their mouths. “They taste sweet, like popsicles,” said Adam. Dad called him over to the edge of the lawn. He showed Adam how the earthworms were coming out of the grass. Adam looked closely and saw them wiggling and moving around. There were so many!

When they came back in, wet and happy, Adam’s mom had towels for them to dry off. She asked them to go into the family room. She had spread out a blanket on the floor by the fireplace. There were plates filled with Adam’s favorite peanut butter and banana sandwiches without the crust. There was chocolate milk in tall glasses with straws. He saw crunchy carrots and apple slices. There were marshmallows and hot dogs on sticks for roasting.

“Mmm,” said Dad when he saw the room. “Look what your Mom did! Come and sit, Adam. Who’s hungry?” Adam and his parents sat down with their legs crossed on the soft blanket.

“Can we have an indoor picnic again tomorrow?” asked Adam, his mouth full.

His mother kissed him on his cheek, which was sticky with melted marshmallow. “We’ll see.”

Questions

1. How did Adam's mom feel in the morning? How can you tell?
2. How do Adam's parents cheer him up after the rain cancelled their plans to go to the park?
3. Name three of the activities Adam enjoyed in the rain.
4. What food did they have at their indoor picnic?
5. Do you know what time it was when Adam woke up?

Vocabulary List

Each of the vocabulary words below are used in the reading passage. As you read the passage, pay attention to context clues that suggest the word's meaning.

1. Usually
2. Cheerfully
3. Replied
4. Quiver
5. Cozy
6. Spoil
7. Roasting

Context Clues

Using context clues from the sentences in the passage, underline the correct meaning of the word in boldface.

1) "He wasn't sure, but he thought that was the time his family **usually** woke up when they went to work and school."

- a. often b. never c. always d. from time to time

2) "Hello!" said Adam, **cheerfully**. "It's time to get up and go to the park!"

- a. sleepily b. quietly c. happily d. hopefully

3) "I don't know," **replied** Adam.

- a. yelled b. wondered c. explained d. responded

4) "Adam's lip began to **quiver**. His eyes got misty."

- a. hurt b. tremble c. kiss d. turn red

5) "They sat together on the couch. They snuggled, and it was **cozy**."

- a. uncomfortable b. squished c. comfortable d. rainy

6) "Hmm," he said. "Rain might **spoil** a picnic in the park, but it can also be fun sometimes."

- a. close b. ruin c. postpone d. dirty

7) "There were marshmallows and hot dogs on sticks for **roasting**."

- a. eating b. sharing c. cooking d. washing