

Once upon a time there was a family of mice. There was Mamá Ratón, Papá Ratón, and Brother and Sister Ratón. They all went on a picnic on a beautiful day.

Mamá had a beautiful voice and sang as she walked.

Papá had big muscles (or so *he* thought). He carried a *huge* picnic basket.

Sister was older than Brother and was very brave.

Brother had big muscles like his dad (or so *he* thought) and was almost as brave as his sister.

“Boo!” said Sister. “Yikes!” said Brother.

As they searched for a place to eat, they passed a tall fence.

“Psst! Hermana! I hear a cat lives behind this fence!” said Brother.

“I’m not scared of any cat,” said Sister.

“Me, neither,” said Brother.

Mamá sang a pretty song while Brother and Sister helped Papá unload the food.

Papá said, “Here are the medianoches, and the pollo frito, and the congri, and the bread, and the lemonade. What are *you* all going to eat?”

“Papá, you are so bad!” said Mamá.

“I have to eat a lot to keep these muscles so huge!” said Papá.

When they were done eating, Brother and Sister said, “Mamá, Papá! Vamos a jugar. We want to go play.”

“Children, you go play by yourselves,” said Mamá. “Me and Papá, we’re going to stay here and smooch.”

Papá said, “Yippee!” And they started smooching. *Smmooocch!*

Brother and Sister said, “Eeewww!” So they went to play by themselves.

They played hide-and-go-seek.
Sister was *always* lt.
They played fútbol. Sister scored again!

They played "close your eyes
and spin till you fall down."

They *both* won!
They had a great time.

They went to check on Mamá and Papá.
Mamá and Papá were still smooching.

Smmooocch!

"Eeewww!"

So Brother and Sister
went and played some more.



Sister said, "Race you to that fence, Hermano!"
Brother said, "That's where that cat lives!"
Sister said, "Chicken!"
Brother said, "I'm no chicken. Look at these muscles!"
"Boo!" said Sister. "Yikes!" said Brother. Then they
raced to the fence! Sister touched it first. But Brother
was not too far behind.

Brother said, "Do you think the cat is there?"
Sister said, "Let's look." They both looked through
the fence. Sure enough, there was the cat!

Sister said, "¡Hola, Gato!"

Brother said, "¡Hola, Gato!" The cat didn't say a word.

Brother said, "¡Hola, Gato!"

Sister said, "¡Hola, Gato!" The cat didn't move a whisker.

Brother flexed his muscles and said, "¡Hola, Gato flaco!
You're no match for these! Hee hee hee!"

Sister said, "¡Hola, Gato flaco! Hee hee hee!" They both
laughed so hard they had to hold their sides.

They laughed so hard that they didn't see the cat's bright
green eyes get a little smaller.

They looked through the fence again. The cat stared back.
Sister stuck out her tongue and gave the cat a great big raspberry.
“Ppllllllllllhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!”
So did Brother. “Ppllllllllllhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!”
They fell over laughing, tears coming out of their eyes.

They laughed so hard they didn't see the cat's tail stop moving. They laughed so hard that they didn't see his claws digging into the earth. They were laughing so hard . . .

they didn't see that cat jump up to the top of that fence and look down at them.
Brother and Sister stopped laughing. They looked up.
“Uhhh! ¡Adiós, Gato!” they said.

Then they turned around and started running as fast as they could.

“Mamá! Papá!” yelled Brother.
WHOOSH! They could hear the cat running behind them! WHOOSH!
It was getting closer—
WHOOSH—and closer.

“Mamá! Papá!” yelled Sister.
WHOOSH! The cat was getting even closer—WHOOSH—and closer!

Finally, they reached the picnic blanket. *Smmooocch!*
“Mamá, Papá! Stop smooching!” they shouted.

Papá turned around. “What?” he said.
“¡Papá, el gato!” said Brother.
“The cat is gonna eat us!” said Sister.

Papá flexed his muscles and said, “¡Yo no tengo miedo del gato! I'm not scared of that cat! If that cat comes I'm going to tell him, ‘¡Yo soy Papá Ratón!’ ¡Yo voy a darle pow! Pow! Pow! Pow!”

And just then Papá saw the cat.
“Mamá!” he shouted. He jumped behind Mamá.
Then Brother and Sister jumped behind Mamá!

The only thing that stood between that mean cat and her familia was Mamá. Her heart pounded.

She didn't know what to do, but with the courage a mother feels when her family is threatened, she stood on her hind paws, looked right into the great green eyes of that cat, and, from somewhere deep inside her, she said . . .

Woof! Woof! Woof! Woof! Woooooof! Woof!

The cat stopped turned around, jumped over the fence, and was gone.

"Whoa," said Brother.

"Cool!" said Sister.

"I knew I married the right woman!" said Papá.

And when they all got home nice and safe, Mamá said, "You see, kids? ¡Es muy importante hablar otro idioma! It pays to speak another language!"