

Laura's laurel tree

Hello, my name's Laura. I live here, and there's a garden in front of my house with beautiful laurel tree. The branches are very strong, and whenever I get the chance, I jump up and swing on them. I also tell it my secrets. Sometimes I hide underneath it, to play with my blue teddy bear. And sometimes I draw pictures of the birds that fly by. My dad thinks my drawings are great. Look, that's him over there. Isn't he handsome? Dad, the tree and me are a family.

Today, my dad came to see me because he said he had some news. He looked very serious, and he said that I have to go to the big school now, so we have to move house. Dad says that my new school is a long way away. The school I've been going to is just round the corner, but to get the big school, you have to walk such a long way that dad doesn't think I'll make it.

I don't mind moving house, but there is one thing I'm worried about. What about the tree?. What will we do with the tree? Dad says you can't take a tree with you, but we can visit it whenever we want. "Whenever we want." I don't want to leave my tree behind!

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What will I do without my tree? Where will I swing? Where will I hide? What will I play under? Where will I draw birds? And the worst part of all - who will I tell my secrets to now?

After Dad gave me the news, I decided to spend even more time under my tree. But I didn't feel like playing or swinging on it any more. I knew that my laurel tree was sad too, and I had to find a solution. What could I do...?

Yes! I've got it!

The next day I woke up nice and early so I could put my plan into action. All I had to do was prove to my dad that I could walk all the way to my new school. And I'd do it the way athletes do.

Every day I'd do a little training. And the first morning, I got all the way to Ramon's bakery.

"Excuse me, is this the way to the school?" I asked.

"Yes," he said, "but you've still got a long way to go. You'll never get there on foot."

Oh! When I got home, I was so tired I had to sit down. “What’s wrong with Laura? Why isn’t she playing?” my dad must have thought. But *shhhhh!* My plan was a secret –I couldn’t tell him about it yet.

The next day, I put my trainers on and set off again. The walk up to Ramon’s bakery didn’t seem so difficult now, and I still had enough energy to carry on.

“Good morning, is this the way to the school?” I asked Maria at the flower shop.

“Yes,” she said, “but you’ve still got a long way to go. You’ll never get there on foot.”

“Of course I’ll get there, that’s why I’m training”, I said. / But... (yawn), *aaahhh* first I need a little rest. Doing exercise is really tiring. On the third day, it felt as though my legs were much stronger. In no time at all I was at Ramon’s bakery. I walked straight on to Maria’s flower shop... and I still had enough energy to get to Alicia’s newspaper stand.

“Hello, is this the way to the school?” I asked her.

“Yes,” she said, “but you’ve still got a long way to go. You’ll never get there on foot.”

Phew! It was a long way to the big school! But I wasn’t going to give up. I was training really hard, and dad always says that if you work hard, you can get what you want. And what I wanted more than anything was not to be separated from my tree.

The fourth day was the day of the final challenge, and I knew I couldn’t afford to fail. / I started walking first thing in the morning, and on the way Ramon, Maria, and Alicia came out to say hello.

“Come on, Laura! That’s the spirit! You can do it! It’s not far now!”

Before, no-one believed I could do it, and now everyone was cheering me on as I went past. When I got home I was so happy that I hurried to tell my tree all about it. I’d walked all the way to my new school, and dad was going to get a big surprise when I told him. But I was the one who got a surprise. As he walked back from work, he had met Alicia at the newspaper stall, Maria at the flower shop, and Ramon at the bakery, and they’d all said to give their regards to the little sportswoman who had managed to do something so difficult. And when dad saw me, all he could do was congratulate me.

“I don’t think we’ll have to move after all,” he said. “You’ve worked hard, and proved that you can walk all the way to school on your own.” Since then I’ve never stopped training. I carried on walking, and travelled the whole country, meeting bakers, newspaper sellers and florists in every town I visited. But what made me happiest was knowing that, after every race, I could always come home and find my tree waiting for me. He was proud of me too. I know he was, because he gave me a beautiful crown, made of his leaves. And my dad told me that in Greek and Roman times, a laurel wreath was a symbol of victory, which was given to athletes when they won their races.

And I’d won my own crown!! Because Laura means ‘the winner’.

Script: Mireia Vidal