

Snowing Tortillas

Antonio and Marta lived at the edge of the woods because Antonio was a woodcutter. He was a good man and a good woodcutter, but to be honest he was not too smart. That was OK because his wife Marta was smart enough for both of them, as you will see.

One day Antonio took his machete deep into the woods and he saw something shiny under a tree. It was a gold coin! Then he saw another and he dug up a whole bag of gold coins. He was so happy! Antonio ran straight home to Marta. "Marta! We are rich!"

But she was not happy. She was worried. "Where did you get this gold, Antonio?"

"It was buried in the woods. Aren't we lucky?"

"I am afraid this gold belongs to the bandits. And when they find us with their treasure, eek"

"Marta, you worry too much. How could they find us?"

Marta knew her husband well. He was too friendly and talked to everyone. He could never keep a secret. So she started thinking. "Antonio, we must bury this gold. We can only keep a little to spend."

So Antonio with his strong arms dug a hole in the back yard and they hid the bag of gold. She took one piece and said, "Husband, please go buy me a big bag of masa flour so that I can make tortillas."

Soon he returned with the bag of masa. She said "You have worked so hard today, Antonio, you should go to bed early." So he did. Marta opened the bag of masa, mixed the dough, and started making tortillas. She made piles and piles of tortillas. She filled the kitchen with them. She kept making tortillas until the whole bag of masa was empty. Then she stood at the front door and began throwing them. She threw them into the garden, onto the roof, on the path and everywhere. In front of the house all you could see was tortillas! Tortillas! Tortillas!

Then Marta when to bed. Aaah, she was tired! Antonio woke up first and got up to build a fire. When he went outside for firewood, he saw all hose tortillas. "Marta! Marta!"

She got up and looked out the front door where her husband was pointing. "Oh, it must have snowed tortillas last night."

"Snowed tortillas?"

"Yes. Don't you know that when it gets really cold it snows tortillas?"

"I never heard of snowing tortillas before."



“Well, it’s because I went to school and you didn’t. Now that you are a rich man, you should go to school.”

The next day Antonio put on his Sunday clothes, slicked back his hair, and went to school. He enrolled in the first grade. All the little kids looked at him and giggled when he tried to fit his big body behind a small desk. When the teacher asked the children, “How do you spell the word ‘cat’?” they all put up their hands, but not Antonio. When the teacher asked, “How much is 2 + 3?” the children knew the answer, but not Antonio. By afternoon, Antonio was ready to go home.

“Marta, I don’t want to go to school any more. I am no good at school things.”

“Antonio, you are a good husband and a good woodcutter, and that is more important to me.”

So back to the woods he went, happy to be carrying his machete instead of school books. A week later, while Antonio was in the woods, some men came to the house. They were mean-looking. “Where is our gold?”

Marta looked surprised. “What gold?”

“You know what gold. Your husband has been talking all over town about the gold he found in the woods. It is our gold, and you had better give it back – or else!”

“I don’t know anything about any gold. My husband says a lot of crazy things. You cannot believe what he says. If you want to wait, you can talk to him.”

So the banditos waited, cleaned their fingernails with their knives, and looked very mean. Soon Antonio came home. The banditos growled, “Where have you put our gold?”

“Oh, that was your gold? I don’t remember where. Marta, where did we bury that gold?”

“Gold? What are you talking about?”

“You remember. The gold I found the day it snowed tortillas.”

“It snowed tortillas?”

“Yes. You know. I found gold and then it snowed tortillas and then I went to first grade.”

“What?” said the bandits. “It snowed tortillas and you went to first grade?”

“I told you,” said Marta. “My husband says crazy things sometimes. Don’t make him angry. He can be a little dangerous.”

“She is right, boys. He’s crazy. Let’s go.”

Antonio and Marta never saw the bandits again. And they lived the rest of their lives very comfortably with that gold. And, strangely enough, it never snowed tortillas again.

