

DAY AT A PICNIC

Hal Ames



Bobby did not like that he had to go with his parents to the company picnic at the park. The day was hotter than usual. The sun was bright with only a few clouds in the sky.

He only knew a few of the kids who would be there, and they were all younger. He knew he was going to be bored.

Bobby sat alone in the back seat of the car listening to his music. He did not want to go to the picnic, which put him in a bad mood. He folded his arms and stared out the window at the passing scenery. He was not really looking. He was thinking about how much more fun it would be to play with his friends at home and practice his skateboard tricks.

Bobby loved to skateboard. He was one of the best skaters in his city. He had won many contests and had trophies and ribbons in his room. Today, he was supposed to practice with his coach, but instead he had to go with his parents to the picnic.

It took about an hour to get to the park. All his father's co-workers were going to be there. He hated these picnics. They always had the same food: hotdogs, hamburgers, potato salad, and watermelon. Bobby wanted pizza, but his dad said it was not real picnic food.

There was a big sign that said, 'Welcome' outside of the park entrance, which had red letters and arrows pointing to the picnic. Every year it was at the same place, so Bobby wondered why they needed signs.

Bobby's dad parked the car under a big tree to keep the car cool; away from the hot

sun. They unloaded the supplies they had packed for the picnic and carried them to the picnic tables close to where the food was waiting for the lunch to start.

Every year Bobby's dad brought a game called cornhole. He took two boards and cut a hole in each one of them. Bobby's mother sewed some bags of beans; four red, and four blue. The people would toss the beanbags trying to put them into the holes. Each time a bag goes into the hole, the player gets three points. If the bag lands on the board, but not in the hole, the player gets one point. Bobby's dad always won the cornhole game.

After setting up the game with his dad, Bobby walked over to the food table. Sure enough, the food was the same as it always was. He picked up a hotdog, added some mustard and ketchup, and pushed it into his mouth. He ate the whole thing in one swallow. He also took some potato chips and a few pickles.

One of the ladies yelled at him and told him to wait until it was time to eat. She made him walk away from the table.

Bobby walked around alone wasting time until the games began. His dad always made him participate in the games as his partner. They always did all the normal picnic games like the three-legged race, egg toss, and the pie eating contest. The Robertson family usually won the award for the best family. Bobby's dad always wanted to win, but they always lost.

While Bobby was walking, he saw some kids on skateboards. He was very surprised that the city had already opened the new skateboard park. He wished he had brought his skateboard, but he did not know the new park was already open. He walked over to the fence to watch the boys and girls as they went back and forth. None of them was very good, but they were having fun.

Just then, someone came up behind him.

"Hey Bobby, do you know how to skateboard?" a familiar voice asked him.

He turned around and behind him was Marilynn, the daughter of his dad's boss.

"Yeah, kind of," Bobby said shyly. "I mess around on a board at home, but we

didn't bring it today. I didn't know the skateboard park was open yet."

"I have a skateboard in my car. Do you want me to get it for you?" Marilyn asked.

"Sure, what kind is it?" Bobby responded.

"I think it's a Snyder, I'm not sure," she said as she left to get the skateboard for Bobby.

"A Snyder!?" Bobby thought to himself. "That's the best skateboard in the world. I hope that's really what she has."

Marilyn ran back to Bobby, and said, "Here, try this out."

Bobby looked at it. Sure enough, it was a Snyder.

"Wow, this is great. How did you get a Snyder?" Bobby asked.

"My dad got it yesterday. He told me about it, but I haven't had a chance to ride it yet. Do you want to use it now?" she asked Bobby.

"SURE!" Bobby said with a big smile on his face.

Bobby took the skateboard from her and ran to the entrance to the park.

He then thought, "I don't have my helmet, wrist protectors or kneepads. I shouldn't skate without them."

Just then, Marilyn, who had followed him to the entrance, said, "Oh, one more thing. Look inside the box."

Bobby looked inside, and there he saw all the equipment he needed.

"How'd you know I was going to need this?" Bobby questioned Marilyn.

"My dad told me he had purchased everything I would need. Go ahead, you can use them," Marilyn smiled as she watched Bobby get ready.

Bobby was ready in a flash. He dropped the skateboard, put his right foot on it, and then pushed off with his other foot.

"Wow, this board is really sweet. I can do all kinds of tricks with this." Bobby thought out loud.

He did jumps, twists, and all kinds of tricks. He went as fast as he could and made

almost every trick he tried. He loved this new skateboard and how well he could ride it.

After trying all his tricks, he noticed something strange. All the other riders had stopped and were watching him do his tricks. They were all amazed at his skill.

Bobby liked the attention, so he tried even more difficult tricks to impress the people watching. Soon people were at the fence clapping for him every time he made a trick, or they went, “Ah” when he missed one. He was getting tired, but he enjoyed the people watching him, so he kept on going.

Finally, he got so tired he had to stop. Everyone clapped their hands and yelled their approval.

As Bobby was leaving the skate park, Bobby’s father came up to him.

“Excellent job son, I hope you like the new skateboard,” he said to him.

“Huh? What do you mean?” Bobby was curious.

“The skateboard is yours, son. I had my boss bring it so you wouldn’t know. We planned all of this just for you,” his dad explained.

“You mean you knew the skate park was opened all along?” Bobby asked.

“Yep, and so did everyone else. We wanted to surprise you,” his dad continued.

“Well, you sure did surprise me, dad. This is great!” Bobby answered.

“There’s one more thing you need to know. See that man over there in the green hat?” his dad asked, as he pointed to a man on the other side of the skate park.

“Yeah, I see him,” Bobby answered, while he looked over at the man.

He suddenly recognized the man who was standing there. “Oh my gosh! Is that Cody Snyder? He’s the greatest skateboarder in the world. Why is he here?” Bobby blurted out, expecting his father to tell him he was joking.

“He wants to meet you,” his dad said with a big smile on his face. “He talked to your coach back in the city, and your coach recommended that he give you a tryout to join his skateboard team. He’s waiting over there to talk to you.”

Bobby walked over to where Cody Snyder was standing. They talked for a while, and then Bobby ran back to his dad.

“Cody Snyder wants me to be a professional! He wants me to join his team. I can’t believe it. This is the best day of my life!” Bobby yelled out.

VOCABULARY: (*Match the word to its definition*)

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. swallow _____ | a. turns, rotate |
| 2. entrance _____ | b. supervisor |
| 3. in a flash _____ | c. not normal |
| 4. sweet _____ | d. paid athlete |
| 5. twists _____ | e. eat food |
| 6. applaud _____ | f. cool, special |
| 7. unusual _____ | g. opening, entry |
| 8. curious _____ | h. quickly, fast |
| 9. boss _____ | i. interested, inquiring |
| 10. professional _____ | j. clap hands |

TRUE / FALSE:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Bobby likes to roller skate. | T / F |
| 2. The picnic was at the lake. | T / F |
| 3. Marilynn was Bobby's friend. | T / F |
| 4. Bobby likes pizza. | T / F |
| 5. Bobby's dad always won the cornhole game. | T / F |
| 6. Cory Snyder was watching Bobby. | T / F |
| 7. It was raining the day of the picnic. | T / F |
| 8. Bobby brought all his skateboard equipment to the picnic. | T / F |
| 9. Bobby liked his dad's music. | T / F |
| 10. Cory Snyder offered a job to Bobby. | T / F |

MULTIPLE CHOICE:

1. What kind of skateboard did Bobby ride? _____
 - a) Hawk
 - b) Snyder
 - c) Falcon
 - d) Big Bear

2. Who gave Bobby the skateboard? _____
 - a) his mother
 - b) Madelyn
 - c) his coach
 - d) Marilyn

3. What did Bobby eat before he went to the skateboard park? _____
 - a) hamburger
 - b) chips
 - c) cornhole
 - d) hotdog

4. Why was Bobby's family going to the park? _____
 - a) company party
 - b) company picnic
 - c) company surprise
 - d) to learn to skateboard

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

1. Where did Bobby and his parents go?

2. What kind of food was at the picnic?

3. Who gave Bobby the skateboard?

4. Besides the skateboard, what else did she give him?

5. Who was watching Bobby on his skateboard?

6. What did the other riders do when Bobby was doing his tricks?

7. What was the name of the game that Bobby's dad made?

8. Who always won the cornhole game?

9. How long did it take to get to the park?

10. What did Bobby want to do instead of going to the picnic?
