

PEPE AND THE MAGIC BOX

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Pepe loved watching TV. He really liked watching cartoons and programmes with music groups. But what he liked more than anything else were the toy advertisements. Pepe preferred toys shown on TV to the ones he had at home. He liked cartoons, especially when they were about travel stories. Pepe thought that travelling was great fun. He could meet new people and learn about new places when travelling.

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One fine day, while he was quietly watching TV, he discovered a new toy he had never seen advertised or in any toyshop for that matter. What it was exactly was the “Playful Robot” and it looked fantastic. It walked, it danced, it obeyed anything people ordered it to do through its remote control which seemed to be magic. Pepe decided that this one was the toy he wanted to play with most.

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Pepe dreamed about the “Playful Robot” from the moment he saw the advertisement until his birthday. It was huge, very kind and a good playmate. If he got it, he would finally be very happy and he would have a cool time. He was going to invite all his friends and... Pepe was really looking forward to his birthday.

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At last, his birthday arrived and his parents gave him a big box. What would there be inside? Pepe tried to imagine. A bike? A toy castle? A construction set? He had no idea. Would the Playful Robot be inside? He looked at the box and he did not dare to open it. He was so nervous!

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But... oh, surprise!

What there was inside the box was, exactly what he wanted, that fabulous Playful Robot. It was bigger than Pepe, and it was covered in coloured lights. It was wonderful, his dream had come true. He could not believe that now the robot belonged to him.

Quickly, Pepe started to play with his new robot. He made the robot move a little with the remote control. It raised a hand, raised a foot, and moved its head... It was really funny!

His father and his mother are brilliant. They had bought the most attractive toy in the world for him. It was electrical and it would be his best friend, he was completely sure, he would never be able to be away from this wonderful toy. It seemed magical!

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But, after a few minutes, Pepe began to get fed up with his new toy. It seemed to be funnier when he saw it in TV! The only thing it did was to raise a hand, a leg, and move its head. What a drag!

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It was always the same. It didn't move from its place, it didn't walk, and it didn't speak. It couldn't be moved from where his parents put it because it was quite heavy, and, to top it all, it made a very strange noise.

Pepe was sad. He was as sad as he had been happy before. When he saw the Playful Robot in the TV ad he believed it was wonderful, but now it was different, it seemed to be more stupid and useless.

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For that reason Pepe was a little sad. After having been so excited about the Playful Robot, he didn't like it at all now. It is boring, all the time either raising or lowering an arm, a leg or moving its head. Who could think that something like that was funny? It was a stupid robot, it always did the same things.

And Pepe was so sad that he got into the robot's box, so nobody would see him. There, he would be able to think and cry if he wanted to. How would he explain to Mum and Dad that he didn't like this present they had paid so much money for?

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But soon he had a great idea. When he was inside the box, he began to imagine that he was travelling in space. The box was like a spaceship that flies among the stars. And down below, he sees the Earth, very small. It is so pretty from space! Now I understand why it is named the Blue Planet.

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Flying around the star-filled universe is smashing. Pepe wants to speak with them and to ask them about the airplane Pepón and about the Little Prince, a boy of another story that arrived on Earth from a very small planet and who visited other planets, but that is another story.

This one is a magical box, with it he can tour the universe and discover unknown worlds, learn to dream, to laugh and to cry.

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Pepe's imagination knows no bounds. Suddenly, he imagines that the box is a submarine. Now it is at the bottom of the sea, surrounded by fishes of all colours imaginable. And there is a chest full of coins there. Surely that must be treasure from some pirate ship!

He wants to learn the names of all the creatures that live in the sea: the grouper, hake, squid, sardine, prawn... He has only seen them at the fishmonger's. Ah, he saw them in the aquarium, too!

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Pepe wants to count the coins locked up in the treasure chest: they are coins through the ages: the shield, the doubloon, the peseta, the euro. Pepe has decided that, from now on he will save in his own money box.

Also there are plants that seem to be plants, but they are really animals. This magical box is really cool.

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When he gets bored of being at the bottom of the sea, inside his submarine, he imagines that the cardboard box is a tree house in the middle of the jungle. He is like Tarzan! And down below he can see all the animals without any danger. Look, a green elephant! It is beautiful!

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There are other animals too: a lion, a zebra, a rhino, a panther... Each animal has a different colour, any colour he could imagine.

What a fun adventure. Pepe is having a great time. The sun shines high in the sky and rests on a cotton cloud. The green elephant speaks to him about Nature and Pepe promises to himself not to throw litter on the ground, but in the wastebasket.

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But it is time to go back home, and the best way to return is imagining that the box becomes a car. It is amusing going for a drive through the city with his new car! He imagines that he is passing in front of his friends' houses, and he waves to them.

When he is driving his car, which moves with solar energy, he is happy. In the city he is passing through everything works with solar energy: cars, heating, light, the food-mixer, the refrigerator...

He thinks that energy is very important, and that it must be conserved. He promises that he will switch off the light when he leaves his room. This is a box full of surprises. Pepe drives along, waving to everybody with a happy face. Everything seems to be great fun.

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When he steps out of the cardboard box, the robot had fallen on the ground. Naturally, the batteries had run out! This had definitely been the best birthday present he had ever received. And Pepe isn't talking about the robot, which is really boring, but about the magical box, in which he can imagine anything he wants.

Pepe is already thinking about new adventures with his magical box. Travelling in an airship, imagining that the box is either an elevator or a magician's top hat, a boat that sails the seas, a plane to visit the whole world...

Pepe has understood that the best toy can be a cardboard box, because his imagination turns it into something magical.