

RITA'S BIRTHDAY

Page 1:

Hello! Hello, everybody who is reading this text, and you especially . Yes, yes, you. I do not know your name, but I want you to say it to me. Louder, I can't hear you. Wonderful! You have a beautiful name. My name is Rita and I am made of paper. I have a lot of friends, as you are going to find out.

Today is my birthday. I must prepare everything very well, because I am having a party. I want everybody to come to my birthday tea party. Especially Periquito the little boat, Pepón the airplane, Tanta the elephant, the Pajarilla sisters and Susana the frog. All of them are made of paper, the same as me.

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But, pay attention!, I have a human friend, too, his name is Ramón, he is not only a human like you and like the rest of the people, but he is made of geometric figures: circles, squares, triangles... The same things that you can find at home, have you noticed? The table is a square, plates are circles, and a funnel is a triangle, and so on. Well, I can't hang around dawdling, I must make a call. Mummy and Daddy tell me that I have to learn to use the telephone correctly, to use it only when it is necessary. But today is an important day and I must telephone everybody. These calls today are necessary.

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Periquito is a very nice little boat made of paper. He sails all over the sea, he rides a wave and he picks up shells that, later, he gives me as a present whenever he comes to visit me. If you put a seashell next to your ear you can hear the voice of the sea. Do you know how the sea speaks...?

- Hello Periquito.
- Hello Rita.
- Do you want to come to my birthday party?
- Of course. And not only will I give you a seashell, today I will give you wind fritters and cheese that I cooked on the high sea myself. I call them marine fritters.

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- Thanks a lot, Periquito. The party will begin at six. Don't be late.
- I will go sailing, I will head for your house and in two sea blows and a swell I will be near you. See you.

I like speaking with my friend Periquito, he knows a lot of stories about coloured fishes, enchanted mermaids, happy boats and ghost boats, wise sailors, blue moons and oil slicks. Periquito says that water is very necessary to live and we need to take care of it. I know, for that reason I turn the tap off while I brush my teeth. I don't waste anything. I don't want to squander water. And what about you?

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Finding Pepón the airplane is much more difficult because, as you notice, he always has his head in the clouds. Today he is very close to the sun, which provides light and heat. Sometimes, my friend Pepón acts like heating and other times he acts like a fan, turning his propeller round and round without stopping. He says that little paper birds, like me, should be careful with both cold and heat, just like people. And electrical appliances can be really dangerous if you do not know how to use them. I am a little small, so I do not use those appliances. I just watch them and learn when Daddy and Mummy use them.

- Hello Pepón. Are you coming to my home to have a birthday tea with me?
- I will go flying, because I want to give you a gust of wind and various sandwiches as presents, how does that sound?
- A gust of wind! Wonderful! I will be able to fly with it. Periquito will bring marine fritters.
- See you then, Rita. Happy birthday!
- Thanks, thanks.
- See you at six p.m.

It is great to organize a birthday party in this story of paper characters, because everybody is very friendly and prepares exquisite food.

You are invited to my party, too. But you must think about a present which cannot be bought with money. What food would you like to cook for the birthday tea party? Think of that and call when you've decided, ok?

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My friend Tanta the elephant lives in a huge and crowded forest, she is almost as big as the whole wide world. Tanta is a green elephant because she comes from the most wonderful enchanted forest of the planet. She is the only green elephant that exists in this paper world.

- Hello, this is Rita, is that Tanta?
- Yes, it is me. This is Tanta, is that really you Rita?
- Yes, this is Rita.
- Happy birthday
- Thanks, Tanta. I am calling to remind you that my birthday party will take place at my home at six o'clock.
- I'll be there, Rita, and I'll bring a piece of forest path and orangeade for you. How about that?

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- Wow! A piece of forest path! I'll be able to see the forest whenever I want to walk on it. And another thing, orangeade is a wonderful drink. Periquito will bring marine fritters and Ramón various sandwiches.

- Delicious... yummmmy!
- Goodbye, Tanta. See you.

I love speaking with Tanta and stroking her trunk. Do you know which other animals live in Tanta's forest? If you see them, please invite them to my party. Tanta has enormous ears and she always uses them to listen to her parents, to her teacher and to other paper animals, although they are very small. You can learn many things when listening.

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The Pajarilla sisters always speak at the same time. Of course, because they are twin sisters...there are two of them, but there only seems to be one of them.

- Could I speak with the Pajarilla sisters, please?
- That's us!
- Hello, this is Rita. My birthday party is today at six o'clock. Don't forget.
- A very happy birthday to you Rita. By the way, we want to give you a bunch of bottled joy, that way when you open it you can roar with laughter. As well as that, we have cooked coconut biscuits.
- Bottled joy! Very original! And I am sure that the coconut biscuits will be really tasty too. Periquito is bringing marine fritters, Pepón is bringing various sandwiches and Tanta is preparing orangeade.
- What a smashing party!

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Of course, if you think about it calmly, birthday parties can be very boring, especially if people only eat candies, sweets... and nobody has bottled joy. But in my party there will be very different food and loads of smiles. Have you already decided if you will attend my party? I am asking you reading this story.

Do you know something? My school teacher, who is also made of paper, says that if we have a complete, balanced diet we will be healthy and happy people. She also says that we must be careful with pointed scissors and with very sharp knives. My teacher always tells the truth. For that reason, there won't be any scissors or knives in my party. They are not necessary. And the food is very varied. It's going to be a great party.

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But I can't hang around talking to you. I have to make another call. I don't want to forget Susana the frog.

- Is that Susana?
- Yes, yes, yes, it's me, Susana the frog.
- This is Rita, the little bird. I'm calling you because I want you to come to my tea party today. As you know, today is my birthday.
- Well! Happy birthday! What time is the party?
- At six. Be sure to come.
- I will go in a rain cloud that will be perched on your window a few minutes before six o'clock. I will bring a piece of rainbow and bags of peanuts, what do you think about this idea?
- Great, Susana. Periquito is bringing marine fritters, Pepón is preparing various sandwiches, Tanta is bringing orangeade and the Pajarilla sisters are going to prepare coconut biscuits.
- What a super picnic!

Do you know Susana the frog? No! Then it is a pity, because she lives in a small pond which is illuminated by the light of the sun and the rainbow during the day and by the reflection of the moon at night. When she comes to my house she always asks the same question: Why do you forget to switch off the light when you leave a room? She never forgets it. And you? Do you switch off the light when you leave a room or do you leave the light on?

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And, finally, I must call Ramón. Ramón is my geometric friend, he lives with his parents and he likes cakes.

- Hello Ramón.
- Who is it? If I do not know you I cannot speak with you. My parents have told me not to speak to stranger.
- It's me! Rita! Don't you remember me?
- Yes, of course, you are Rita the little bird. Happy Birthday, because today it is your birthday, isn't it?
- Yes. That's why I want to invite you to my party. It's at six in the afternoon, will you come?
- Of course! I will bring you a wise label and some tasty sandwiches, made of lettuce, tomato and tuna.
- A wise label, that's cool! So much food to eat will make us stuffed! Periquito is bringing marine fritters, Pepón, various sandwiches, Tanta, orangeade, the Pajarilla sisters, coconut biscuits and Susana, peanuts.
- Yummmmy. I am already licking my lips!

My friend Ramón says that products speak to us and, all we need is to know how to listen. But they speak through their own wise labels, if we listened to them before buying, everything would be fantastic.

Ramón knows how to place the plates on the table and he knows how to use the place settings correctly too, but he does not enter the kitchen if he is alone. He only enters when he can help his Daddy or his Mummy. He is a very clever boy.

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Well, I have just finished calling all my friends. I am very glad, now I know that my party will be a huge success. As well as that, we have so much food, nobody will be hungry. Nobody has spent much money for my birthday party. Every year is the same- the money that we have not spent is sent to other paper friends who have no money to celebrate a birthday party like this one.

I will cook the cake with the help of my mother and my father. Ramón is right, you know. The kitchen can be a very dangerous place if you don't know how to use casseroles, frying pans, the food mixer and everything correctly. You can burn or scald yourself with the hot surfaces and hot water. Can you imagine having an accident right on your birthday...?!

But none of that will happen because I will be accompanied by mum and dad to cook the cake. Thanks to their help, bit by bit, I will learn to cook.

I never grab hold of anything without their permission. In the kitchen there are some tools that we mustn't use. Do you ask at home if you can use something that there is in the kitchen? I suppose you do, don't you?

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Sure, today it is a special day, so I am in the kitchen with Mum and Dad, baking a delicious cake, with biscuits, jam and chocolate.

Mum says:

- Rita, you can place the biscuits on that tray.
- Great! (I say while placing the biscuits)

Meanwhile, dad is preparing the chocolate and mum is preparing the jam. The three of us are doing excellent teamwork.

I very much like helping in the kitchen, but when it is necessary to use the oven or the hob it is a more appropriate job for grown-ups. I don't want to get burnt or spoil the wonderful cake that we are preparing.

Papa says:

- Rita, the cake is finished, so you can put the candles on it, but be careful.
- Wonderful! (I say again)

I am very happy, the cake is already finished and I am in charge of putting the candles on it. Five candles, because I am going to be five. It is fantastic!

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At six in the afternoon, my house is full of friends. Nobody is missing. Everybody is here: Periquito the little boat, Pepón the airplane, Tanta the elephant, the Pajarilla sisters, Susana the frog and my friend Ramón.

A lot of people and all of us are having a nice day. The gifts are wonderful: a seashell with the sounds of the sea, a gust of wind, a piece of forest path, a bunch of bottled joy, a piece of rainbow and a wise label. Papa and mother have given me a book of stories about the heart as a present. I am very, very happy.

On top of that, we have so much food to eat: fritters, sandwiches, orangeade, biscuits, peanuts and cake.

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Do you remember who has brought each thing?

Today I have learned a lot of things: the telephone is very useful when it is necessary; both turning the tap off and putting out the light is really important; I must be careful with electrical appliances; I can learn a lot of things if I listen; eating all types of food is healthy and I must not use pointed scissors or sharp knives; I should pay attention to the wise label before buying a product.

Do you want to know what I usually say? The best thing in the world is friendship.