

Grandfather's Wish



Chapter Seven by Kay Hively

Excited to see three lambs, Miguel crawled into the pen with the ewe and her babies. The lambs surrounded him as he knelt down. Even the ewe was happy to have Miguel in the pen. While he played with the lambs, the ewe enjoyed her hay and water.

Miguel was glad to see that one of the lambs was a ram. Even though it was the smallest of the three, the little ram looked healthy. Miguel was so proud of his animals that he scooped all three of them up in his arms and hugged them to his chest.

Miguel held his future wrapped in his arms.

In bed that night, Miguel could hardly sleep. He was excited about his lambs, and he was eager to help shear sheep the next morning. With all this on his mind, Miguel forgot about the upcoming fiesta.

Early the next morning, two men came to the ranch. Senor Martinez and his son Jose were ranchers from the other side of the valley. They had come to help shear the sheep.

Miguel and his father had already sorted the animals. The ewes were separated from their lambs and the three big rams were penned in the barn.

As soon as the two helpers had taken care of their horses, the first ram was brought into the pen. Jose wrestled it to the ground and held it while Senor Martinez began cutting the wool from its body. The ram was a fine Navajo. Its wool, hanging in long strings, was of especially fine quality.

As Senor Martinez and Jose worked, so did Senor Sanchez and Miguel. They took the second ram and began shearing

its wool. Miguel's job was to hold the ram still and prevent its sharp horns from hurting him or his father. Two of the three rams in the Sanchez flock had full sets of horns. Unlike other breeds, Navajo rams often have two sets of horns. Sometimes one set of horns grows forward and the other set grows backward.

Miguel had always admired the massive horns on the Navajo rams.

All morning long the sheep shearers worked, clipping the fine wool as fast as they could. Miguel liked to see the pile of wool grow. His favorite wool came from the Navajo sheep. It grew in long strings and in many colors.

Senor Sanchez said Navajo wool was strong and long-lasting. He said it would probably be used to make bright, colorful rugs.



The men worked hard shearing the sheep. Miguel's mother and his little brothers even helped by keeping the extra set of clippers sharp. By mid-day everyone was ready to eat.

Miguel ate his tortillas quickly so he could visit his ewe and her lambs.

He was happy they were safe in the barn. Soon he would have to put them with the other sheep. Like a protective parent, Miguel wished he could keep his own sheep apart from the others on the ranch.

Classroom Extensions Things to Think About and Do -

- A. Learn about Navajo rugs. Many of the designs have meanings. Create your own design and explain what the design means.
- B. Explain what the author meant when she wrote, "Miguel held his future wrapped in his arms?"

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Next Week: Chapter Eight - Fun at the Fiesta