



LUIS AND EL TORO

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Chapter 1



Show Illustration #1

Luis had already finished his breakfast when the sun began peeping over the mountain top. He stood outside his home, a little cabin on the mountain side, watching the sun rise. The sky grew bright with rose and gold colors and slowly all the mountain tops appeared out of the gray mist of night. Luis glanced over at his favorite mountain, El Toro. How beautiful it looked against the morning sky! He could hardly take his eyes from it. *Some day* he thought, *I shall draw El Toro*. Then his thoughts were shattered by the sound of his father's voice.

"Luis!"

"Yes, Papa," he answered. "I will get my hoe and come right away." Luis thought his father wanted him to help in the fields.

"No, Luis," his father said. "Today you will not go to the field with me. Today you will go down the mountain to the store for your mother. Listen carefully to the things she needs and do not forget anything."

"Yes, Papa," Luis replied his eyes sparkling. He liked to work in the fields with his father. But it would be fun to go to the store and see Juan and the other boys who went to school with Juan.

"Here is the money you will need." Luis' father continued. "Take care that you do not lose it on the way."

"Oh, I shall be very careful, Papa," Luis promised.

"And these are the things I need." said Luis' mother, coming to the cabin door. "Sugar, coffee, rice, tomato sauce, and lard." It took all four fingers and the thumb of one hand. *That will help me to remember*, he thought.

Happily Luis set off on the foot path that led down to the lane. The mist was almost all gone from the valley, and the sun was warm on his shoulders. *My*, he thought, *what a good day this is going to be*.

The store which Juan's father owned, was down the lane where the lane met the highway. As soon as Luis saw it, he began to run. How eager he was to see Juan again. Then suddenly he stopped short in the path and tried to recall the items his mother had told him to buy. Carefully he counted on his fingers. *Sugar...coffee...lard...tomato sauce*. He had used all his fingers but not his thumb! *Oh, dear!* he thought. *There is one more thing and if I do not remember it, Papa will not trust me to come again*. He thought and thought. And then suddenly

he remembered. *Rice!* That was it. Happily he ran on to the store.



Show Illustration #2

Juan was standing at the door. He shouted, "Hi, Luis! It is a long time since I have seen you."

"Yes, Juan," Luis replied. "We have been busy in the fields. And we do not have much money these days to buy things. But today Papa sent me to buy some groceries for Mama."

Together the boys entered the store and Luis repeated his list to Juan's father. Just then some other boys came into the store.

"Hi, Luis!" they shouted. "Hi, Juan!"

Then they all began talking and laughing at once until finally one of them said, "Well, Juan, are you all set for school next week?"

Juan made a face. "No," he said. "I do not want to go. But my father says I'm just sitting in school all day!"

"How about you, Luis?" they asked.

Luis' face grew sad. "I would like to go," Luis said. "But Papa says there is not enough money to buy shoes. And he needs me to help in the fields."

"What an odd fellow you are!" Juan exclaimed, "wanting to go to school. I would much rather stay at home and help my father."

"But there is so much I do not know," Luis answered. "I'd like to learn to draw the beautiful things I see." He was thinking, *I'd like to know about God*. But, he thought, *the boys would laugh*, so he did not say anything more.

By then, the groceries were ready. Luis counted out the coins his father had given him and handed them to Juan's father.



Then, balancing the package perfectly on his head, he bid the boys goodbye and started toward home.

Show Illustration #3

The trip home was more difficult. The mountain slope was steep. But Luis was strong and sturdy, and he climbed steadily, the package balanced safely on his head.

Now and then he stopped to rest.