1 The village party

Sophia Walter and her brother, William, lived in a small village. On the last day of May, Sophia said to William, 'It's June next month and 21st June is the longest day of the year here, isn't it? Why don't we have an enormous party that day? What do you think? I looked on the calendar. That day is a Saturday this year. We can invite thousands of people.'



William laughed, 'Well perhaps a hundred. That's an amazing idea! I'd like to invite everyone in my group at college and you should send invitations to all your classmates, Sophia.'



'Right! And to everyone in the family AND everyone who lives in the village,' Sophia added.

'Good thinking!' said William. 'We could have party quizzes, races and competitions, too. I might win one for dancing.'

'William, you aren't very good at dancing ... sorry,' Sophia said. 'But, well, you ARE improving slowly ... . Hey! Pop or rock music?'

'Both,' William answered. 'We can tell everyone to wear funny costumes as well.'

'Or their best clothes,' Sophia said.

'Let's say, wear funny costumes OR best clothes then,' William said.

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'And we must put really long tables outside in our street and ask everyone to bring food,' Sophia said.

'Yes, excellent!' William said. 'Like pizzas, pieces of cheese, olives, pasta, salads, sandwiches ... and let's ask Mum to make a huge butter and strawberry jam cake in the shape of our street.'

'And milkshakes,' they both said at the same time.

'We can ask Mrs Trip to make those,' William said. 'Her chocolate milkshakes are delicious.'

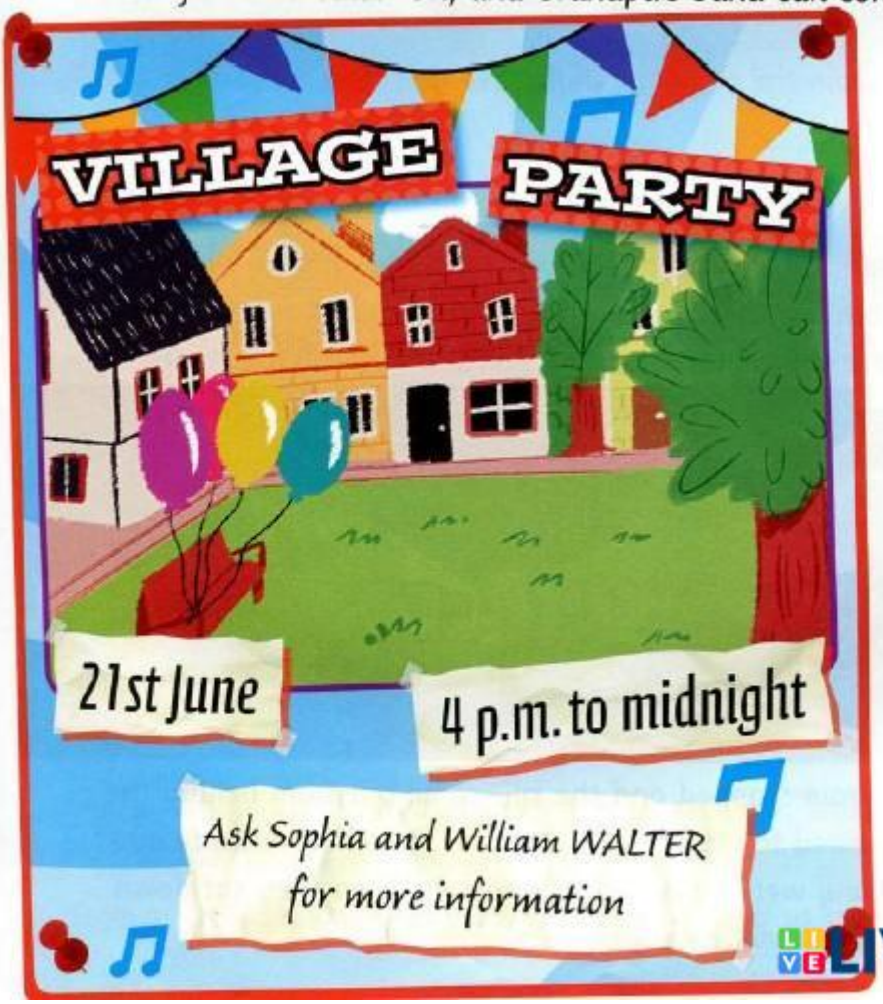
'Good thinking!' Sophia said. Then she and William went to speak to their parents about their village party idea.

'Fantastic!' Mum said, and Dad agreed.

'I can get prizes for the races, quizzes and competitions,' he said.

'Oh!' Mum added, 'We must have a running race for grandparents only! And a volleyball match in Mrs Trip's front garden, too. We can put the net there.'

'Wonderful!' Dad said. 'Oh, and Grandpa's band can come, as well. They play pop and rock music.'



'Grandpa's band – brilliant!' Sophia said.

'OK,' William said. He wasn't so sure about that, but he liked the volleyball idea.

William and Sophia designed a party poster with a cartoon of the village on it and glued it to the wall on the corner of their street. It said: Village party! 21st June. 4pm to midnight. Ask Sophia and William Walter for more information.

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Everyone was excited about the party and Sophia and William worked hard. They wanted the party to be perfect.

On the morning of 21st June, the weather was dry and sunny. Neighbours carried out their tables and put them down the middle of the street and someone brought a hundred paper plates and plastic cups. Dad and two of his friends made a stage for the band to stand on and put lines of little flags with spots and stripes on them between the street lights.



Just before four o'clock, everyone started arriving. Some wore funny costumes. Lots brought delicious food with them. But then it began to rain.

'No! No! No!' Sophia said. 'What shall we do?'

'Don't worry!' said Mr Sand from the camping shop. 'See you in a minute.'

'No problem!' said Mrs Kite from the little clothes shop. 'I've got an idea.'

'Never mind!' said Miss Smart from the school office. 'I can help, too.'

Mr Sand came back with three huge tents. Mrs Kite came back with 24 umbrellas. Miss Smart came back with ten big towels. Everyone ran around under the umbrellas and hurried to move the tables and chairs and food inside the tents.



And, when they finished, the rain stopped and the sun came out from behind the clouds again. So, everyone helped to carry the tables and food back outside into the street again, and to dry any wet chairs with the towels. Then they sat down with their umbrellas and laughed and laughed.

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At five o'clock, William entered the dancing competition, but he didn't win. Sophia's friend, Betty, did. At six o'clock, Grandpa's friend, Richard, won the sports quiz that Sophia wrote.

At six thirty, William's friend, Dan, won the hopping race. Mrs Trip won the skipping race and Sophia's grandmother won the running race for grandparents. At seven o'clock, Uncle Harry won a prize for the funniest costume. He looked like an octopus but couldn't hold eight sandwiches in his eight arms.

At about eight o'clock, Mr Walter stood up and said loudly, 'Let's thank Sophia and William for their fantastic idea and hard work. Thank you Grandpa's band for the great music, Mrs Trip for letting us use your garden for the volleyball match and for your delicious milkshakes and we mustn't forget to thank Mr Sand, Mrs Kite and Miss Smart for your help, too. What an adventure!'

'Yes! Hooray! Well done!' everyone said and clapped. No-one went home before midnight.



'That was such a cool day,' said William the next morning when he sat down quietly to read his new music magazine.

'Yes, it was brilliant,' said Sophia. 'Hey! Next year, shall we call it a summer festival and have a different ... ?

'Sophia!' William said, 'It's much, much too early to start talking about that yet!'

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