

2013

GOAL

The day before Christmas, with the lofty, ethereal, whitish red dome of the San Juan Mission behind us, and after a breakfast of “make your own omelet” and a chocolate chip pancake, we began our meandering walk along the historical mission district’s small Carmelesque shops. The day before the celebration of a symbolic new beginning. Of more light entering the world.

The road ended in a small wall, with the sign, “No loitering, no drugs allowed”—short-hand testament and warning that behind this low slung wall was the Mexican-American portion of the town.

Turning left, we continued our walk past small cottages, sheltered by majestic pepper trees, which allowed dappled light to fall onto the stony, dusty road. On the right a mother sat on the steps of her porch, talking in rapid-fire Spanish on her cell phone while watching her two sons play. The older, maybe seven, with close-cropped hair, placed a soccer ball on the ground. He began to instruct his younger brother, barely two, with a more ragamuffin hair style, how to kick—each practicing the motion into thin air.

The older brother walked around the ball, and stopped about ten inches from it. He placed his feet shoulder-width apart, bent his knees, and then nodded. The younger boy kicked the ball. It traveled the ten inches through his brother’s upright legs.

For a moment there was silence. Then the arms of both brothers raised simultaneously in ecstatic victory. Their hands came together in high fives followed by a hug as they jumped up and down, shouting:

“GOOOAAAALLLLL!”

We quietly and smilingly walked past them. As we looked back, we saw them running after the ball, and, although we could no longer see the sign with the no loitering letters, but could still see, through the wispy branches of the pepper tree, the outline of the Mission’s dome.

Goal!! This is a beautiful. It was such a lovely interaction, and I'm so glad you captured it, rather than just letting it evaporate. This is really well-written, and perfectly describes this precious, ineffable moment. I did a little tightening, nothing significant. It is a perfect little gem. Start collecting them - you can string them together to make a necklace :-)

Love, Jo

the second was during a walk we took in San Juan old district. I found some scrap notes (about three nearly illegible lines) and recreated a "poem". Then i found a one page where i'd actually written it up. So, i include both the one page, and then after what i wrote this morning from memory.

ah, such memories; love love

I remember the Goal story It captures the resilience and joy of youth. A very sweet little anecdote. Thanks for sharing, these are really precious little gems. Make that necklace as your next project :-) Love, J

A few years later I found three barely legible lines of writing, had forgotten I wrote the above, and so tried to create a small poem from it!:)

Goal!!!

J & I are walking on a
tree shaded street in old San Juan.

Two brothers are holding hands,
walking from their porch onto the lawn.

The three year old sets ^{lets go of his brother's hand, and} a soccer ball on the grass
His older brother walks a few feet away.

The younger one kicks the soccer ball through
and places his feet apart.

They both giggle. We smile, and take
each other's hand, and continue our stroll

Goal!!! on so many levels ----