

Jocelyn Ramirez - Top Blue #1 - 11th Grade

In the quaint town of Cotulla, the annual celebration of "Dia de los Puerco" was more than just a festival; it was a cherished tradition that brought the community together. Every year, the county fairgrounds buzzed with excitement, filled with the scent of barbeque, the sounds of laughter, and the vibrant colors of booths selling everything from crafts to homemade delicacies. But this year was different. As the sun dipped low on the horizon, casting a golden glow over the fair, a hush fell over the crowd. People were stunned to see a lone figure riding a majestic white stallion into the fairgrounds. The rider, cloaked in a flowing robe and wearing a mysterious mask, seemed to embody the spirit of the festival itself. The rider gave a sense of excitement and compelled the crowd to stare in awe. Yet he carried an air of enigma that left the townsfolk both intrigued and slightly uneasy.

With the feeling lingering through the crowd the lone, inexplicable figure walked around the fairgrounds. All the people watched as he strolled past them, wondering who he was and what it was about him that made him so compelling. The air stilled, like the calm before a storm. Kids, usually running around like crazy, held tight to their parents, eyes wide and curious. The smell of barbecue, usually the main attraction, seemed to disappear as everyone stared at the mysterious rider. He got off the horse real smooth, the white stallion just breathing quiet clouds in the cool air.

The rider walked towards the funnel cake stand, and the crowd moved aside like he was a king. Maria, the lady who ran the stand, had seen a lot at the festival, but

nothing like this. He pointed at the funnel cakes, all golden and sugary, and Maria, too surprised to talk, just gave him one.

He took it with a gloved hand, and it was so quiet you could hear the paper crinkle. Then, very slowly, he took off his mask. Underneath the mask wasn't some scary villain, but old Mr. Abernathy, the town's retired librarian. Everyone gasped, and then started laughing.

Mr. Abernathy, with a twinkle in his eye, took a big bite of the funnel cake. "Happy Dia de los Puerco, everyone!" he said, loud and clear. He explained he always wanted to make a big entrance, and this year, with his granddaughter's costumes and a borrowed horse, he finally did it.

Everyone relaxed and the party started up again. Mr. Abernathy's little joke reminded everyone what the festival was about: fun, friends, and being silly. The smell of barbecue came back, the kids started playing again, and the Dia de los Puerco went on, better than ever, thanks to the librarian. And the story of the masked rider? Well, that became a legendary story everyone told for years to come.