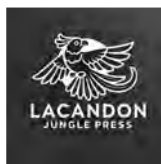


Tico Goes to School

A 'Tail' of Bravery and New Beginnings

Flaco Sol



Lacandon Jungle Press

Tico Goes to School

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*For anyone who was ever nervous to start something new, or afraid to venture beyond
what they knew.*

*For without those nerves and without that fear, they wouldn't have had the chance to use
their bravery.*

*Every big adventure starts with a tiny step. It's okay to feel nervous. It's okay to feel unsure.
That just means something wonderful is waiting on the other side of that first moment.
Just like Tico, you belong. The world is a better, brighter place because you're in it. So take
a deep breath, step forward, and know that you're going to do just fine.*

You've got this.

— Flaco Sol

This is a story about courage.

Yours, too, is a story of courage.....

Once upon a time, in the colorful jungle of Verde Valley, there was a young tiger named Tico. But Tico didn't look like the other tigers. While most tigers had bright orange fur with bold black stripes, Tico was white with black stripes that shimmered in the sunlight.

Tico's father was a hardworking farmer who spent his days tending crops and gathering fruit to sell at the market. His hands were always busy, but his heart was always full of pride for his family. Tico's mother was a kind and motherly tiger who made everyone feel welcome. She spent her days caring for their home and helping neighbors in need.



Today was Tico's first day of school, and he was both excited and nervous. He packed his favorite green backpack and said goodbye to his mamá and papá. 'Suerte, mi amor!' his mamá called out. 'Be brave, Tico!' his papá said in Spanish.



Tico smiled and stepped carefully into the jungle path leading to school. When he arrived, all the orange tiger cubs turned to look at him. Tico waved and said, 'Hi! I'm Tico. Nice to meet you!'



But the other cubs whispered to each other. 'Why is he so pale?' one asked. 'He looks like he's made of snow!' another laughed. Tico's ears drooped, but he stood tall. 'I'm just like you,' he said. 'I love to play and learn. And I can even speak two languages!'



'What's that mean?' sneered one cub named Bruno. 'It means I can speak Spanish and English! Watch—Hola, amigos! That means 'Hello, friends!' But instead of being impressed, the cubs laughed even harder. Tico felt his face grow warm. He wanted to hide, but he remembered his papá's words—Suerte. Be brave."



During recess, Tico sat alone under a tree until he noticed a group of cubs struggling to tie vines for their fort. 'Necesitan ayuda?' Tico asked. The cubs looked confused. 'Do you need help?' he repeated.



'Yeah, but you wouldn't know how,' Bruno said. Tico grinned. 'Watch this!' He twisted and tied the vines quickly, creating a sturdy knot. 'Whoa! That's awesome!' one cub said. 'How did you do that?' asked another.



Later that day, Bruno tripped while carrying his art project. Papers and markers scattered everywhere. 'Oh no!' Bruno groaned. Tico hurried over. 'Necesitas ayuda?' he asked. 'What?' Bruno blinked. 'Do you need help?' Tico repeated. Bruno nodded. 'Yeah. Thanks.'



That afternoon, during music class, the teacher asked the cubs to share songs from home. Tico nervously raised his paw. 'Can I sing a song in Spanish?' he asked. The teacher smiled. 'Of course, Tico! We'd love that.'



Tico took a deep breath and began to sing. His voice filled the room, and soon the other cubs were clapping along. Even Bruno tapped his paw to the beat. 'That was cool!' one cub said. 'Sing another one!' said another.



That afternoon, Bruno walked Tico home. When Tico's mamá opened the door, she said, 'Hola! Quieres quedarte para la merienda?' (Hello! Would you like to stay for a snack?) Bruno looked at Tico, confused. Tico smiled. 'She's inviting you for a snack. Come on!'



Bruno grinned and followed them inside. Mamá served them fruit and cookies while Papá played soft music on his guitar. 'Your family is nice,' Bruno said. 'I think it's cool that you know two languages. Maybe you can teach me some Spanish?' Tico's face lit up. 'Claro! I mean, sure!'



From that day forward, the cubs learned that being different wasn't bad—it was what made Tico special. And Tico learned that kindness could turn strangers into amigos.

The End



Thank you for sharing Tico's journey with me! *Tico Goes to School* is not only Tico's first adventure but mine as well as an author.

Like Tico, I had to remember my mother's words: *You can do anything you set your mind to*. Her belief in me gives me courage and I hope Tico's story inspires young readers to embrace their own unique paths with bravery and confidence.

About the Author

Flaco Sol is inspired by the richness of cultures around the world, the beauty of living in a melting pot of diversity, and the way people discover what makes them unique. A passionate baseball fan, a dedicated father, and an avid learner of foreign languages, he finds joy in understanding different traditions and perspectives. His appreciation for cultural diversity fuels his writing, aiming to encourage young readers to embrace their own uniqueness and the stories that shape them. Finding one's special purpose is

a journey, and *Tico Goes to School* is a reflection of that path—one filled with curiosity, courage, and new beginnings.

When not writing, Flaco enjoys exploring new places, immersing in different traditions, and embracing the lessons found in everyday life.

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