

英文原版
赠全文朗读音频

Disney · PIXAR
COCO

寻梦环游记

A Story About
Music, Shoes, and Family



华东理工大学出版社
EAST CHINA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PRESS



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美国迪士尼公司 著

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图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

Coco寻梦环游记: 英文 / 美国迪士尼公司著.

—上海: 华东理工大学出版社, 2018.6

ISBN 978-7-5628-5473-9

I. ①C… II. ①美… III. ①英语—语言读物

IV. ①H319.4

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字 (2018) 第098075号

项目统筹 戎 炜

责任编辑 黄 娜 孟雨慧

装帧设计 肖祥德

出版发行 华东理工大学出版社有限公司

地址: 上海市梅陇路130号, 200237

电话: 021-64250306

网址: www.ecustpress.cn

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印 刷 上海盛通时代印刷有限公司

开 本 720mm × 1000mm 1/32

印 张 12.25

字 数 272千字

版 次 2018年6月第1版

印 次 2018年6月第1次

定 价 49.80元

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扫一扫 收听英文朗读

Chapter 1



Mamá Coco is the only person who truly understands Miguel. That's why he loves spending time with her.

“Hola, Mamá Coco,” he says as he steps into his greatgrandmother's room.

She's in a wicker wheelchair with her shawl and furry slippers. Her skin is as wrinkled as a wadded paper bag and her face is framed by two white braids.

“How are you, Julio?” she says. Mamá Coco is very old, and sometimes she gets confused.

“Actually, my name is Miguel.” He leans forward so she can get a good look at him. She lost her teeth long ago, but that doesn’t stop her from smiling. “Heh, heh,” she chuckles as she reaches for his cheeks.

Miguel tells her everything — how he likes to run with his hands open and palms flat because it’s faster; how he has a dimple on one side of his face but not on the other; who his favorite luchador is. Mamá Coco nods and smiles, while the scraggly cat at the window yawns and stretches.

When he runs out of things to say, Miguel starts humming absentmindedly as he straightens



things around the room. He catches Mamá Coco's foot moving, but he can't tell if she's trying to tap the rhythm or scratching an itch on her heel.

Without realizing it, Miguel stops humming and starts to sing out loud. He can't help it. The music just takes over.

He's about to hit a high note when his abuelita storms in.

"How many times do I have to tell you?" she says, pointing at him. "No music!"

She startles the cat at the window, and it runs off. She startles Mamá Coco and Miguel, too. Noticing this, Abuelita softens a bit and comes over to give Mamá Coco, her mother, a kiss on the forehead.

"Sorry I yelled," she says, and turning to Miguel, she adds, "but you know the rule — no music."

Miguel does know the rule. He's reminded every day. Once he blew into a glass soda bottle, and when Abuelita heard the whistle, she snatched the bottle away. Another time Miguel rushed to the window when he heard a truck

with its radio blaring, but before he could catch the tune, Abuelita angrily slammed the window shut. A few nights before, a trio of gentlemen had serenaded as they strolled by the family hacienda, and instead of letting them fill the air with beautiful songs, Abuelita burst out the door and chased them off. “No music!” she’d shouted after them.

And here she is again, telling him about the ban on music.

“I know the rule,” Miguel says, “but—”

Abuelita shushes him. Then she sits on the edge of Mamá Coco’s bed and pats the space beside her so Miguel can sit, too.

“Let me tell you why we have this rule,” she begins. Miguel sighs. He’s heard the story a million times. He can recite it by memory, and he says the words in his mind as Abuelita speaks. “A long time ago, there was a family. A mamá, a papá, and their little girl. The man, he was a musician. He loved to play the guitar while his wife and daughter danced. Every day, he and his wife would sing, dance, and count

their blessings.” Abuelita pauses and takes a deep breath before going on. “But this man had a dream. He wanted to play his music for the world. And one day, that man left with his guitar . . . and never returned.” She shakes her head with shame, and her voice hardens a bit. “Now imagine a man holding a guitar and walking away as his poor wife and child stand in the doorway and watch. But do you think that woman wasted one tear on that walk-away musician? Tch—¡Claro que no!”

Miguel decides to finish the story. “She banished all music from her life because she had a daughter to provide for,” he says, and Abuelita nods. “So she rolled up her sleeves and she learned to make shoes. Then she taught her daughter to make shoes. And later, she taught her son-in-law. Then her grandkids got roped in. As the business grew, so did her family.”

Abuelita puts a hand on Miguel’s shoulder. “And who was that woman?”

“My great-great-grandmother, Mamá Imelda.”

“And the little girl?”

“Mamá Coco,” Miguel answers, glancing at his great grandmother as she sits in the wheelchair, nearly asleep.



Chapter 2

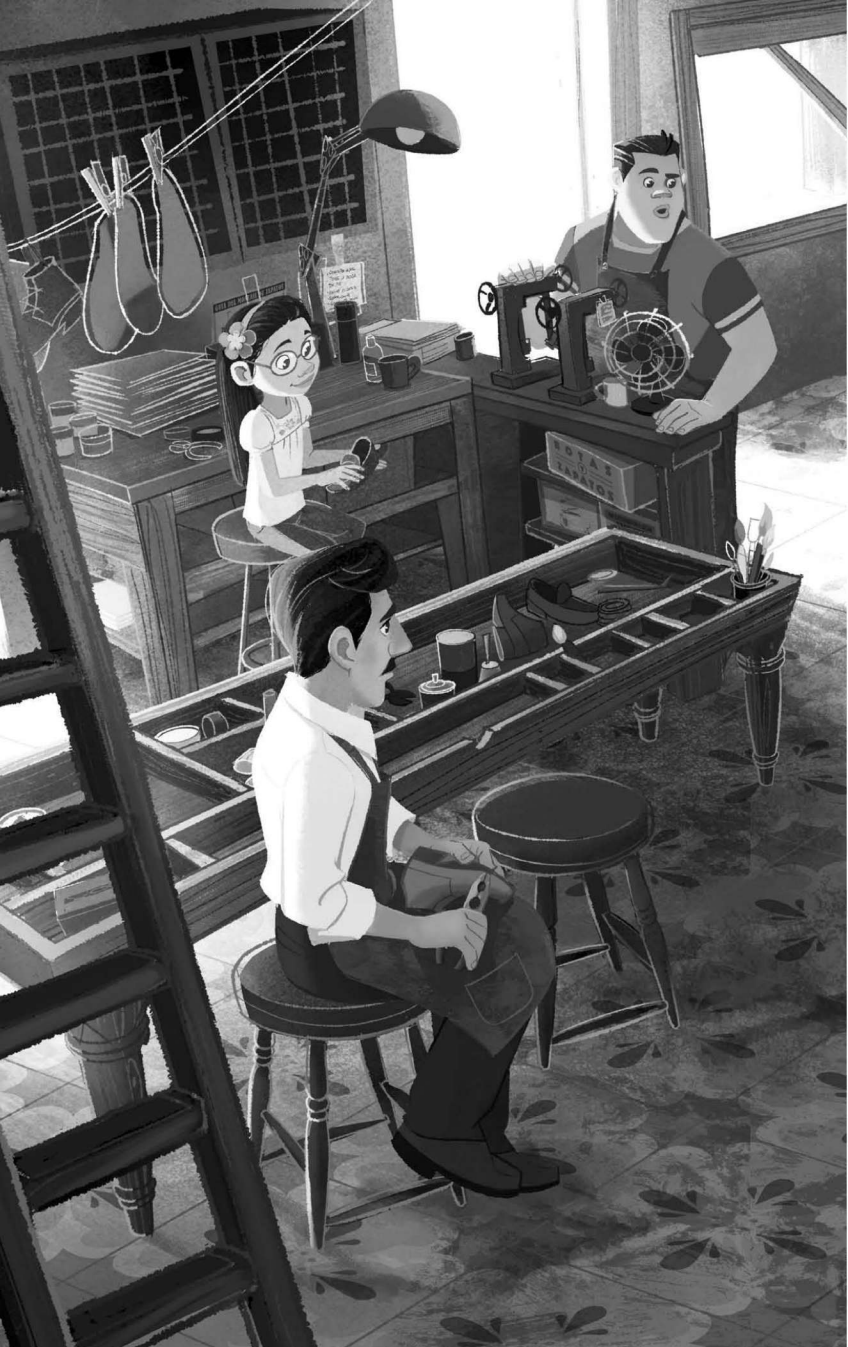


Abuelita gets up and adjusts the shawl on Mamá Coco's shoulders. She beckons Miguel to follow her, and they tiptoe out, making their way to the ofrenda room. It's set up as a memorial to their ancestors, with an altar decorated with embroidered cloth, flowers, and candles illuminating portraits of relatives who have passed away. In the flickering light, the portraits seem to move as if the ancestors were still alive. Abuelita lovingly adjusts a sepia-tinted photo of Mamá Imelda with baby

Coco on her lap. A man stands beside her, but his face has been torn away. The only clue that this is the mysterious musician is a charro jacket with fancy trim, the kind that mariachis love to wear.

“Come along,” Abuelita says, and she leads Miguel across the courtyard to the shoemaking shop. Cabinets along the walls hold trays of buckles, shoelaces, brackets, threads, and chisels. Half-finished shoes hang from clotheslines, and different-sized mallets are thrown about. The floor is scuffed from so many years of the Rivera family hard at work. Even now, they are busy making shoes. Miguel’s papá and tía Gloria use rivet guns to make eyelets for shoelaces. His mother and grandfather run fabric through sewing machines. Tío Berto carves into leather with a swivel knife, and Tía Carmen traces patterns on a cutting board. It’s very noisy in the shop, but the tapping, punching, and sewing sound nothing like music to Miguel.

Abuelita waves her hand across the room as if showing Miguel a grand kingdom. “Music tore our family apart, but shoes have held it together.”



Then she giggles to herself. “In fact,” she says, “I captured the heart of your grandfather when he realized that I made the most beautiful and comfortable cowboy boots in all of Mexico.”

“I never got blisters,” Papá Franco says.

“*No one* gets blisters when they wear *my shoes*,” Abuelita proudly announces.

“Okay, okay,” Miguel says. “Shoes. I get it.” He slips a red hoodie over his tank top, grabs a shoeshine box, and heads for the door. “Why don’t I make myself useful and go shine some boots in town?”

“Be back by lunch, m’ijo,” his mamá says.

“And don’t forget to use the brush on suede and the cloth on leather,” Abuelita reminds him.

“Got it!” Miguel says, rushing to shine shoes like a proper Rivera boy. But, and this is the part he’s left out, he plans to shine shoes near the musicians in Mariachi Plaza!

On his way to the plaza, Miguel says hello to a woman who is whistling as she sweeps her stoop. Then he passes a lone guitarist playing a classical piece with lots of tremolo. Miguel

nods with appreciation, and the man nods back. The closer Miguel gets to the plaza, the more music he hears and the happier he feels. Young girls sing while jumping rope, the slap on the sidewalk setting the tempo for their song. The church bells chime in harmony with a tune played by a street band, and when a radio blares a cumbia rhythm, Miguel does a few crossover steps to the beat.

He's humming when he reaches a pan dulce booth and grabs his favorite type of sweet bread, the cochinito, a gingerbread cookie shaped like a pig.

"Muchas gracias!" Miguel says as he tosses the vendor a coin.

"De nada, Miguel!"

As he walks along, he feels something at his leg, and when he looks down, he sees the scraggly cat from Mamá Coco's window. It scurries off, then glances back to see if Miguel is following. *Where does that cat want me to go?* he wonders.

He shrugs and moves on to a street vendor

at a booth full of alebrijes, colorful sculptures of fantastical creatures, like lizards with feathers, rabbits with horns, and giraffes with multicolored spots. Miguel stops a moment, tapping a rhythm on the table. He's about to take a bite of pan dulce when a familiar street dog sidles up. The dog is nearly bald, with a few hairs sticking out here and there like thorns on a nopal. He goofily licks his chops because he's hungry.

Miguel breaks off the rump of the cochinito and holds it over the dog's nose. "Want some of this?" he asks, laughing.

"Roo, roo!" the dog answers.

Miguel goes through the commands he has taught the dog. "Sit, roll over, shake." The dog performs each trick perfectly. Miguel finishes with his favorite, "Fist bump," and he laughs as the the dog laps his long tongue against his closed hand. "Good boy, Dante!"

Miguel drops the pan dulce, and Dante gobbles it up.





Chapter 3



There's a sense of celebration in the air because it's the eve of Día de los Muertos, the Day of the Dead, when the community honors loved ones who have passed away. The streets are lined with strings of papel picado, squares of paper with punched-out designs, brightening the space with their pinks, greens, golds, and blues. Children reach for decorated sugar skulls. Some of the elderly, viejitos and viejitas, carry candles and vases filled with marigolds and mums for their ofrendas, while

others rush to buy soda, candy, fruit, cigars, or toys to leave at the gravesites.

Meanwhile, Miguel quickly makes his way to Mariachi Plaza with Dante at his side. They finally reach their destination, and the plaza lives up to its name, for it is crowded with musicians. *They're so lucky, thinks Miguel, to play guitars and trumpets without getting scolded.*

“I know I’m not supposed to like music,” Miguel tells Dante, “but it’s not my fault!” Miguel looks up and gazes at a statue of a handsome mariachi. “It’s *his*: Ernesto de la Cruz, the greatest musician of all time.” At the base of the statue is a plaque with the musician’s most famous quote—SEIZE YOUR MOMENT.

Just then a tour group makes its way to the statue, and Miguel eavesdrops as the tour guide tells them about the famous musician.

“And right here in this very plaza,” the tour guide says, “the young Ernesto de la Cruz took his first steps toward becoming the most beloved singer in Mexican history.”

As the guide speaks, Miguel imagines de la