

Nikki's Adventure



Nikki was happy to visit the special park her mother had been telling her about. When they arrived, she could hardly believe her eyes.

As she stood on the sidewalk in front of the entrance, she could barely see over the hedge that made a fence around the park. She could see the top of a red and white tent and the head of a dinosaur. She heard carousel music, the sounds of ducks, and children playing. Nikki could smell popcorn, hot dogs, flowers, and fresh straw.

The most exciting sight of all, however, was the huge hot-air balloon that swayed gently in the breeze just outside the park. It was tied down to stakes that had been hammered into the ground. It was the biggest balloon Nikki had ever seen. She wanted to get closer to see inside the basket that hung from the balloon. It was tied to the balloon by large ropes.

The man who sold balloon rides was reading his newspaper. Nikki's mother walked over to talk to the man. Nikki walked over to look at the basket. She had never seen a hot-air balloon up close. The basket had high sides. Ropes went up from the basket to the balloon above. She got up on her toes to peek inside. To get a better look she pulled herself up on the edge of the basket, but lost her balance and toppled into the basket head first.



Nikki's mom continued to talk to the balloon ride operator as a breeze began to blow and the balloon began to rise into the air. Nikki was sitting on the floor of the basket, where she found a leather bag. It was filled with tools balloonists can use to help find their way. She found a compass, a telescope, and a map of the park. About that time, Nikki felt the balloon begin to wobble. She looked over the side of the basket, and was amazed to see the ground so far below.

The ropes that were supposed to keep the balloon in one place had come untied and were dangling below the balloon. She could now see into the park. A boat drifted toward the bridge, a flag waved in the breeze, children rode the horses on the carousel as it circled round and round, and farm animals gathered under the trees in the barnyard.



The balloon continued to rise. Nikki was now directly over the park. She could no longer see the sides of the buildings. Instead, she saw the tops of the buildings. The red and white top of the carousel now looked like a fancy pie. She was seeing the ground the way the birds see it.

Nikki noticed a rope which was dangling by itself from the balloon into the basket. She grabbed the rope to steady herself. This let the air out of the balloon and the balloon started to slowly descend toward the ground. She saw that the balloon was drifting toward a large fenced pasture, located within the park, where she finally landed. Nikki had a wonderful adventure but she was glad to be on the ground and see her mother again.