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Oh! What a Holiday!

WHEN I WAS A CHILD, our family lived in the city of Newcastle. It was about eight miles from the North Sea, and our family sometimes had a picnic at the seaside. Occasionally, in the evenings after finishing my homework, I would ride my bicycle down to the sea to enjoy the fresh air and the smell of the ozone. I loved to hear the lashing of the water on the rocks. It was like another world, after the noise and bustle of the city.

In those days there were no passenger planes. Besides, our family could only afford a week at the seaside, where we would hire a caravan. Caravans were like old horse-drawn buses, without the horses. They were converted into holiday homes still on their large caravan wheels. They provided a small dining-room, a tiny kitchen, and bunks for sleeping. Usually we would spend our days outside on the beach, playing in the sand, looking for shells and pebbles, and paddling in the water (“plodging”, as we call it in our dialect).

I remember one special holiday in a caravan. When we arrived that Saturday it was raining, but we didn’t mind. We planned to enjoy the rest of our six days playing on the beach. It rained all night. The next day, it was still raining heavily, so we had to stay in the small space of the caravan. The next day it rained... and the next... and the next. I remember my father

taking me with an umbrella to buy food for the family to eat inside the caravan. We came home soaked, and had to hang our wet clothes inside the caravan. In fact, it rained until the next Friday, and we were due to return home on Saturday.

When the heavy rain continued on Friday, we decided to return home that day, feeling there was no point in staying for another wet Saturday. So we packed our luggage and set off home. Just then, the sun began to shine as if to mock us! Then when we arrived home, we found that the rain had flooded the house and we had to clean it up! Yes, what a holiday!

Yet, maybe some farmers would be feeling happy to have rain for their crops. For the sake of those who needed rain, we can only agree that:

*“Along with the sunshine,
we’ve got to have a little rain sometime.”*

Life is like that: we have good days and bad days.