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VROOM! VROOM!



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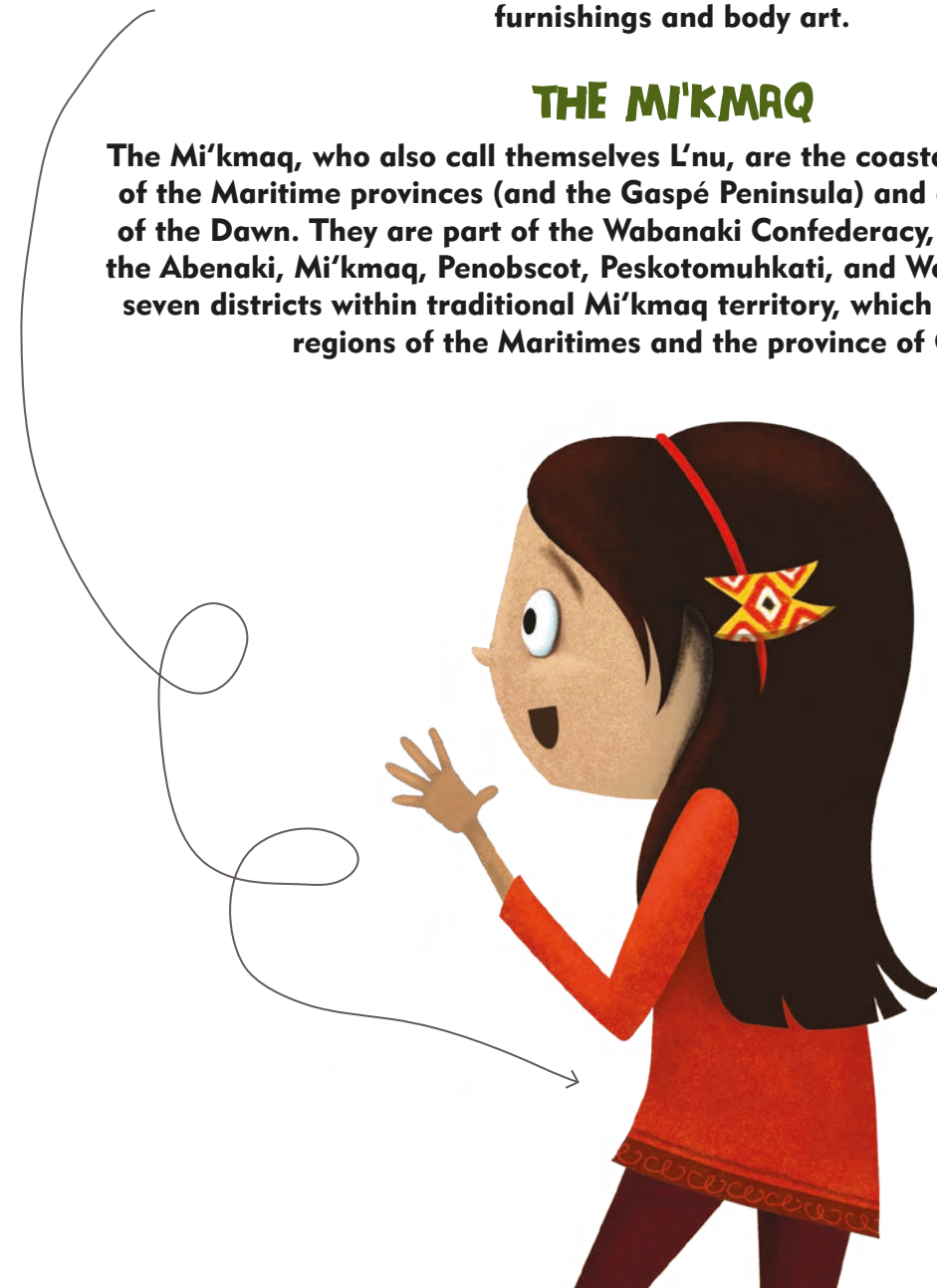
Dairy Farmers of Canada would like to acknowledge the contributions made by Indigenous partners in the representation of the book's Mi'kmaq character, Nadine.

MI'KMAW MOTIF DESIGNS

The double curve motif design associated with the Mi'kmaq nation can be traced back to pre-contact petroglyph art found in the traditional coastal regions of the Maritime provinces. What sets these motif patterns and designs apart from those of other Indigenous nations is their floral representation. These patterns would traditionally be found on clothing (look for the motif at the bottom of Nadine's shirt when reading the book), birch bark canoes, furnishings and body art.

THE MI'KMAQ

The Mi'kmaq, who also call themselves L'nu, are the coastal Indigenous peoples of the Maritime provinces (and the Gaspé Peninsula) and are known as People of the Dawn. They are part of the Wabanaki Confederacy, which is made up of the Abenaki, Mi'kmaq, Penobscot, Peskotomuhkati, and Wolastoqiyik. There are seven districts within traditional Mi'kmaq territory, which includes the coastal regions of the Maritimes and the province of Quebec.



CHAPTER 1

What's a Soap Box?

Every day after school, Colin and his twin brother, Robin, wave goodbye to their friends and head home. Before they have a snack, they each have some chores to do. Colin sweeps the stairs and Robin gets the mail from the mailbox. Of all the chores, these are the two they like the least. Colin doesn't like sweeping because he's not



very agile with the broom. And Robin doesn't like getting the mail because there's never anything interesting.

But today there's a surprise among the bills and flyers:



"Colin, look! There's a soap box race!"

"A box of soap can't race," Colin says with a chuckle.

"Not that kind of soap box. These soap boxes are little homemade cars. And if they're built well, they can go *really* fast," explains Robin.

Colin stops sweeping. Robin hands him the flyer and Colin reads it quickly.

"Should we enter?" he asks, a twinkle in his eye.

"Of course we should enter!" answers Robin.



CHAPTER 2

Rolling, Rolling, Rolling . . .

Once their plans are drawn, the twins spend the entire weekend building their soap box.

While rummaging through the garage and basement, they find:

- wood planks of all shapes and sizes
- various colours of paint
- a steering wheel
- two horns
- some screws
- some nails
- a really, really big roll of grey tape

Their pile of building supplies is impressive. But the twins are missing one important thing.

"We don't have any wheels," Robin realizes.

"Aw, nuts! Without wheels our soap box can't move," says Colin.

"And if it can't move, we can't win," Robin says with a sigh.

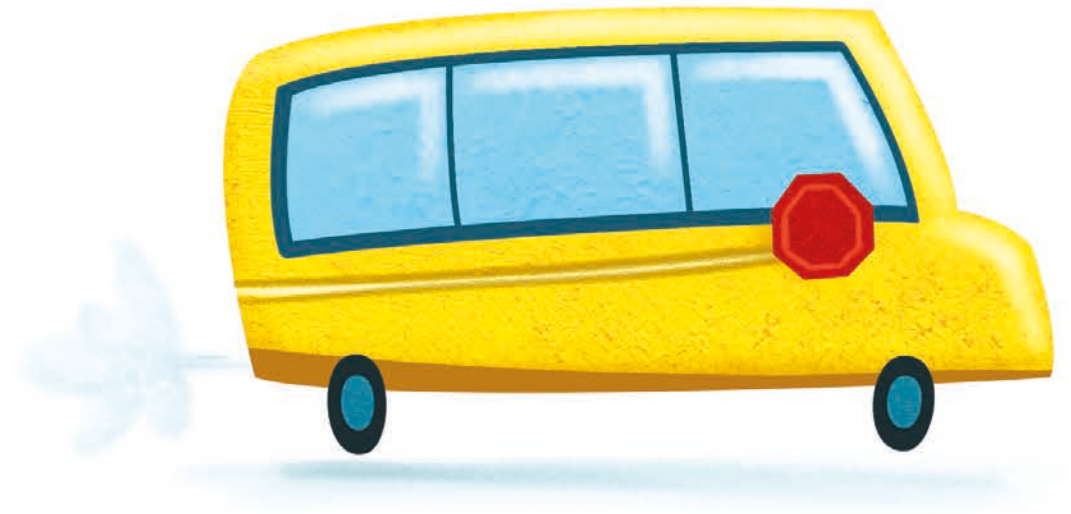


Rather than get discouraged, Colin comes up with an idea.

"We could ask Emma and Nadine. They might have wheels we could use."

"That's a great idea! Maybe they could even help us build the soap box. The four of us would make an unbeatable team."

The boys are excited. Working in a team is always more fun.



CHAPTER 3

You Too?

As soon as they board the school bus, Colin and Robin join Emma and Nadine in the last row. The two friends are having an animated discussion.

"We have an offer for you," says Robin.

Curious, the girls stop chatting.

"We're listening," says Emma, raising an eyebrow.

"Have you heard about the soap box derby?"

"Of course," say Nadine and Emma.

"Well, Colin and I are going to enter."

"Oh yeah?" asks Emma.

"Yeah, and we were wondering if you'd like to join our team."

The girls look at each other and burst out laughing.

"What's so funny?" asks Colin.

"We were going to ask you to join *our* team!" Emma explains when she finally catches her breath.

"Really?"



“Really! We started building our soap box yesterday,” confirms Nadine.

“But then we ran into a problem—we don’t have a horn,” says Emma. “We were wondering if you’d like to work with us.”

The four friends stare at one another. Then they all start laughing.

“Four builders for two soap boxes. That’s twice as great, right?” asks Robin.

“Absolutely,” says Emma.

“We’re in!” says Nadine.

“Excellent! Let’s start after school,” says Colin.





CHAPTER 4

Construction and Snacks

Emma's garage is the new headquarters for the four friends to build their two soap boxes. The girls install their new horn while the boys adjust their new wheels. Both cars are almost finished.

"Let's paint ours green," says Emma.

"Good idea! We can name our soap box Brocco-Lightning," suggests Nadine, a paintbrush already in her hand.

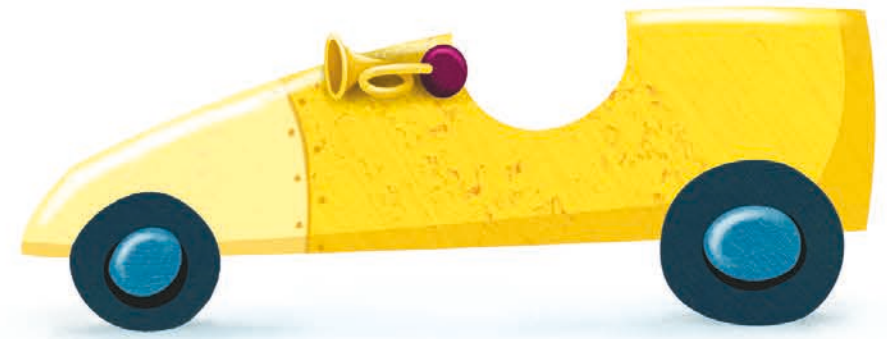
"I love it," Emma says and turns to the twins. "What are you going to name your soap box?"

"Hmm, I didn't know we had to give it a name," answers Colin, stumped.



Robin rummages through the cans of paint.

"If we paint it white, we could call it Cream of the Crop. If we paint it yellow, we could call it Zippy Banana," suggests Robin.



"Zippy Banana—I love that name!" says Colin.

The four friends paint their soap boxes. The girls in broccoli green and the boys in banana yellow. Colin is just putting on the last coat of paint when Emma's father comes into the garage carrying a tray of broccoli with yogurt dip, slices of banana bread and four glasses of milk.

"Some fuel for my favourite builders!"

"Thank you!" say the famished friends as they rush to get a snack.

"Make sure you stock up on energy," says Emma. "Because after our snack, we'll test our soap boxes."

The others try to cheer, but their mouths are full of broccoli.



CHAPTER 5

Three, Two, One, Test!

Once the soap boxes are set up at the top of the small slope of Emma's driveway, the teams are ready to do their first test run. Nadine and Robin are the drivers. Colin is in charge of the stopwatch. Emma is the safety officer. She walks around each car, carefully reviewing her checklist.



"Brakes?"

"Check!"

"Steering wheel?"

"Check!"

"Helmets?"

"Double-check!"

Satisfied, Emma puts down the checklist and places a hand on the back of each car. "Are you ready?"

Nadine and Robin glance at each other and then shout, "Yes!"

Colin raises his stopwatch and counts down.

"Three, two, one, GO!"

Emma gives the cars a hard push.
Nadine holds her steering wheel
tightly. Robin does too.

The soap boxes creep forward and
then . . . stop. Robin even has to get
out of Zippy Banana to push it across
the finish line.

"These soap boxes are so slow,"
Nadine says as she takes off her
helmet.

"We'll never win with these," agrees
Robin.

"Don't worry," says Emma. "With a
few tweaks, I'm sure the next test run
will be great."



Both teams get back to work—removing a bit here, adding a bit there—to try to make their soap boxes faster. But the outcome of every test run is the same: their soap boxes are too *sloooow*!

“This isn’t working. We have to find another solution,” says Nadine, scratching her head.

The four friends sigh.

“I’m getting tired,” says Colin. “I’m going home for dinner. Are you coming, Robin?”

That’s when Emma gets an idea.



"I know what we need!"

"Really?" asks Nadine.

"Yes. We need fuel!"

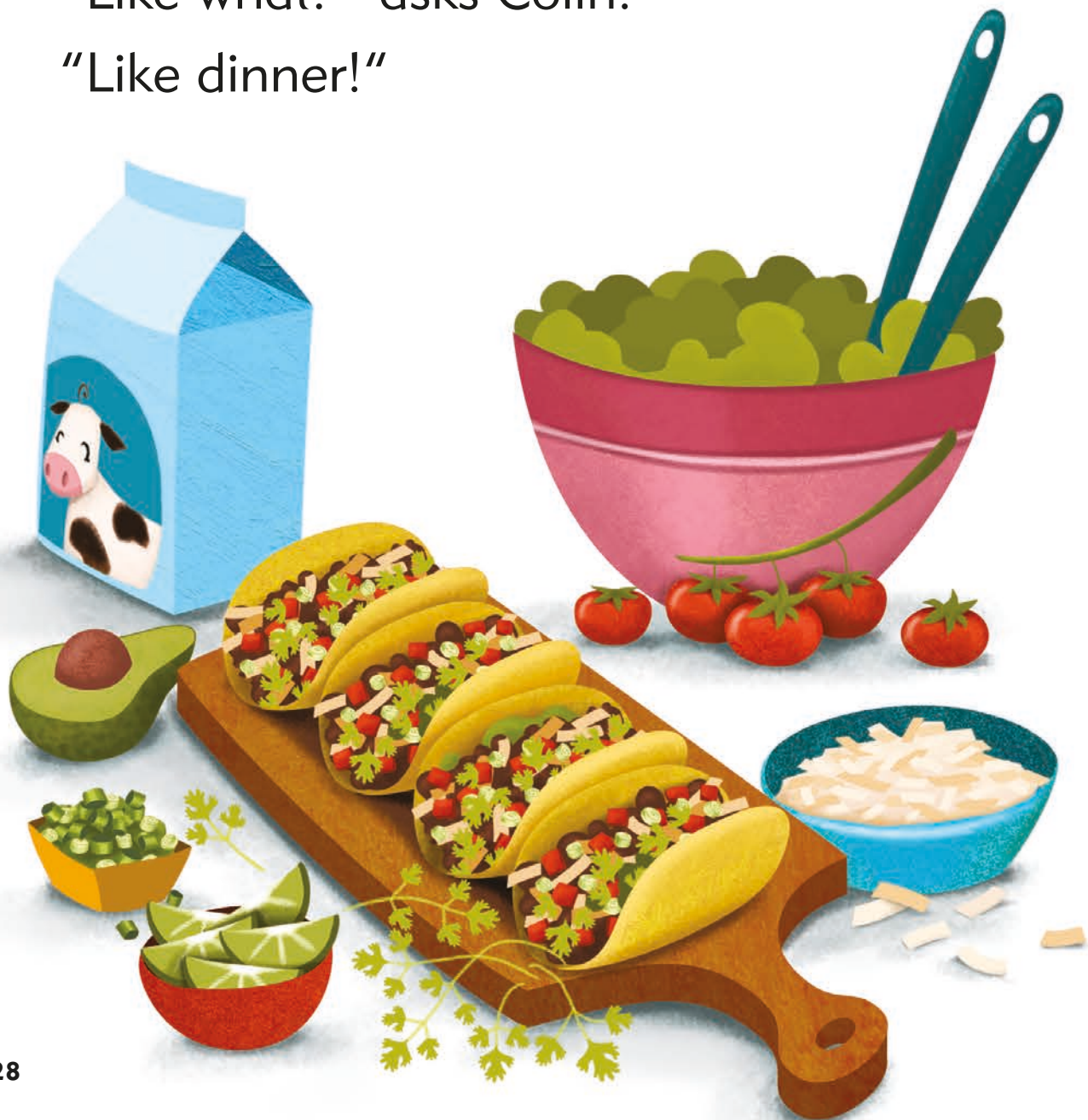
"Like gas for cars?" asks Robin.

"Yes," says Emma. "But not gas.

Something *else* that gives energy."

"Like what?" asks Colin.

"Like dinner!"



CHAPTER 6

What We Need Is . . .

The friends had studied energy at school. They had learned that a car needs fuel, like gas or sometimes electricity, to work. They had also been taught that energy could come from many sources, like the sun, wind, water and food. Emma was excited that she had remembered what she had learned.



"Tomorrow, we'll test our soap boxes using food to make them go faster. If food energy works for humans, it might work for cars too!"

But there's a problem.

"Oh no! I can't come tomorrow. I have a piano lesson," says Nadine.

"Neither can I. I'm going to the dentist," says Robin.

"How about the next day?"

"That won't work either. We have gymnastics," says Colin.

"And Friday I'm the one who can't come," Emma says with a sigh. "That only leaves us Saturday morning right before the race."

Seeing how sad Emma is, Nadine tries to cheer her up.

"Saturday will be fine. We'll have tons of time to do a test run before the race."

"Yeah," says Colin. "We can all bring food to use as fuel for the test run."

"I'm already excited!" says Robin.

"I even know what snack I'm going to bring."

"Really? What is it?" asks Emma.

Robin smiles and winks. "It's a . . . surprise!"



CHAPTER 7

Fuel Try

On Saturday, Colin and Robin leave their house at sunrise. Together, they push Zippy Banana all the way to Pelletier Park. Instead of a driver, the seat is filled with food—carrots, lentil salad, whole-wheat bread and an insulated container of cold milk. And Robin's surprise? Bananas, of course!

As soon as they arrive at the park, they hear Emma's voice coming from the top of the hill.

"Great! We can start our speed runs!"

The Brocco-Lightning team also has a car full of food—slices of apples, grapes, nuts, cheese cubes and broccoli, of course!

"So, how do we do this?" asks Robin.
"Well . . . um . . . I don't really know," admits Emma.

In the silence, rumbling tummies can be heard.

"Before we start, we could have breakfast," suggests Nadine.

"Good idea," says Colin. "That way, at least we will have energy and that will help us think better."

The friends set up a scrumptious picnic. After they've eaten and are full of energy, the problem of how to fuel the soap boxes resurfaces.



"I was thinking that with cars, we put the fuel in a little door on the side. But our cars don't have a little door," says Nadine.

"Actually, our cars don't even have motors!" adds Colin.

"That *is* a problem," agrees Emma while eating a delicious slice of apple.

At the bottom of the hill, the organizers start setting up for the race. They put up banners and posters and install a special table for a beautiful golden trophy.

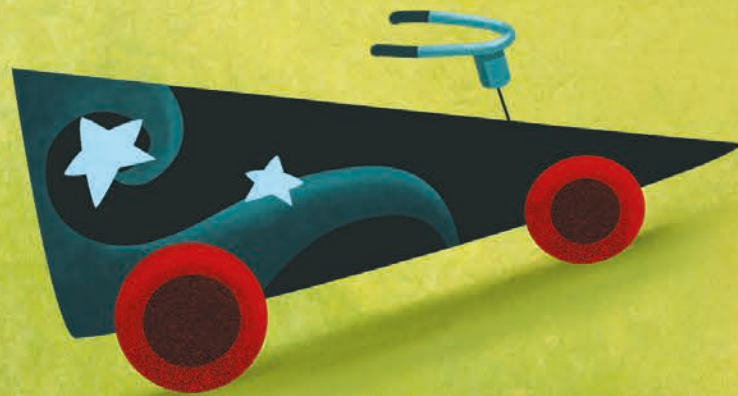
"Uh-oh," says Colin. "I think it might be too late to do a test run."

"What will we do?" asks Nadine fretfully.

Emma takes a last bite of apple, chews and declares, "We cross our fingers!"

"And we have fun!" adds Robin as he pushes Zippy Banana to the starting line.





CHAPTER 8

Let the Race Begin!

Six teams have signed up for the soap box derby. Along with Zippy Banana and Brocco-Lightning, there are:

- KiwiZOOM
- Unbeatable BEET
- Milky Way
- Carton Kart



Already, friends and family are gathering on each side of the track to watch the race and cheer on the teams.

The Brocco-Lightning and Zippy Banana teams get a lot of attention from the other participants. And not only because of their snazzy soap boxes.

"Do you have any cheese left? I'm a little hungry," asks one racer.

"I could really go for some of that broccoli to give me energy," says another.

"Your picnic looked so nice," says the Milky Way driver.

"It really did," adds the Carton Kart driver. "If your teams win, it may be because you had such an amazing breakfast."

Colin, Robin, Nadine and Emma glance at one another—and burst out laughing.

“If we win, it’s *absolutely* because of our breakfast!” says Robin.

Emma triumphantly holds up a container of cheese cubes and grapes.

“Snacks for everyone!” she says.

“Yes!” adds Robin. “That way we all win!”



CHAPTER 9

And the Winners Are . . .

Brocco-Lightning does not win the race. Neither does Zippy Banana. And you know what? The four friends are happy anyway.

They had fun building soap boxes and sharing their delicious “fuel” with many new friends.



On the way home, plans are already being made for next year's derby.

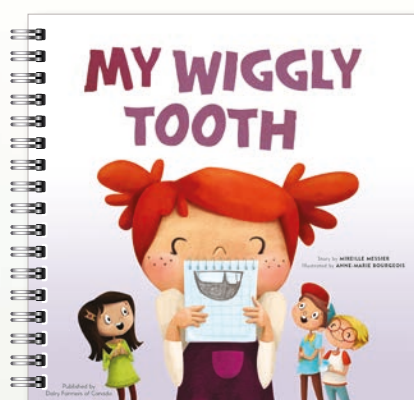
"Next time I'll bring a salad to the race," says Robin.

"And I'll bring blueberries and yogurt," adds Nadine.

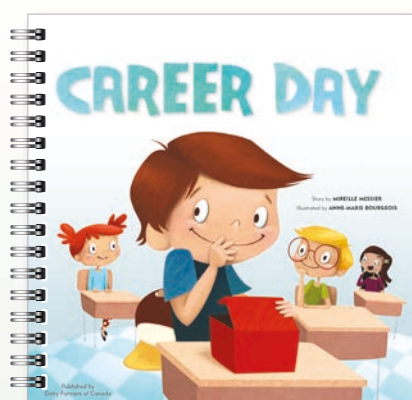
"You know it's a race and not a potluck breakfast, right?" teases Colin.

"I know," says Robin. "But it's the breakfast part of the race that really gives me energy. Vroom! Vroom!"

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