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(machine translated from French to English)

Postbus or village clock?

I grew up in a small village in Lavaux, between vineyards and forests. Only a hamlet that looked like all the others, with its church that seemed perched on top of the highest vine wall, surrounded by an orchard with some apple trees where children loved to pass in autumn, innocent air but heavier pockets on return than on the anda-ta. My older brother had a reputation as a day when, by the end of the season, all the fruits had been harvested. Only about ten remained, perched at the top of the tallest tree, sheltered from the grand staircase of the pa-store. For us, these apples were obviously the most beautiful and certainly the most succulent on record. My brother started climbing the tree. Arriving at the most fragile branches, where one usually stopped, he bravely countless climbed. At the bottom we all held our breath, ready to run away if things go wrong. But no-notwithstanding the branches that rained under his weight, Paul went on without hesitation, picking up the last apples in the meantime and throwing them away. From that day, he was considered by the children to be the strongest, the best of all. I was just "Paul's little sister", which, given my rather assertive character, did not satisfy me.

This had been happening not so long ago, 100 years ago, at a time when children were already bearing a lot of responsibilities at an early age, when their contribution to the work of their parents was not only desirable, but absolutely indispensable. It was a time when children had a lot of responsibilities, but also a lot of freedom.

There was no school in our house, we walked every day to the next village. A 30-minute march, which we could have done in 15 minutes with a little good will and, above all, less jolly and skittish on the road. The return was even slower, we had time off before we had to help-kings, who to return the cows, who to collect wood or sweep the farmhouse yard at the end of the day. On the other hand, we definitely had to be back when the 5 p.m. bells were ringing, on pain of a monumental shake and a significant increase in our working time, with an advanced awakening.

In the strip of the village, no one had watches, so we expected to be near the church, so we could check the time at all times. But when I was nine years old, a Postbus line was opened connecting two municipalities just below our house. This road was narrow and winding, between the old walls. The bus was beeping his horn repeatedly: "Pi-Po-Pa!" At first we spent as much time admiring him from every possible and imaginable point of view. Then we gradually resumed our usual games. We were pirates attacking boats loaded with exotic merchandise, detectives on the track of the great bandits, survivors beached on a deserted island and in front of building huts in the forest, or Indians on the track of bison (the cows of a farmer from the surroundings, who never understood why some nights, his beasts were so nervous).

I don't know if my ears were better than those of others or if I was more attentive to my environment, but in any case, I immediately noticed that in order to be punctual at home, we had to start at the third Pi-Po-Pa. For months, I haven't honked a car before, and we've never been punished. It was my turn to get the honors!

One evening in early summer, we found ourselves as usual after school, even more excited than usual with the start of the great holidays. Ironically, we were playing Postbus. Paul was obviously the driver. Ap-polaiati on a trunk that fell during the last storm, we passengers, flipped left and right at every movement of the bus. We had a lot of adventure: injuries, punctures, bandits attacks, cliff falls, from which we always came out, heroic. As usual, I was looking at the horn. A delay that day was not with repentance: it was the day of bottling of the game collected the

previous year and the whole village, adults and bam-bini, had to meet to mark the event. After the second blow, I warned that our departure was imminent. Get out of the way! Departure for everyone, it's time, we come back soon as the wise children we are.

As usual, Paul and I ran from milking to home. As usual, we placed our backpacks in the entrance of the house always open and went directly out to take care of our homework. As usual, we thought everything was fine. Unfortunately, our parents didn't arrive at that time. What could they have done outside the walls of the farm? A beast had escaped? They wore Sunday clothes and didn't look happy...

It took several days to realize that the bus schedules had changed.

Believe me, the following summer was the hardest in my life! But that didn't stop my brother Paul from-venting a Postbus driver a few years later.