



DALAWA NA!

by Maria Santayana

Wow! So much has happened this year, it's hard to know where to begin. Samantha has grown so fast and we've been catapulted with her into the infamous "terrible twos." Really, I don't think it's been so hard on her. Anton and I are finding it hard to keep up, though. One of her biggest milestones this year has been learning to talk -- incessantly. She started out having lengthy conversations with us or her dolls which seemed to consist almost solely of senseless prattle but, at the same time, made perfect sense to her. As the months went by she learned to speak more clearly and now is telling stories, singing songs--ok, sometimes it's one line from a song sung over and over again (as Mama Bibot found out on her birthday)--and keeping everyone entertained with all the new words she's learn-



Samantha

ing. We've quickly learned NOT to say anything we don't want to hear her parrot later on, probably at some awkward moment when we're having guests for dinner. It's such a pleasure to hear her chatting away happily though and all those times we've had to stop what we were doing, turn the TV up or off altogether are quickly forgotten when she comes up, sits on my knee, and says "I love you, Mommy," or "Yummy! Delicious!"

while eating dinner, after I've had a particularly long and tiring day. The second and biggest milestone this year has been the arrival of Jose Enrique Miguel Santayana. Okay, that was long --and you haven't even heard his whole name, hahaha! We call him Baby Ricky. Ricky was born on October 6th, 2001 at 3:27am. Why do babies always seem to be born early in the morning? If not at the crack of dawn, it seems most women end up going into full labor in the middle of the night. My midwife and I are still trying to figure that one out. My theory is that it's for the sheer pleasure of waking up a bleary-eyed husband with "Honey, we need to go NOW!" or "Honey, my water's broken," and watching them leap out of bed like a hornet stung them. Back to Ricky. Ricky weighed in at 3580 gm and measured 51 cm in length. He's a beautiful little boy with a perfect little oval



Jose Enrique Miguel (Ricky).

head, big eyes, nice ears and a lovely disposition. At three and a half weeks old he's already 4 kg and has grown 3 cm. For a newborn he's very alert and loves looking around at everything and everyone. I think the person for whom Ricky's arrival has changed things the most is Samantha. Anton still goes to work and I still stay home and care for the kids but little Sam's world has changed drastically. She first saw Ricky the day he was born. During the visit she was very excited and climbed up on the hospital bed with me to get a better look at her new sibling. Her first comment was, "Oh, yucky face!" At first I thought, oh, no, it's starting, but then realized that she was referring to the colostrum all over his face (he'd just been fed) and not the classic newborn look. The first sign of sibling rivalry showed up during that first visit. I started to nurse Ricky and Sam immediately burst into tears saying, "No, no, no." When asked why she was saying no, she just kept crying and said, "I don't know . . . no, no, no." Poor girl! This lasted for a few days and for the first two weeks she was quite moody. It just dawned on me this morning though that for the past week she's basically been her old self again; she's been much happier and seems to be enjoying her cute little baby brother much more. The other night I let her hold Ricky for a moment while sitting down and he immediately started pooping into his nappy. Sam looked extremely worried and held her leg out saying, "Oh, oh, oh." I took him off her knee and tried to assure her that he had a nappy on, but she was sure he'd done a poopy on her pants and insisted I

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change them. She also loves talking to him. She came running up yesterday asking, "What's your name, Ricky?" When Ricky wakes up from his nap and starts crying, Sam is usually the first one there and she keeps running back and forth between the living-room and Ricky, frantically saying, "Mama, you get the Ricky," and "I here, Ricky." So sweet! Today a midwife visited to weigh and measure Ricky and Sam took such an interest in everything that was happening. While the midwife was listening to his heartbeat she asked, "What she doing, Mommy?" When I explained that she was listening to his heart she asked, "He like it?" I said yes, to which she replied, "OK. He like it," and scampered off, happily satisfied that he was all right. All in all Sam is adjusting to her new role as "*Ate Sam*" very well. She's made it over that initial hump and is finding out that having a sibling can be fun! One of the things I wondered about throughout almost my entire pregnancy was, "How will I ever love another child as much as I love Sam?" I expressed this concern to my mom and she told me, "Honey, your love won't be divided. It'll be multiplied." In these past few weeks I've found that statement to be absolutely true and in addition to that I've found my happiness has been multiplied as well. "*A baby is a small member of the home that makes love stronger, days shorter, nights longer, the bankroll smaller, the home happier, clothes shabbier, the past forgotten and the future worth living for.*"

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TAYO NA SA SEMENTERYO

by Bingbing Juarez

NOVEMBER 2, 2001

BAMBI JUST CAME HOME FROM DUTY IN THE HOSPITAL AND GREETED her kids. "What did you do today?"

"We had a picnic in the cemetery!" Nico answered joyfully.

"Did you have fun?"

"We had pizza, drinks and ice-cream from the vendor who passed by. We sat on the benches of the tombs near Lolo Grande and Lola Grande Laico (Great-grandfather and great-grandmother Laico). Then we prayed the rosary and Grandpa let me light the candles with matches," (that was an exciting job for him).

That's the way we celebrate All Saints Day in the Philippines. It's a big picnic. Some people stay with their departed loved ones the whole day. They put up tents for the night or as shade for a day of hot sun. They bring chairs, tables, card games, stereos -- I even saw a rice cooker standing on the side of the street -- why? -- it was being used to reserve the space for her car, still stuck in traffic outside the gates of the cemetery. The wife probably walked ahead to get to their plot faster than the car which was going at a snail's pace in the traffic, and her job was to save a parking space for the car.

It's a yearly tradition here in the Philippines that we visit and pray for the dead on November 1 and 2, so traffic is a nightmare with all the cars going to the cemetery, but we still go as a sacrifice, a love offering for our dearly departed. Some people travel in from the provinces and others go from the city to the provinces. Those who come from faraway places camp out with the dead. There are some cemeteries that allow carnival rides like Ferris Wheels, the Octopus, etc. and games to entertain the visiting relatives. It's a great big fair.

As for the Laicos, we just stay a few hours to pray, bring flowers, light candles, have our snacks, our picnic, the way Mama taught us. We were never allowed to go to the rides or games. But she used to let Popoy collect the melted wax from the candles and shape it into a big ball. As soon as he had accomplished this we would pack up and go. I was told since childhood, we have to go every year because if we don't, the dead might haunt us.

I think it's a very good tradition (in spite of the dreadful traffic) because it keeps us thoughtful of the dead. I brought my grandchildren to teach them this, and if they ever decide to fly away from here, they will keep this tradition and practice it even in a foreign country.

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Lemon Bars: Ganado si Aling Cristi... Another Recipe

by Nonon Flores

Ingredients:

1 box yellow cake mix
2 eggs
1/3 cup canola or vegetable oil
1 - 8 oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened
1/3 c sugar
1 tsp lemon juice

Mix dry cake mix, 1 egg, 1/3 c. oil until crumbly. Reserve 1 cup of mixture--set aside. Pat remaining mixture lightly into an ungreased 13"x9"x2" pan, and bake 15 minutes at 350 degrees. Meanwhile, beat together cream cheese, sugar, lemon juice & 1 egg until light and smooth. Spread over baked layer. Sprinkle with reserved crumb mixture. Return to oven and bake 15 minutes longer. Allow to cool. Cut into bars.

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