

A bilingual book of hope
inspired by the work of
Pediatric Orthopedic Project

Final Edit for Review

PEDIATRIC ORTHOPEDIC PROJECT, INC.



Ten Bears on a Mission

(Diez Ositos En Una Misión)

Written by

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NEXT CENTURY
PUBLISHING

Final File For Review



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Ten Bears On A Mission

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Published by Next Century Publishing
Austin, TX
www.NextCenturyPublishing.com

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ISBN: 978-1-68102-265-9

Printed in the United States of America

TO OUR AUDIENCE:

May you experience the unique joy of helping to improve the life of someone else

A NUESTRA AUDIENCIA:

Que algún día sientas la dicha única de ayudar a mejorar la vida de otra persona

TO OUR PATIENTS:

It has been our honor to help you. Get well soon & may this surgery transform your life

A NUESTROS PACIENTES:

Ha sido un honor ayudarte. Que te sanes pronto y que esta cirugía transforme tu vida

Dedicated to my children, Enrico, Salvatore, Joseph and Angela:
Thank you for giving up time with Mom and Dad
so that we could help other children throughout the world

Dedicado a mis hijos, Enrico, Salvatore, Joseph y Angela:
Gracias por ceder tiempo con mamá y papá
para que pudiéramos ayudar a otros niños al rededor el mundo

Ten bears went on a mission trip one day
Not just any bears, special ones I'd say

Un día, diez ositos fueron a una misión
Ositos especiales, con alma y corazón



Each year, the Pediatric Orthopedic Project's (POP's) medical team travels to the Dominican Republic (DR) to perform free surgeries on poor children with bone problems. Each child receives a bear.

In their new t-shirts, the precious gifts were packed
On their way to unknown arms where toys had often lacked

En su caja con detalle, cada uno fue empacado
En camino a manos pobres, donde juguetes habían faltado



*Many needy children in the DR do not have toys or sporting equipment.
They often play baseball with a stick instead of a bat.*

Their mission yet was very clear: to help ease the pain
Ten children soon would feel; for a better life to gain

Para los ositos, su propósito era claro:
Ayudar a diez niños y servir de amparo



In the DR, children with crooked backs are often teased and not accepted in society. Most are girls.

The box was opened carefully and then, one by one
Each bear was gently placed in Nurse Lisa's loving arms

La caja fue abierta con mucho cuidado
Y cada osito, en manos de Lisa colocado



Who'd then deliver each to its final destiny:



Esta enfermera entonces entregó con alegría

A boy or girl soon to have crooked back surgery



Un osito a cada niño apunto de tener cirugía

Oh the gleam in her eyes and the look on his face
It said it all: This was a special place



De pronto las miradas y las sonrisas también
Decían con esperanza: "Vamos a salir bien"



For some patients who have no mom or dad, the bears keep them from feeling lonely.

The furry friends', names they'd all soon reveal
Their newfound companions in their journey to heal

El nombre de cada osito fue pronto revelado
Un nuevo compañero en el viaje a ser sanado



The hospital does not have pillows or blankets. So, we bring them for our patients.

Predictable names were "Teddy" & "Buddy", to name a few
But we even had a "Juan", a "Phoenix" & a "Lumiere", too

Nombres como "Teddy" y "Buddy" no deben de sorprender
Pero también hubo un "Juan," un "Phoenix" y hasta un "Lumiere"



We are often surprised by the names our patients give their bears.

And as each child had surgery, each bear's role became clear
To serve as a pillow, comforter or to dry a shed tear

Y al recuperarse cada niño, su osito le sirvió en cama
Como almohada, consuelo o secador de lágrima



The bears help calm the children when they are frightened.

At first, in pain they sat and then they proudly stood tall

Cada niño con dolor fue sentado y después con orgullo parado



*Our patients are sat the day after surgery and start walking the next day.
This can hurt a lot. The bears help them get through the pain.*

Sporting their arrow—straight spines as they walked down the hall

Caminando con espalda nueva; nunca más jorobado



It is very exciting to see a child walk for the first time after surgery, especially for the parents.

Towards teary-eyed moms and dads who had waited for so long
To see their children again feel normal, healthy and strong

Hacia madres y padres emocionados
Al ver sus hijos normales, fuertes y sanos



The families are always thankful for our help. That makes us very happy.

And throughout the recovery, they were never apart
The bears and the children so dear to their hearts

Y durante la recuperación, nunca fueron separados
Los ositos y los niños a quienes fueron destinados



Most of our patients go home 5 days after surgery. Some patients become friends forever.

About the Author



Dr. Madelyn M. Stazzone co-founded POP in 2012 with her husband, Pediatric Orthopedic Surgeon Dr. Enrico Stazzone. She is the President and Executive Director of the organization while her husband is the lead orthopedic surgeon. She also manages POP's annual mission trips to Santiago, Dominican Republic. Dr. Stazzone wrote this story as a poem in English after she was inspired by how the bears helped the patients during their recovery. She later translated it into Spanish. Born and raised in New York City from immigrant Puerto Rican parents, Dr. Stazzone knows first-hand the struggles of poverty and limited access

to healthcare. This has been the motivation behind helping those less fortunate. Her fluency in both Spanish and English has helped her be effective in her efforts in the third world as well as in writing this book.

About the Illustrator



Lucy Zhu is a gifted senior at Marquette High School in St. Louis who has already achieved both academic and artistic accolades. In 2016, she was one of only 72 students chosen worldwide to attend the Summer Science camp at MIT. In 2014, she won the Missouri Statewide Google Doodle Contest for her depiction of a machine that can harness tornados and convert them into energy and water. She plans to major in Computer Science at Stanford University.



When ten bears go on a mission to help children in need of tender loving care, each finds its unique purpose. But they discover that the journey is not that easy. Facing challenges, big and small, the bears strive to help turn ten children's rainy days into a bright, colorful future.

We hope you have enjoyed our story based on the experiences of the Pediatric Orthopedic Project (POP). POP is a non-for profit, 501 (c) 3, medical organization dedicated to improving orthopedic care in children in the third world. Each year, our mission is to travel with a team of medical experts and perform free surgeries on children with orthopedic (bone) problems like scoliosis (crooked backs). The surgeries are life-changing since without our help, the children we serve have no hope of healing. Each patient receives a teddy bear from POP. Inspired by the children from POP's 2015 scoliosis mission to the Dominican Republic, "Ten Bears On a Mission" relates the experiences of the patients and their bears. Part of the proceeds of this book will go to POP. We thank you for your support and invite you to visit our website at www.popstl.org for more details on our efforts.

Author Dr. Madelyn Stazzone is a bilingual, native New Yorker who knows first-hand the challenges of poverty. She is a Pediatric Radiologist who co-founded POP with her husband and now serves as President and Executive Director of the organization. She lives in the greater St. Louis area with her husband and 4 children.