

Carlos & Isabel

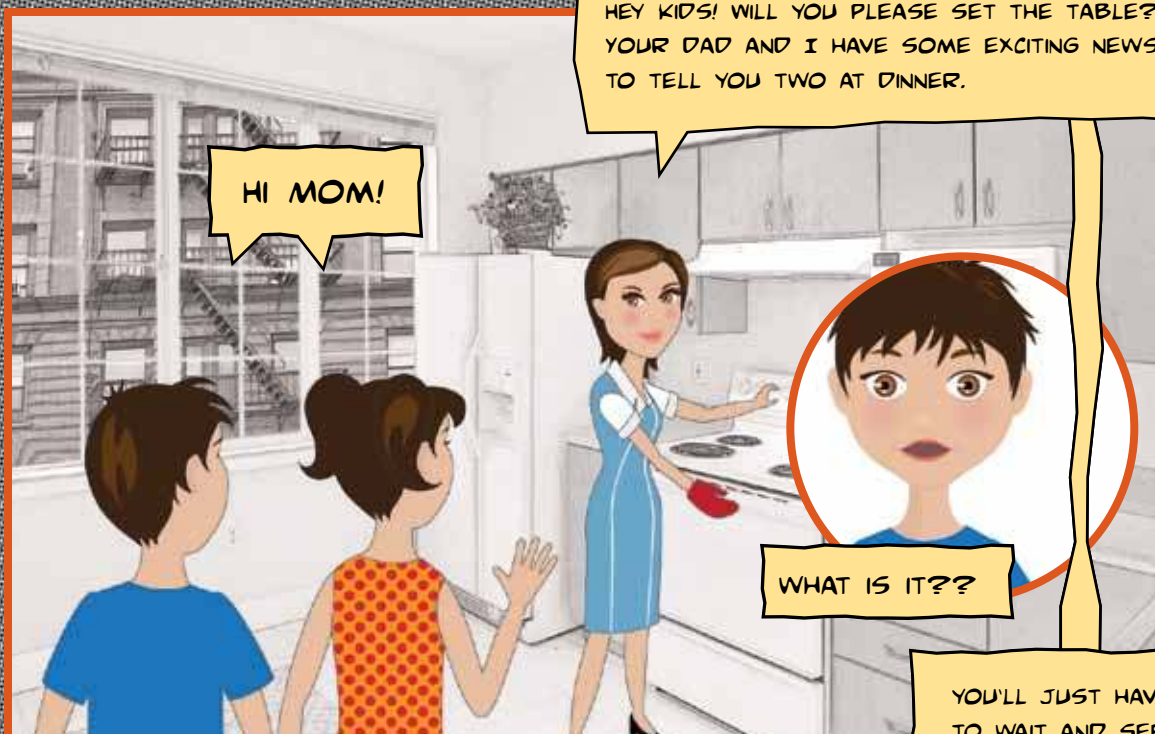
# SAVE ESPERANZA







HI! WE'RE ISABEL & CARLOS GARCIA. WE'RE 10 YEARS OLD AND WE'RE TWINS! TODAY WAS JUST A REGULAR DAY AT SCHOOL, BUT EVERYTHING CHANGED LIKE CRAZY WHEN WE GOT HOME... JUST WAIT UNTIL YOU HEAR THIS STORY!



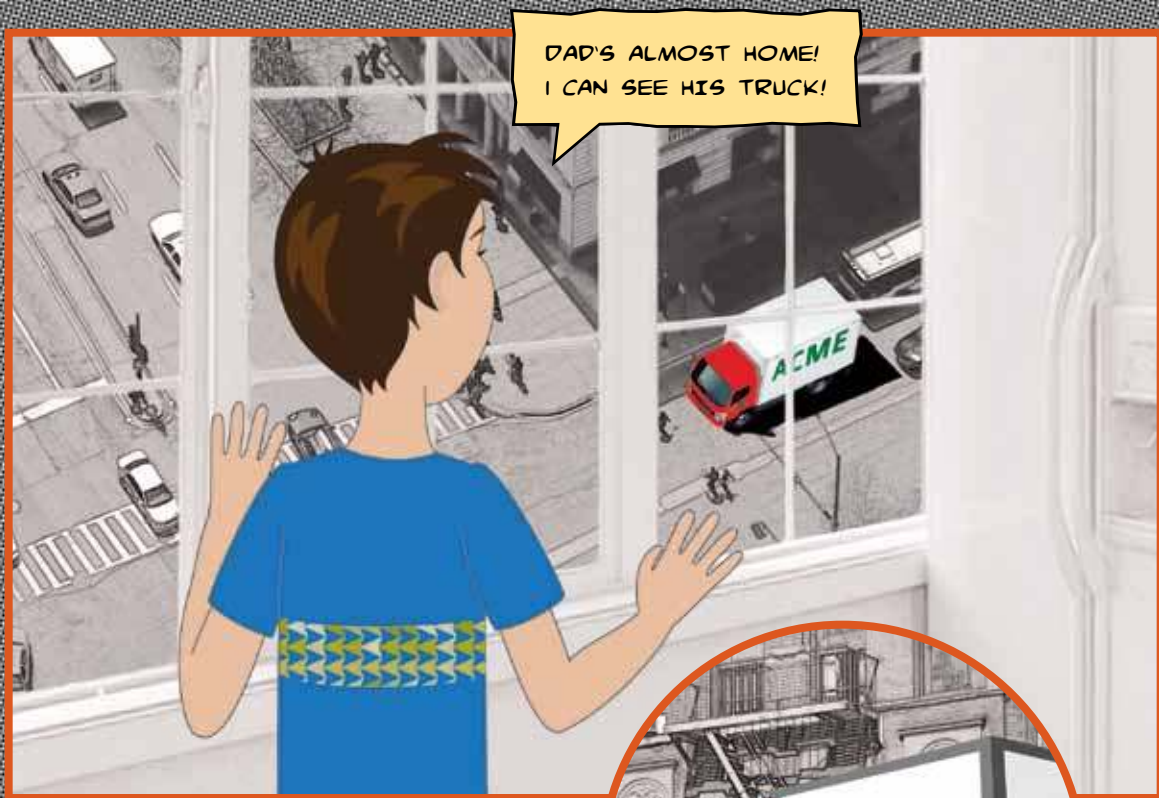
HI MOM!

HEY KIDS! WILL YOU PLEASE SET THE TABLE? YOUR DAD AND I HAVE SOME EXCITING NEWS TO TELL YOU TWO AT DINNER.

WHAT IS IT??

YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE...





DAD'S ALMOST HOME!  
I CAN SEE HIS TRUCK!



HEY EVERYONE, I'M HOME!  
HOW'S MY FAMILY TODAY?


HI HONEY!

HI DAD!





SO...ARE YOU GONNA TELL US  
THE GOOD NEWS NOW?



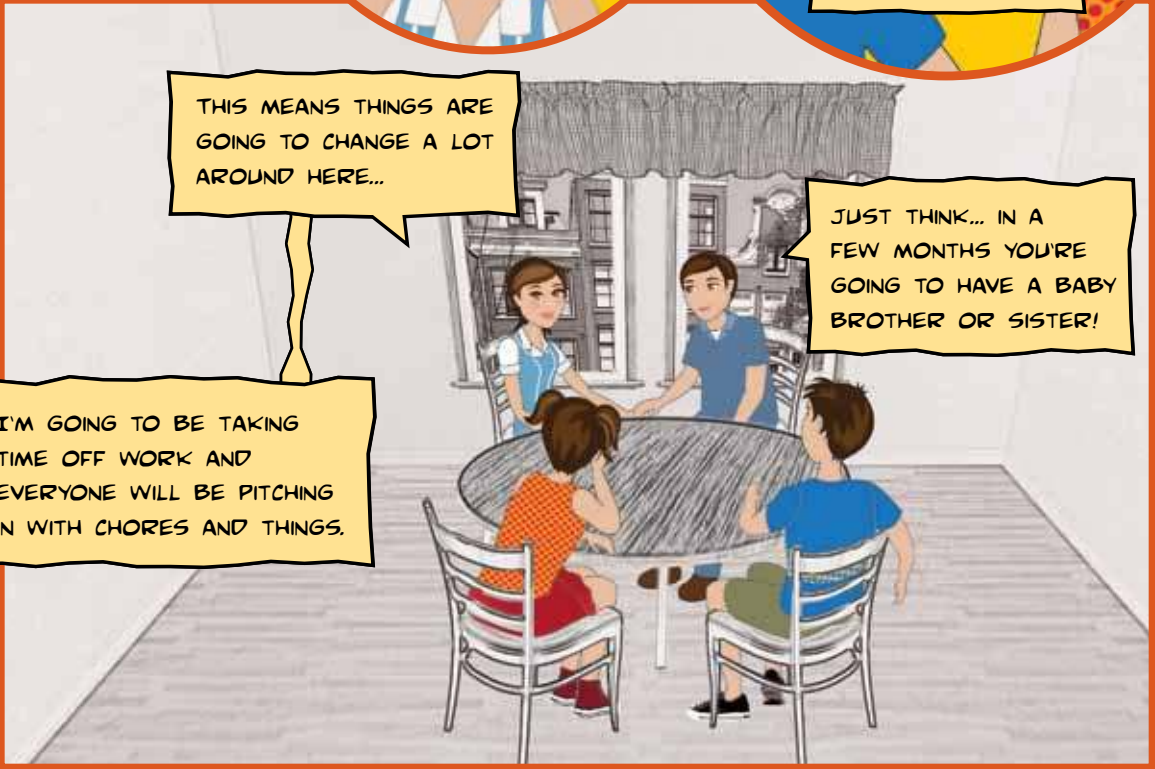
YES! KIDS...YOUR MOM  
IS HAVING...



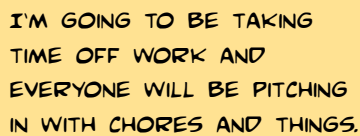
...A BABY!!



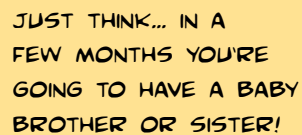
A BABY??



THIS MEANS THINGS ARE  
GOING TO CHANGE A LOT  
AROUND HERE...



I'M GOING TO BE TAKING  
TIME OFF WORK AND  
EVERYONE WILL BE PITCHING  
IN WITH CHORES AND THINGS.



JUST THINK... IN A  
FEW MONTHS YOU'RE  
GOING TO HAVE A BABY  
BROTHER OR SISTER!



LATER THAT NIGHT...

DO YOU THINK THE  
BABY WILL BE A BOY  
OR A GIRL?

HMMM... A BABY BROTHER  
WOULD BE REALLY COOL,  
BUT ANOTHER SISTER  
WOULD BE OK, TOO

WELL, I WANT A BABY  
SISTER. JUST THINK...  
WHEN SHE'S OUR AGE,  
WE'LL BE 20 YEARS  
OLD! I CAN'T WAIT TO  
MEET HER!





OUR MOM & DAD SEEMED SO HAPPY WHEN THEY TOLD US ABOUT THE BABY! BUT AFTER AWHILE WE NOTICED THAT THEY WEREN'T SO HAPPY ANYMORE. DAD STARTED LOOKING REALLY WORRIED ALL THE TIME AND MOM JUST SEEMED TO BE GETTING A LITTLE BIT SADDER EVERY DAY.

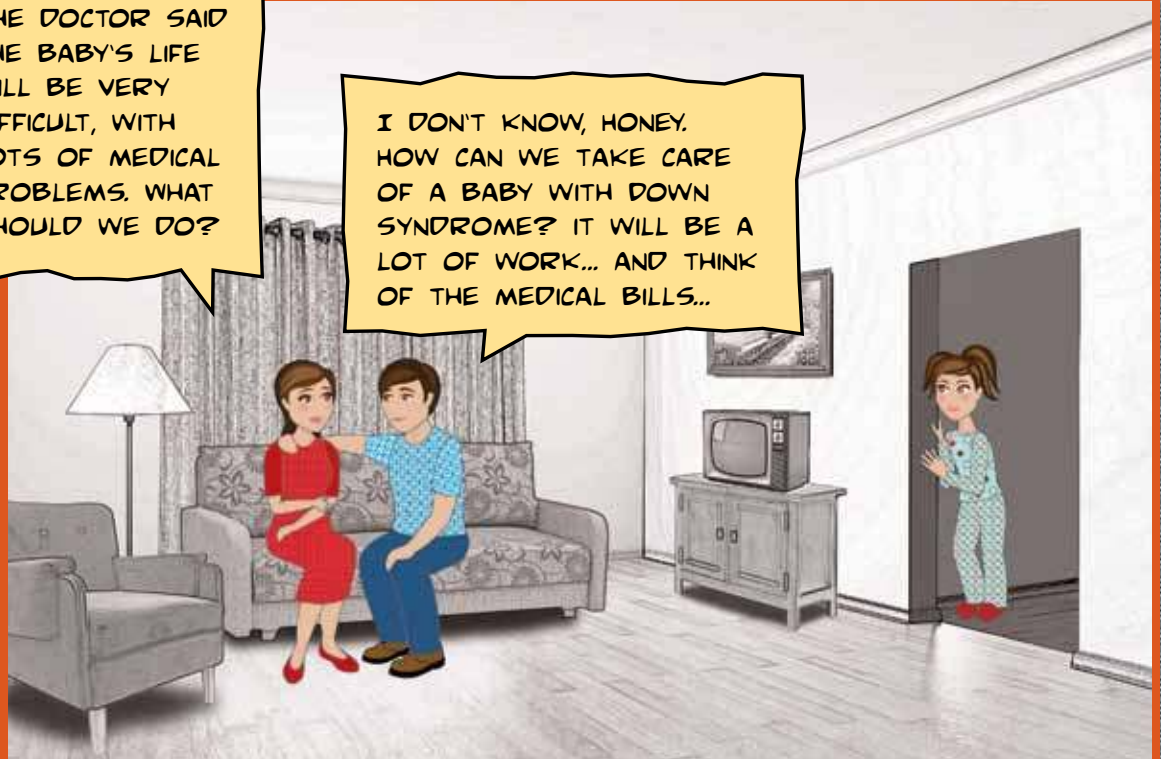


WE COULDN'T  
FIGURE OUT WHAT  
WAS WRONG....

THEN ONE NIGHT  
WE PICKED UP  
SOME CLUES BY  
ACCIDENT...

THE DOCTOR SAID  
THE BABY'S LIFE  
WILL BE VERY  
DIFFICULT, WITH  
LOTS OF MEDICAL  
PROBLEMS. WHAT  
SHOULD WE DO?

I DON'T KNOW, HONEY.  
HOW CAN WE TAKE CARE  
OF A BABY WITH DOWN  
SYNDROME? IT WILL BE A  
LOT OF WORK... AND THINK  
OF THE MEDICAL BILLS...







WAKE UP CARLOS....CARLOS!!


C'MON, CARLOS!  
MOM & DAD ARE  
TALKING IN THE  
LIVING ROOM... IT  
SOUNDS IMPORTANT!  
MAYBE THIS WILL  
EXPLAIN WHAT'S BEEN  
GOING ON WITH THEM.



WHAA??... LET ME SLEEP...



C'MON! MAYBE WE  
CAN HELP!



SOME OF MY CO-WORKERS  
AND FRIENDS ARE SAYING I  
SHOULDN'T HAVE THE BABY...  
EVEN MY *SISTER* IS TELLING  
ME IT WOULD BE BEST NOT  
TO HAVE THE BABY!





WHAT DO YOU THINK IT MEANS? MOM MIGHT NOT HAVE THE BABY???

I DON'T KNOW. DOWN SYNDROME MUST BE A PRETTY BIG DEAL. I GUESS IF THEY WON'T TELL US ABOUT IT, WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO FIGURE IT OUT FOR OURSELVES.



LET'S GOOGLE IT!!



THE BABY IS ABOUT 2 MONTHS OLD NOW, I THINK... SO THIS WEBSITE SAYS OUR SISTER ALREADY HAS TEETH AND TASTE BUDS! LOOK AT THOSE FINGERS AND TOES! HER HEART'S BEEN BEATING SINCE SHE WAS JUST 18 DAYS OLD! HEY, SHE CAN EVEN HICCUP..

SHE CAN HICCUP?? THAT'S AWESOME!







IT SOUNDS LIKE DOWN SYNDROME HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH DNA & CHROMOSOMES OR SOMETHING. SHE'LL HAVE A LOWER IQ THAN OTHER KIDS, AND HER FACE WILL LOOK A LITTLE DIFFERENT THAN OURS. SHE COULD HAVE HEALTH PROBLEMS WITH HER HEART AND SOMETHING CALLED A THYROID... THAT MUST BE WHY THE DOCTOR THINKS SHE'LL HAVE A TOUGH LIFE.



DOESN'T THAT SOUND LIKE LUKE'S BROTHER NATHAN?



YEAH, IT DOES! SHOULD WE GO TALK TO LUKE & SEE IF HE CAN TELL US MORE ABOUT IT?

YEAH, LET'S GO SEE HIM TOMORROW! HIS MOM WILL BE HOME... MAYBE SHE'LL TALK TO US, TOO.



HEY LUKE! IS IT OK IF WE COME IN  
AND TALK TO YOU FOR A MINUTE?

HI CARLOS! HI ISABEL! COME ON IN!  
NATHAN WAS JUST CRUSHING ME IN  
A VIDEO GAME.



NATHAN'S BEATING YOU??

OH YEAH! HE'S GOT  
OUTRAGEOUS SKILLS...  
DON'T YOU, NATHAN?



YUP!



COOKIES IN THE KITCHEN! HOT FROM THE OVEN! COME AND GET 'EM!!



MRS. WILLIAMS... WHAT DID YOU THINK BEFORE NATHAN WAS BORN & YOU FOUND OUT HE HAD DOWN SYNDROME?



WELL, WE KNEW NATHAN HAD DOWNS WHEN WE ADOPTED HIM. I HAD A WONDERFUL UNCLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME & MY HUSBAND & I ALWAYS WANTED TO ADOPT A CHILD WITH THE SAME CONDITION.





PEOPLE ARE TELLING MY MOM SHE SHOULDN'T KEEP THE BABY BECAUSE DOWN SYNDROME KIDS HAVE LOTS OF PROBLEMS AND COST A LOT TO TAKE CARE OF. IS THAT TRUE?



YES, IT CAN BE... BUT WE ALWAYS GET BY. NATHAN IS PART OF OUR FAMILY AND WE LOVE HIM SO MUCH! OTHER PEOPLE LOVE NATHAN, TOO, AND HAVE HELPED US OUT WHEN WE NEEDED IT MOST.

DO YOU THINK YOU COULD COME OVER TO OUR HOUSE THIS AFTERNOON? OUR MOM COULD REALLY USE A FRIEND RIGHT NOW.



I'D LOVE TO.



HI MOM! IS IT OK IF MRS. WILLIAMS AND THE BOYS COME IN FOR AWHILE?



THAT'S A WONDERFUL IDEA!  
JADA, IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE  
YOU AGAIN...

IT'S GOOD TO SEE  
YOU TOO, MARIA



ABOUT 7 MONTHS LATER...

DO YOU THINK MOM WILL  
LIKE HER FLOWERS?.

SHE'LL LOVE THEM!

I CAN'T BELIEVE OUR  
SISTER IS FINALLY HERE!

I KNOW!! 9 MONTHS WAS  
A LONG TIME TO WAIT!





HER NAME IS ESPERANZA.  
IT MEANS HOPE.

ISN'T SHE BEAUTIFUL?



SHE'S PERFECT!

YES. SHE IS.







WE LOVE TO HEAR  
FROM OUR READERS!  
YOU CAN TELL US WHAT  
YOU THINK AT:  
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