

Episode 2: Talking to Extended Family

Settings: Chávez home – kitchen; Chávez home – outside porch
Characters: Announcer, Lourdes, Mario, (Ana), Marta, Jose

Intro music (same for each episode) fades up and under narration

Announcer: You are listening to the latest edition of *Un Nuevo Amanecer Para Ana Y Su Familia*. Join us each week as we travel with the Chávez family through the ups and downs of raising a child with a disability in a sometimes unfriendly world. Last week Lourdes and Mario learned their baby Ana may have a serious disability. Mario was devastated and then infuriated when the doctor asked him to sign forms. Lourdes fears her parent's reaction. Let's find out what happens next.

(Music segue)

Mario Narrates: *(speaking directly to the radio audience)* We have dinner with Lourdes' parents each Sunday. We've been doing that, oh...ever since they moved here from Mexico into the apartment upstairs. *(chuckles to himself)* It's a blessing and a curse to have your in-laws so close, wouldn't you agree? Jose, my father-in-law, of course I respect him...especially how he's dealt with his horrible accident...but he can be so critical. We never seem to do anything right. We don't make the kids speak Spanish, we don't visit Grandma in Mexico. *(pauses in reflection)* I remember that one Sunday after we visited the doctor with Ana. She wasn't even a year old. Lourdes and I were devastated and I was soooo angry. But, of course, there were many things I was angry about...

(Music fades up and out again.)

(Sound effect – clanking of dishes/kitchen noises and conversation – continues under dialogue)

Marta: *(speaking confidentially so others cannot hear)* Lourdes, tell me what's wrong. I know something's wrong – I can see it on your face. You hardly spoke at dinner. It's the baby, isn't it? Something with the baby.

Lourdes: *(defeated and depressed)* Mother I can't. Mario says to wait. Just...help me with the bunuelos. We'll talk after dessert.

(Sound effect – Ana begins to cry)

Jose: *(he is holding Ana – speaks to her gently, but somewhat impatiently)* Sh...sh...Ana. *(to others)* What's with this crying? Aren't you feeding her right, Lourdes?

Mario: *(mustering bravery)* Father, Lourdes and I have something to tell you. To tell both of you. *(pauses)* It's about Ana.

(Kitchen noises become quiet)

Marta: *(slightly panicked)* What? What is it? I knew something was wrong.

Mario: We went to the doctor this week...

Jose: And??

Mario: *(slowly)* He says Ana may have a disability...something called Cerebral Palsy...

Lourdes: *(sadly)* We know she is already delayed. He says she may not walk...but we don't know.

Marta: *(starting to cry)* I knew it...I knew it...Not like our other babies...something...something... *(under her breath)* Oh, Blessed Virgin, have mercy on us.

Lourdes: Papa? *(pauses)* Papa? *(with worry)* Say something...

Jose: *(slowly, holding back anger)* This would not have happened if you had not gone outside without the red ribbon...it was an eclipse. How could you be so careless? Look what you've done!

(Lourdes is weeping)

Mario: Father, please, don't...it's no one's fault. The doctor said so.

Jose: Look at my leg! What do you see? My accident left me with this. Now I cannot work, I do not walk without a cane. Is this the life you want for your daughter? To be ridiculed? My Ana?

Lourdes: *(through her tears)* Father, you don't understand. The doctor says Ana may not have cerebral palsy, but if she does, she can have a good life. There are people who can help us. She'll go to school with her brother and sister...live with her family...It's not like in Mexico...

Jose: *(interrupts)* No, this is not Mexico! In Mexico we would not need help! Family takes care of family! Our problems stay at home!

(There is a commotion as Lourdes runs out crying loudly – house door slams)
(Sound effect – outside noises – standing on porch)

Mario: *(quietly)* Lourdes, Lourdes. *(she continues to sob)* Sh. Sh. It's going to be o.k.

Lourdes: How can it be o.k., Mario? How can it be o.k.? I know it's not my fault, but I can't do this alone. We can't do this alone. Ana needs help. The doctor says it and I know it's true. Papa won't budge. You won't sign the doctor's papers to get help. *(sobs)* Why won't you sign those papers? Why won't you? *(sobbing)*

Mario: *(comforting)* Sh...Sh...*(pauses)* Lourdes.... I know we need help, but...but... I can't sign those papers.

Lourdes: *(somewhat angry now)* Why not? Tell me, why not?

Mario: *(pauses)* I just ...can't.

Lourdes: *(getting angry)* You need to tell me why!

Mario: *(quietly, resigned)* But...you will be ashamed...

(Music fades in and up – same music in each episode)

Announcer: Will Mario reveal his secret to Lourdes? Will they have the courage to go against Papa's wishes and get the help they need for baby Ana? Join us next week – same time – for the next edition of *Un Nuevo Amanecer para Ana y su Familia*.

(Music fades up and out)