

Episode 4: Learning More about the Healthcare System

Settings: Hospital; Chávez home - outside
Characters: Announcer, Lourdes, Mario, Gabriela, Children

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 baby Ana had a seizure during a doctor visit and was rushed to the hospital. The doctor had just informed the family that Ana has a disability called cerebral palsy and urged them to get professional help. Ana's father, Mario, has refused to get help, but he won't reveal why. Let's find out what happens next.

(Music transitions up and out)

Mario Narrates: *(speaking directly to the radio audience)* I got the call while I was working at the garage. Mr. Herzing was kind enough to let me go right away to the hospital to be with Lourdes. *(sounding frightened even as he remembers)* My heart was racing all the way there. *(relieved)* Thank goodness Ana was alright. But it did mean more medicines...more doctors...more money. If I hadn't been so afraid, maybe it would've turned out better...

(Music fades up and out again)

(Sound effect – hospital heart monitor beeping)

Lourdes: Mario! Thank goodness you're here! *(pause as she rushes to hug him)* *(rushing to speak)* The doctor says Ana had a seizure – some sort of misfiring of nerve cells in the brain. She says she's going to be alright, but she'll need medicine – probably all her life.

Mario: *(to Ana, quietly stroking her hair)* Oh, sweetheart. I'm glad you're o.k. Papa's here. *(pauses – then to Lourdes)* What kind of medicine?

Lourdes: Actually, she may need to try several medicines – and she'll have to be watched closely. It will be expensive, but we have to do it. *(pauses)* Mario, the doctor says we can get help to pay the medical bills. Ana needs weekly therapy to get stronger. We need this help, Mario. *(pauses – reassuring)* I think you need to tell me why you haven't signed the forms to get us help.

(Silence –sound effect – just heart monitor beeping)

Mario: *(quietly, resigned - sighs)* Lourdes, I hoped no one would know. I am so ashamed. *(head in hands)* I've been hiding it all this time *(stops – then sounding defeated)* I can't read, Lourdes. I can't read English. I know you've been depending on me to be translator for the family, but I've failed you...We don't have any health insurance because I couldn't read the forms...I didn't sign them...I didn't ask for help because I didn't want anyone to know...and now...where will we get the money? This afternoon in the hospital is more than my week's pay.

Lourdes: *(comforting)* Oh, Mario, it's o.k. We'll figure it out. There's nothing to be ashamed of. The doctor said there's a program called Medical Assistance that will help with Ana's medical bills. There are translators here at the hospital. We'll ask for forms in Spanish. They say we can request that people who work with Ana speak Spanish. *(pause)* Will you do it?

Mario: *(pauses)* Yes. For my Ana, yes.

Lourdes: *(relieved)* Good. I love you. *(to Ana)* Now, my little one, we need to get you home. We need to start planning your baptism!

(Music segue as scene transitions)

(Sound effect – party sounds – children laughing, this continues underneath dialogue)

Gabriela: What a beautiful ceremony it was, Comadre. I am so honored to be Ana's Comadre.

Lourdes: Yes, Ana is beautiful, isn't she? *(pauses, watching the children)* I just hope...*(stops)*

Gabriela: What, Comadre?

Lourdes: *(sighs)* Her disability...it is costing so much already...Mario is worried...where will we get the money?...I just wish she was like the other children. Like her cousins – like your Maria and Rosa...Look at Rosa, she's already walking...Ana shouldn't be sitting here in this chair...she should be playing just like them...

Gabriela: But she will be...

Lourdes: I'm not so sure...what if she doesn't walk?

Gabriela: Comadre, when you lost your babies, didn't you pray for a miracle?

Lourdes: *(hesitates, questioning)* Well...yes

Gabriela: Did you ever consider that Ana is the answer to your prayers...just the way she is?

(Sound effect: children come up to their mothers shouting)

Children: Mama! Mama! Is it time to throw the coins.

Gabriela: *(to children)* Yes, I think it is! And remember...it's a tradition in Mexico...the coins mean good luck for Ana.

Children: YEAH!!

Gabriela: *(to Lourdes)* So let's just throw the coins and see what happens. No matter what, I am here alongside you...

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

Announcer: How will the Chávez family be able to pay their mounting medical bills? How will Lourdes' father, Jose, react when he finds out Lourdes and Mario have asked for help outside the family? Join us next week – same time – for the next edition of *Un Nuevo Amanecer Para Ana Y Su Familia*.

(Music fades up and out)