Episode 1: Parents Find Out About the Diagnosis

Settings: Chávez home; inside car; waiting room; doctor’s office
Characters: Announcer, Lourdes, Mario, (Ana), Nurse, Dr. Edmunds

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.

Lourdes (speaking directly to the radio audience) I can still remember that day. (sighs) It was one of the worst days of my life. (Pause) Ana. My beautiful baby, Ana. My miracle baby. That was the day our lives changed. Forever. And Mario – he made it even harder. But it was not his fault – carrying that secret around with him all those years. Storing away his anger. Well, let me start our story there. Perhaps you can learn something from our journey.

(Music fades up and out again)

Nurse: (shouting loudly over chatter) Ana Chávez to see Dr. Edmunds?

Lourdes (to baby, smiling) That’s you sweetheart!

(Sound effect - family shuffles into office – hear door close)

Dr. Edmunds: Good afternoon, I'm Dr. Edmunds. (they shake hands)

Mario: Good afternoon.

Dr. Edmunds: (to Ana in softer voice) Hello beautiful! Let me look at you. (to parents) I asked you here today because, I'll be honest, I have some concerns about Ana. (to Ana) Let me look in those ears. (to parents) But I want to hear from you how you think she's doing. How is eating going now?

Lourdes: Well (sighs) not much better than last time. She's pretty fussy, cries a lot and doesn't seem to be gaining weight.

Dr. Edmunds: What about sleeping? Is she sleeping? Are you two sleeping?

Lourdes: Well...no. That's been hard. (sound effect – Ana starts to cry again) You don't think there's anything wrong with her (hesitates) do you?

Dr. Edmunds: That's what I wanted to talk to you about. (pauses – chooses words carefully) I'm afraid that Ana’s prematurity may have resulted in something called Cerebral Palsy. I’m not sure…

Mario: (interrupts – irritated) What does that mean?

Dr. Edmunds: Well, I am not an expert on CP, but it sometimes happens with babies who are born early. It is a form of disability – it was no one's fault. There is a lot of help out there for children with CP. Children with disabilities live with their families, go to school, work, get married…

Lourdes: No, you must be mistaken. (starting to panic) She’s smart. She’s beautiful. She was a miracle. This cannot be!
Dr. Edmunds: *(comforting)* And you’re right. She is smart and she is beautiful and I may be wrong about this diagnosis. But it’s important to find this out early. No matter what the case, I would like to make a referral to Birth to 3 services. Ana should have help with her development and I would recommend seeing a Cerebral Palsy specialist as soon as possible – within the next two weeks…

*(Lourdes is crying softly in the background)*

Lourdes: *(softly)* My sweet, sweet baby…*(more composed – to the doctor)* What do we need to do?

Dr. Edmunds: I’ve had my nurse gather some materials on cerebral palsy. *(Sound effect – paper shuffle)* Mr. Chávez, here are some forms to sign – the referral to Birth to 3, and a release of medical information. I’m sorry, but I need these signed before we can do anything. Oh, and this is important – a release to bill your insurance. The last brochure is on Medical Assistance, also known as Medicaid – it will be important to know about that. *(pauses)* I’m sorry to give you all this at once. Most of it is in English, I hope that’s o.k. Do you have any questions?

*(Sound effect – Ana starts to cry loudly now)*

Mario: *(rushing his words – can’t get out of there fast enough)* Thank you, Doctor. I will have to look at the papers another time. Ana should be going home now. Thank you.

*(Sound effect – door closes)*

Lourdes: *(composing herself)* I’m sorry, Dr. Edmunds. I don’t know what’s wrong with my husband. I do have a few questions…

*(music fades up to transition to next part of scene)*

*(Sound effect – car door shuts – car starts – drives away)*
*(time with no talking – hear car motor)*

Mario: *(angry - almost yelling)* That doctor is wrong about Ana! He gives us news like that and tells me to sign a bunch of papers? I tell you that doctor is wrong! And we don’t need any help from anyone!

Lourdes: *(hesitates, trying to convince)* But…the doctor…the papers sounded important…that we should at least read them…I think we at least need to see that…who was it? Cerebral Palsy specialist?

Mario: *(firmly)* I will not sign those papers and that is that! Sunday we see your father – he will agree. *(almost shouting)* No more forms. No more doctors.

*(Sound effect – Ana is crying again from the backseat)*
*(Music fades in and up – same music in each episode)*

Announcer: What can Mario’s angry secret be? How will Lourdes’ parents react to news about their youngest grandchild? Join us next week – same time – for the next edition of *Un Nuevo Amanecer para Ana y su Familia*.

*(Music fades up and out)*