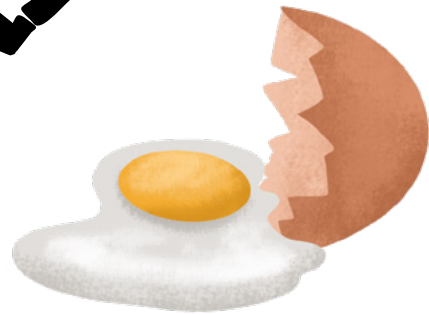




How could Juli be kind to her aunt when she could barely talk with her?

# CAKE and KINDNESS



By Daniella Subieta  
(Based on a true story)

Juli sat with her friend Sarah in the lunchroom at school.

"I'm worried about going home and seeing my *tía*," Juli said.

"Your *tía*?" Sarah asked.

"Yeah, my aunt. *Tía Jenny*," Juli said. "She's visiting for a while. And I don't think she likes me very much. She's really strict, and she never smiles. Even when I smile at her. I just don't want to upset her."

"At least you smile," Sarah said. "Being nice always helps."

All day Juli kept thinking about what Sarah said.

*I guess I could be nicer to Tía Jenny*, she thought. *That's what Jesus would do*. But *Tía Jenny* only spoke Spanish. Juli could understand some Spanish, but she couldn't speak it very well. How could Juli be kind to her aunt when she could barely talk with her?

Mom always said to be patient with people you don't understand. Juli prayed silently. *Heavenly Father, please help me be patient with Tía Jenny. And help me have courage to speak Spanish with her.*

When Juli got home from school, she saw a card on the table. She picked it up. It was for Mom and Dad. *Oh no!* she thought. *Today is their anniversary. I totally forgot!*

Juli wanted to do something nice for Mom and Dad. But she didn't know what to do.

She saw *Tía Jenny* looking around the kitchen.

"Uh . . . *todo bien?*" Juli asked. "Is everything OK?"

"Yes," *Tía Jenny* said. Then she spoke quickly in Spanish. Juli heard her ask if she was *ocupada*—busy.

"No, *yo no* . . . *ocupada*. I'm not busy," Juli said. She felt embarrassed using her broken Spanish. But *Tía Jenny* smiled. She spoke more slowly so Juli could understand. She said she wanted to make a cake for Mom and Dad's anniversary, but she needed help.

"I'll help you!" Juli said. "*Vamos!* Let's go." This was her chance to make something for Mom and Dad! And to get to know her aunt.

*Tía Jenny* and Juli went to the kitchen. They used hand gestures and simple Spanish to talk. *Tía Jenny* showed Juli how to make a checkered chocolate-vanilla cake. Juli helped measure the flour and sugar. She also cut the strawberries to go on top. Soon the cake was in the oven. It smelled delicious!

*That was pretty fun*, Juli thought. But then, as she was cleaning up, she knocked three eggs off the counter. They smashed on the floor and made a gloppy yellow mess.

Juli looked at *Tía Jenny* nervously. Would she be angry?

But *Tía Jenny* just laughed. "*Qué desorden!*" she said. ("What a mess!")

Juli had never seen *Tía Jenny* laugh. It made her laugh too. Together they cleaned up the mess.

When Mom and Dad got home, the cake was ready. "Happy anniversary!" Juli said.

"Thank you! This looks delicious. Did you make it all by yourself?" Mom asked.

"No, *Tía Jenny* and I made it together," Juli said. She smiled at *Tía Jenny*. And this time, *Tía Jenny* smiled back!

A warm feeling spread in Juli's heart. She was glad Heavenly Father had answered her prayer. ●



ILLUSTRATIONS BY MALGOSIA PIATKOWSKA