



STORIES TO
SPREAD ILUSION

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Nacho Pista Tenis Player



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Color and trim along the solid line. Double by the dashed line

About Spina Bifida

Spina bifida is an injury that affects the spine and spinal cord, you know, that **line of bones** all joined together that runs down our back and the little tube of nerves and liquid they protect..., well, children born with spina bifida can have *difficulty walking*, and this is what happens to Nacho, the main character in this story.

Nacho was born with spina bifida and **cannot move** his legs properly, that is why he has to use walking sticks to walk. Other friends who were born with the same thing have other problems. Depending on where the injury is, if it is on the lower or upper spine, they may lack the ability to move their toes or in most of their body. That is why with help from their parents, doctors and associations, boys and girls with spina bifida get used to their bodies and make the most of them.

They go to school, read, play, watch films, draw, paint and play sport, yes, sport... have you ever seen the **PARALYMPIC GAMES...?**

Well a lot of medallists have spina bifida.

Nacho's parents found out after he was born that spina bifida can sometimes be prevented if the mother takes **FOLIC ACID** at least three months before the pregnancy.

Trough this magnificent story you have in your hands, they want to tell all about it to all the daddies and mummies in the world.



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My name is Nacho and I play tennis. I like
 SWIMMING, **maths**, chocolate ice-cream
 and *story books*.

I also have spina bifida, that sounds like
 I have a snake bone stuck in my foot but
 it is simply that my spine

atera zitzaidala

of its place because, before I was born,
 the bones in my back did not stick
 as close together as they were
 supposed to and

that is why *my* **LEGS** *DON'T* **MOVE** *VERY* **MUCH**..



5



As soon as I was born,
 doctors performed an
 operation on my
 spine and also on
 my head, because it was

VERY

BIG.

As soon as I was born,
 doctors performed an
 operation on my spine and also on my
 head, because it was very big.

Now it is more mini than big, but
MY FATHER, who is very funny,
 still calls me little *CASPER*

hee, hee..

6

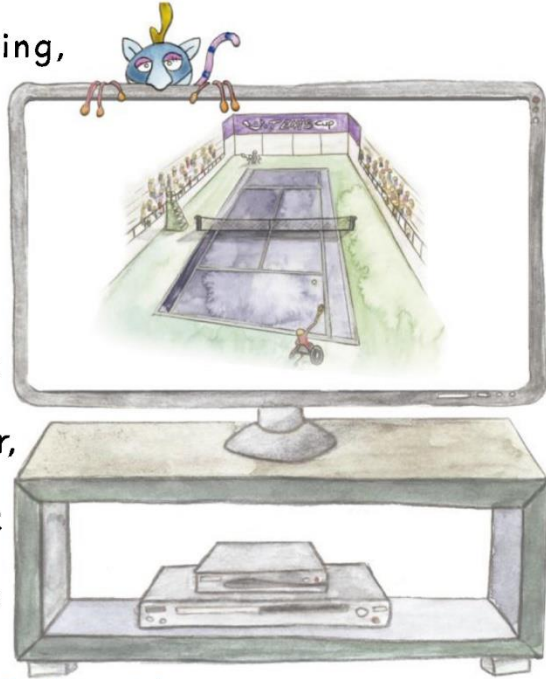
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And as I was saying,
after getting the
operation,
I moved so much
from side to
side that I had
everyone

SCARED

thinking that
I could hurt
myself. However,
I have always
thought that what
was happening to
me was that I was
eager to start



MY CAREER IN SPORTS.

When I turned 5 years old, some of my
mother's doctor friends told her, that what was
best for me and my spine was "to stimulate my
growth and my independence", after that they let
me move more and they signed me up to
wheelchair tennis classes.

And it must have worked, because I am
independent, but **MY SPINE**... is even more
so. It likes to run its own life, that is why
I have to keep an eye on it all day so that
it does what it has to do:

*It has to take me to school
at the pace of my crutches,
to put up with the classes
without saying OUCH!,
to get*

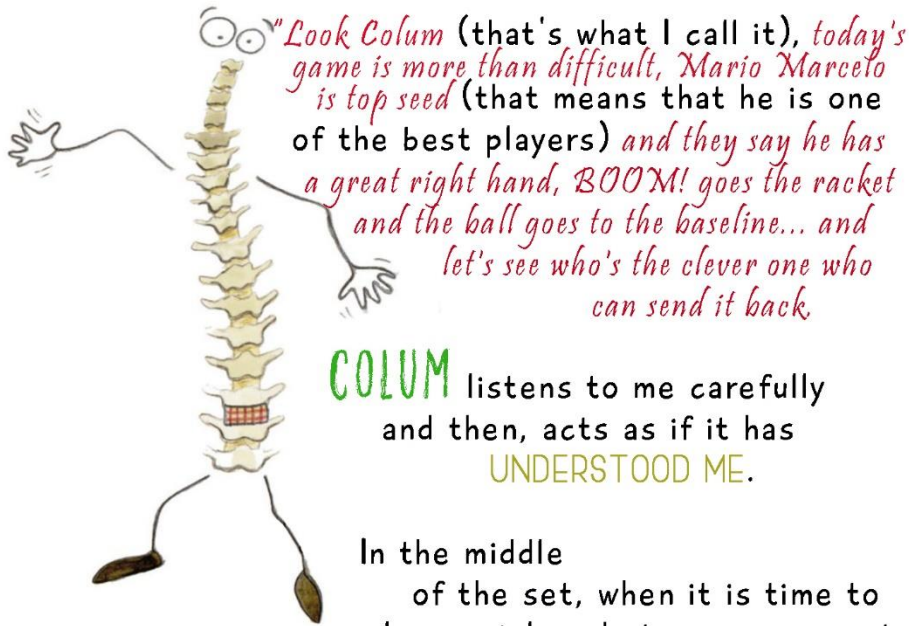
*comfortable in
the wheelchair in
practice and let me
sleep at night,
among other things.*



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Before the games, I have to have a talk with it so that it gives everything it has got:



"Look Colum (that's what I call it), today's game is more than difficult, Mario Marcelo is top seed (that means that he is one of the best players) and they say he has a great right hand, BOOM! goes the racket and the ball goes to the baseline... and let's see who's the clever one who can send it back.

COLUM listens to me carefully and then, acts as if it has **UNDERSTOOD ME.**

In the middle of the set, when it is time to make a quick and strong movement, it responds by pressing itself against the back of the chair, helping me to return the ball scoring a winner (in other words... **WINNING A POINT**).

I am not in the national ranking yet.

I have just **STARTED.**

My dream is to take part in the **paralympic games** and win a medal that I would dedicate to my parents and my sister **GELLA.**

I would dedicate it to my parents because they are champions who should have, not one, but hundreds of medals, and to my sister because *I love her more than anything.*

Come on Naszo!

She was born after me.

She does not have the same thing I do.

wow, She RUNS So fast!!

She is my biggest fan, in the championships she sits anxiously in the stands, clutching her teddy bear and when I score a point she shouts: **Come on Naszo!** (I am Naszo) She is so smart!

At home she likes to sit with me and hold my blue crutches with her small hands while we talk.



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I tell her a story every night and sometimes
I make them up.

What I come up with are **adventure stories**
about a prince on horseback who is going
to save his sister, who is under a **SPELL**.



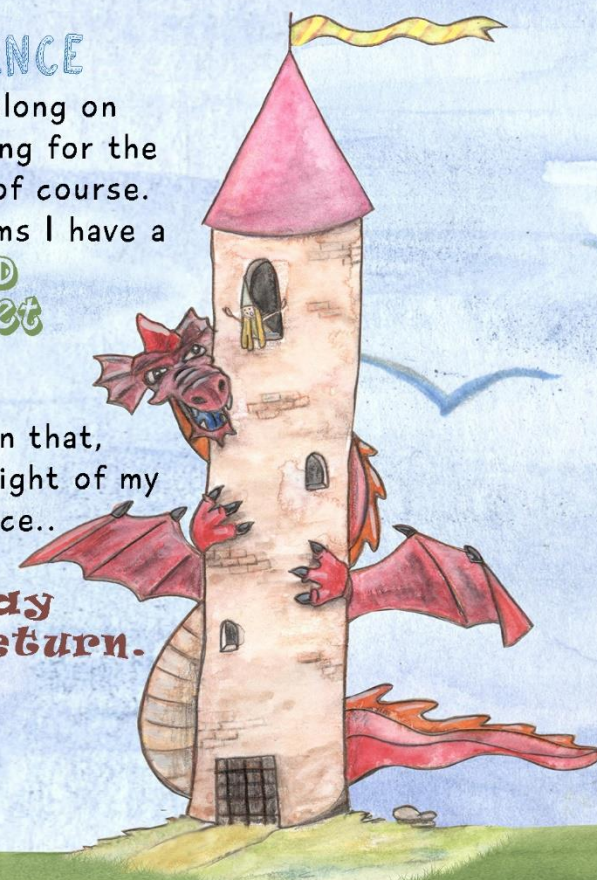
I AM THE PRINCE

and I speed along on
my horse, searching for the
princess, her, of course.
On my coat of arms I have a

**BALL AND
a racket**

as my emblem, and
there is a dragon that,
on the sheer sight of my
imposing presence..

**runs away
never to return.**



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My little sister listens

ENTHUSIASTICALLY

because she loves my stories... and the other day when she saw me sitting in the wheelchair that I use to play tennis she smiled and said: ors... that in her language means

HORSE.

I love her so much, she is so much **FUN AND FRIENDLY.**

I hope that when she is older she still comes to see me at my matches, because no one **encourages** me like she does.

For the players it is very important to hear the applause and encouraging shouts from the spectators and if it is their **family**, even more



I'm always nagging my parents asking:
When are we going to have another baby at home?
And they look at each other and laugh.

I hope that those laughs mean that the answer is, **VERY SOON!**... because I do not want anything more than having the house full of little brothers and sisters who want to listen to stories and play tennis like me, their

BIG BROTHER.



the end

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