

Flor's Journey to Independence
Modified Version
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Chapter 2

The rest of the afternoon passed. Flor felt strange. She felt like she was under water. She found her old bathrobe, two sweaters, and a winter coat in the closet. She made a bed with them on the floor.

Flor helped Betina get ready for bed. She wondered who paid the rent on her apartment while she was gone. Who was Ricardo's new wife? Where did he meet her? Questions, questions and no answers.

In the morning, Flor was tired and worried. She and Betina walked to the store to buy some food. Flor saw a payphone. She called Maria.

"Maria," she said, "I must talk to Ricardo! I need money! There's nothing in the apartment, no furniture, no food, nothing! And Betina is Ricardo's daughter. Doesn't he want to see her?"

"Calm down, Flor," said Maria. "I'll talk to Ricardo. At 1:00 I'll come to your house."

Flor agreed. One o'clock was in five hours. "Let's go to the zoo, Betina," she said. They walked to the bus stop near a school. Flor saw a NOW HIRING sign in the Burger King® window. Can I work there? she wondered.

Betina had a good time at the zoo. Flor didn't. She was worried about everything. Finally, they went home. Maria arrived with dishes, groceries, and a frying pan. She didn't say hello or hug Betina. Flor felt like crying, but she had to be strong.

“Maria,” she said. “Can you stay with Betina for a few minutes? I want to try to get a job.”

Maria was not happy, but she said yes. “Hurry!”

At Burger King, Flor felt scared. She didn’t speak English. Ricardo spoke English for her. She was in luck. The manager was at the counter. He spoke Spanish.

“I came about the job,” said Flor.

The manager’s name was David. He gave her an application. After she filled it out, he looked at it. He said that it was fine. “Come back at 6:00 tonight for training. We pay \$6.50 an hour. You’ll be working the 11:00 to 7:00 shift, Monday through Friday.”

Flor had the job. She smiled and thanked David. On the way home, she thought, Oh, no, what have I done? Who will take care of Betina?

Maria and Betina were playing with Betina’s doll when Flor returned. “Maria, I just got a job at Burger King!” said Flor. “I have to go back for training. Can you take Betina home with you? Only for tonight.”

Maria frowned but she said, “OK, but just this once.” As she left she handed Flor a scrap of paper with a phone number on it. “Ricardo,” she said.