

Quico and Tula



Leave home

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This is a story about a boy and girl who have lived in a family shelter and now tell us about their experiences. Their names are Quico and Tula, and they come from very different backgrounds.





One day, Quico and Tula, accompanied by their mothers, left home with their suitcases and arrived at the family shelter. They had problems at home and needed a place where they could feel more at ease.



Quico was extremely nervous when he arrived at the shelter, his stomach was rumbling and he had no idea what was happening to him.

- I feel strange, I don't feel like talking to anyone and I only want to sleep. Are you going to take me away from my mother? I'm frightened I won't see her again. I don't know anyone and I'm shy about meeting people I don't know.

But as the days went by he began to make friends among the boys and girls who also lived there. He gradually started to trust the people working at the family shelter and his stomach eventually stopped rumbling.





Tula, on the other hand, was absolutely amazed.

- How exciting to see the new place I'm going to be living in! I'll be meeting different people and making new friends. I'm so happy!

As soon as she arrived at the family shelter she ran off to meet the other children and to see the toys she would be able to play with from then on.

They were soon told how the home worked, which made them feel more relaxed. And, in a whisper, they were asked to keep a very important secret:

- Don't tell anyone you live in this home. This is a secret place that no one must know about.

As the days rolled by, they saw that everyone who worked in the house always helped them with everything they needed. And they also found support from the other mothers and children who lived with them.





Quico and Tula were not the only people who lived in the family shelter. It was a big house with many families living in it, each of whom had their own bedroom, with large bunk-beds and a bath that made them feel at home. Everyone would take a



shower and clean their teeth every day without much queuing.

The two children would act out stories of boats and fishing. Of course, they always left everything clean and tidy after them, ready for their next aquatic adventure.

There was a key to each bedroom, which every *mummy* carried with her



at all times, because if she ever lost that key, she and her family would be locked out of their bedroom.

The house had many other places, besides the bedrooms, which were shared and had to be looked after by everyone.



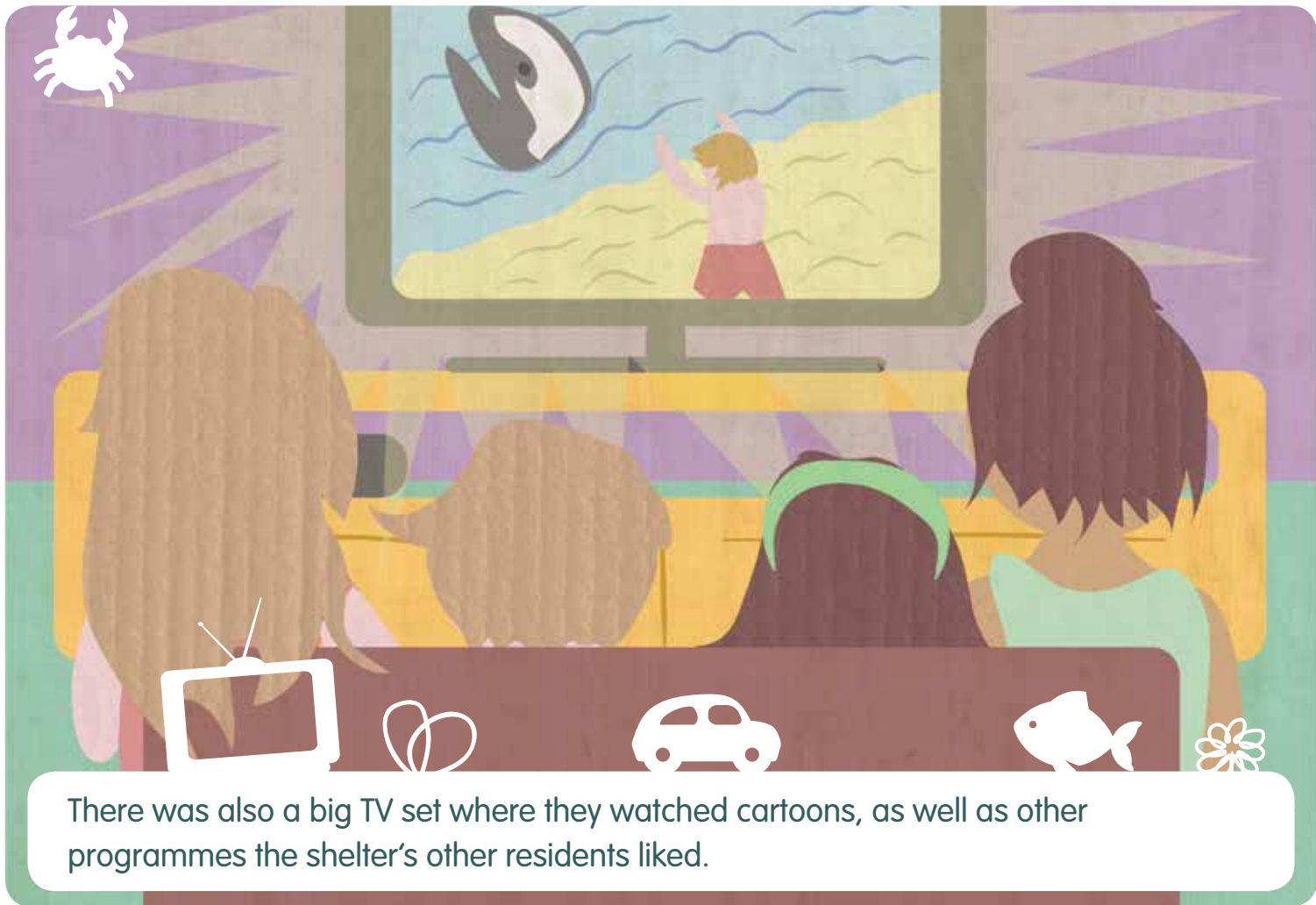
One of these was the dining room, which was only open at certain times during the day, just like a school canteen. The difference here was that there were no monitors. Quico and Tula always used to say:

- You don't know how much we like having breakfast, lunch and supper here. And how lucky we are to do all that with our mothers and other families!



Since the children living at the family shelter could not go to school, they went to morning classes from Monday to Friday so they could have fun and keep up with their learning. Quico and Tula really liked those classes:

- It's like a mini school. We study, paint, learn songs and play with the other kids living in the shelter.



There was also a big TV set where they watched cartoons, as well as other programmes the shelter's other residents liked.

Another place that Quico and Tula discovered was the terrace, where there was a play area and a vegetable garden. It was at the very top of the house and sometimes they could go up in the lift, though it was often time for them to do a bit of exercise so they had to walk up. It was Tula's favourite place:

- Quico, have you noticed? It's full of plants and look, there are all kinds of insects living there: ants, spiders, centipedes and others. It looks like the plants are their homes and we can look after them so they can live in peace, like we do below.





There was a vegetable garden at the end of the terrace, which they had to water and look after with great care. They planted lettuce, courgettes, tomatoes and other things there

- What fun it is to work like farmhands, see how these plants grow and all the fruit they produce, and afterwards *yum yum*: we can eat them!



They used to do lots of activities during the weekends, and not just with the other children. There were times for playing and reading stories with their mothers and spoiling themselves with relaxation and massage sessions.

So much daily activity used to leave them very tired at the end of the day.



After supper, they would spend a quiet moment in the dining room. Then they could go upstairs with their *mums* to their bedrooms, to rest and “recharge their batteries” for the next day.



Since then, every time a new child arrives they tell them how they felt when they first arrived. If you feel like Quico, nervous and not keen on talking, or like Tula, excited and keen to run,

- Don't worry, we went through the same thing.



Life in the family shelter, as you can see, is very intense.

It's like living with a big family!

From now on, you know that Quico and Tula's home is yours too, and that you have to look after it.

Remember that if you need something or want to speak with someone, you've got a lot of people you can turn to.

Quico and Tula wish you all the best!

And remember, everybody loves you and you are

WELCOME!

Quico and Tula

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