



DOS HERMANOS

Escrito por Erica Ray Limones

La primera vez que me di cuenta que las personas esperaban que yo fuera igual que mi hermano fue a los siete años.

Mi hermano y yo estábamos tomando clases de matemáticas particulares durante el verano.

"Cuando corregí el examen de tu hermano, pensé que tú saldrías igual de bien, Marco," me dijo la profesora, entregándome el examen. Trata de ser un poco más como él.

Yo había sacado 6.8. No pensaba que mi calificación estaba tan mal hasta que me enteré de lo bien que había hecho mi hermano.

"¿Qué sacaste?" le pregunté. "Saqué 9.5," dijo con una pequeña sonrisa.

Ese día mi hermano y yo caminamos a casa, hablando y riéndonos todo el camino. Yo ya había olvidado las palabras hirientes de mi maestra.

Pero mientras nos acercábamos a la casa, volví a recordar y me puse nervioso. En cuanto entramos a la casa, mi mamá preguntó, "¿Cómo les fue hoy?"

"Saqué 9.5," dijo José alegre, sacando rápidamente su examen de su mochila.

"¡Excelente, como siempre hijo!" dijo mi padre con una enorme sonrisa.

“¿Y tú, Marco?” dijo mi madre feliz, creyendo que me había ido igual de bien.

“No me fue tan bien,” dije, bajando la cabeza y mostrando mi hoja con el 6.8 marcado en rojo.

Aunque no vi a mi madre, escuché su suspiro y sentí como sus hombros se cayeron de la decepción.

“No es una mala calificación, Marco. Solo debes estudiar un poco más. José estudia bastante. Podrías estudiar junto a él,” dijo mi madre, tratando de sonar alegre.

“Ya será tu turno de sacar un 10,” dijo mi padre mientras aún abrazaba a José.

Yo asentí con la cabeza y no dije nada.

Mi hermano iba dos años más adelantado que yo en el colegio, pero sus notas y las mías eran muy diferentes, incluso comparándolas con sus notas cuando él tenía mi edad.

Hasta ese momento yo no había prestado atención a la diferencia entre nosotros, pero ahora que había entrado a segundo grado de primaria, era obvio como los profesores me comparaban con su maravilloso exalumno, José.

Entre él y yo nunca hubo problemas importantes, aparte de una que otra pelea o discusión por quién tendría el control remoto de la televisión o quién decidiría qué cenar el sábado.

“Mamá, es mi turno de decidir lo que vamos a cenar. Marco eligió la última vez!”

Aunque José y yo sabíamos de las comparaciones, ninguno decía nada, o al menos, no demasiado. José sabía que cualquier intento de consolarme solo me iba a hacer sentir peor, y yo tampoco quería que se sintiera mal tan solo porque yo no podía seguirle el paso.

Pero de vez en cuando él decía cosas como, “No te preocupes, Marco. Todos tenemos nuestros puntos fuertes. Tú tienes los tuyos y yo tengo los míos.”

Los años pasaron.

“Tú estarás entrando a la preparatoria, Marco!” dijo José. “¿No estás emocionado?!”

“En realidad, no,” respondí.

José se había reído, sin entender lo que la preparatoria implicaría para mí. “¿Por qué no? Volveremos a estar en la misma escuela.”

Pero yo sabía lo que estaba por venir. Sabía que iban a empezar de nuevo las comparaciones. Los profesores se decepcionarían del hermanito menor.

Sin embargo, había algo que no podía haber predicho.

Hasta ese momento solamente los adultos habían señalado nuestras diferencias. Pero durante ese primer año de la preparatoria, los alumnos mismos empezaron a hacer comparaciones.

“Mini José,” me decían varios alumnos. La mayoría ni siquiera conocía mi verdadero nombre.

Los comentarios aumentaron y se hicieron cada vez más directos.

“La inteligencia se la llevó José y no le dejó nada a Mini José,” decían mis compañeros cuando se enteraron de que me habían rechazado de varios clubs.

“Lo lamento mucho, Marco. No calificas. Tus notas no cumplen con los requisitos,” dijo el presidente del club de física.

“Lo siento, Marco. Vamos a ir a muchas competencias y necesitamos ganar. Tus puntajes son demasiado bajos. Quizás el próximo año puedas intentarlo de nuevo,” me dijo el presidente del club de matemáticas.

En casa las cosas no eran tan intensas, pero la mirada de mi madre al ver mis calificaciones siempre era la misma.

Recibía la boleta de José con entusiasmo. Pero cuando llegaba yo, la sonrisa se le iba y tardaba unos segundos en abrir la mía, como si se preparara para decepcionarse de nuevo.

Si bien mi hermano era bueno en casi todo lo que intentaba en clase yo me dediqué a tocar mi pequeño teclado eléctrico en casa. Cada vez me encerraba un poco más en mi mundo.

“Vamos, Marco. ¡Vamos a jugar a la pelota!” José decía casi todos los días.

“No, hoy no,” siempre le respondía. “Tal vez mañana.”

La música se había convertido en mi refugio donde nadie podía atacarme y donde José no iba a superarme, al menos no hasta que lo intentara.

“Vaya, Marco. Eso suena genial! Lo aprendiste por tu cuenta?”

Él siempre escuchaba mis canciones y siempre me animaba a continuar.

Mientras yo aún seguía en la preparatoria, José entró a una universidad para estudiar ingeniería.

Recuerdo una conversación con mis padres acerca de mis metas.

“Voy a solicitar ingreso a una academia de música,” dije, ya sabiendo cómo iban a reaccionar.

Ellos no lo pudieron creer y pensaron que yo estaba desperdiciando mi vida.

“¿Música? Eso no te dará ni para comer,” dijo mi padre.

“¿Estás seguro, Marco?” dijo mi mamá, deseando que me cambiara de idea.
“Todavía te quedan un par de años para estudiar mucho e ir a una universidad para estudiar ingeniería o algo así.”

Sin embargo, unos años más tarde me fui a la academia, completamente enfocado en mi meta.

En este nuevo lugar, por fin me sentía totalmente libre. Nadie conocía a José, y mejor aún, a nadie le importaba si yo sabía de matemáticas o química.

Lo único que importaba era la música, y en eso, definitivamente yo era uno de los mejores.

Por primera vez no estaba en las sombras, sino que estaba justo bajo el reflector.

Durante mis 3 años en la academia, dominé tanto el piano como el violín.

Posteriormente recibí una beca para estudiar en Nueva York.

Fue entonces cuando mis padres me vieron con otros ojos. Me vieron como la persona distinta que siempre he sido; alguien que no podía ser como su hermano porque no era su hermano.

José se graduó y se convirtió en un ingeniero muy exitoso y yo he encontrado la fama en la industria de la música, tocando en orquestas de todo el mundo.

Son dos caminos completamente diferentes que no han cambiado quienes siempre hemos sido; dos hermanos.

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## **TWO BROTHERS**

Written by Erica Ray Limones

The first time I realized that people expected me to be the same as my brother was when I was seven years old.

My brother and I were taking private math classes over the summer.

"When I marked your brother's exam, I thought you would do just as well, Marco," the teacher told me, handing me my exam. "Try to be a little more like him."

I had gotten a 6.8. I didn't think my 6.8 was so bad until I heard how well my brother had done.

"What did you get?" I asked him. "I got a 9.5," he said with a little smile.

That day my brother and I walked home, talking and laughing the whole way. I had already forgotten the hurtful words of my teacher.

But as we got closer to home, I again remembered and became nervous. As soon as we entered the house my mom asked. "How did it go today?"

"I got a 9.5," José said cheerfully, quickly pulling his test out of his backpack.

"Excellent, as always son!" my father said with a huge smile.

"And you, Marco?" my mother asked happily, believing that I had done just as well."

"It didn't go so well for me," I said, lowering my head and showing my page with the 6.8 marked in red.

Even though I didn't see my mother, I heard her sigh and felt her shoulders slump in disappointment.

"It's not a bad grade, Marco. You just have to study a little more. José studies a lot. You could study alongside him," my mother said, trying to sound cheerful.

"Your time will come to get a 10," my father said while still hugging José.

I nodded and said nothing.

My brother was two years ahead of me in school, but his grades and mine were very different, even compared to his grades when he was my age.

Until that moment I had not paid attention to the difference between us, but now that I had entered second grade [lit. of primary school], it was obvious how the teachers compared me to their wonderful former student José.

There were never any major issues between him and me, apart from the occasional fight or argument over who would have the remote control or who would decide what to eat for dinner on Saturday.

"Mom, it's my turn to choose what to have for dinner. Marco chose the last time!"

Although José and I knew about the comparisons, neither of us said anything, or at least, not much. José knew that any attempt to comfort me was only going to make me feel worse, and I didn't want him to feel bad either just because I couldn't keep up with him.

But, every once in a while , he would say things like: "Don't worry Marco, we all have our strong points. You have yours and I have mine."

The years passed.

"You will be entering high school, Marco!" said Jose. "Aren't you excited?!"

"Not really," was my response.

José had laughed, not understanding what high school would mean for me. "Why not? We will be in the same school again!"

But I knew what was coming. I knew the comparisons would start up again. The teachers would be disappointed in "the little brother."

However, there was something that I could not have predicted.

Up until then, only adults had pointed out our differences. But during that first year of high school, the students themselves started to make comparisons.

"Mini José" many of them called me. Most didn't even know my real name.

The comments increased and became more and more direct.

"José got the brains and didn't leave anything to Mini José," my classmates said when they found out that I had been rejected from various clubs.

"I'm very sorry, Marco, you don't qualify. Your grades do not meet the standards," said the president of the physics club.

"Sorry, Marco. We'll be going to many competitions and we need to win. Your test scores are way too low. Perhaps next year you can try again," the president of the math club told me.

At home, things weren't so intense, but my mother's gaze when she saw my grades was always the same.

She received José's report card with enthusiasm. But when I arrived, her smile would go away and it would take her a few seconds to open mine, as if she were preparing herself to be disappointed again.



While my brother was good at almost everything he tried in class, I dedicated myself to playing my little electric keyboard at home. I increasingly shut myself more and more into my world.

"C'mon Marco, let's go play ball!" Jose would say almost everyday.

"No, not today," was always my response. "...maybe tomorrow."

Music had become my refuge where no one could attack me and where José was not going to outdo me, at least not until he tried.

"Wow, Marco, that sounds great! Did you learn that on your own?"

He always listened to my songs and always encouraged me to continue.

While I was still in high school, Jose entered a university to study engineering.

I remember a conversation with my parents about my goals.

"I am going to apply to a music academy," I said, already knowing how they would react.

They couldn't believe it and thought that I was wasting my life.

Music? That won't even earn you enough to eat!" said my father.

"Are you sure, Marco?" my mother asked, hoping I would change my mind. "You still have a couple of years to study hard and to go to a university to study engineering or something like that."

But a few years later, I left for the Academy fully focused on my goal.

In this new place, I finally felt totally free. No one knew José, and better yet, no one cared if I knew math or chemistry.

The only thing that mattered was music, and in that, I was definitely one of the best.

For the first time I was not in the shadows but right in the spotlight.

During my 3 years at the Academy, I mastered the piano as well as the violin.

Afterward, I received a scholarship to study in New York.

It was only then that my parents saw me with different eyes. They saw me as the distinct person that I have always been; someone who could not be like his brother because he was not his brother.

José has graduated and became a very successful engineer and I have found fame in the music industry, playing in orchestras around the world.

They are two completely different pathways that have not changed who we have always been; two brothers.