

## LEAD – Final

Jorge learns about lead exposure.

Characters:

- Carolina (wife/mom)
- Jorge (husband/father)
- Juanito (the baby)
- Carlos (Carolina's brother/"expert")

### SCENE 1: Carolina and Jorge's Patio

*The paint on the side of the garage that faces the patio has started to flake. Carolina stands next to the wall attaching a roller to a broomstick. Juanito plays in the grass at her feet. Jorge comes out from the garage with a toolbox. Carlos approaches from the driveway and grabs a pack of cigarettes from his pocket.*

JORGE: Carlos?

*Carlos looks down at his cigarettes and then up at Jorge. Carolina shakes her head as she finishes with the roller. Juanito grabs the end of the broomstick.*

CARLOS: Sorry! I wasn't even thinking about it!

CAROLINA: It's gonna take some time, but you just have to stick with it.

*Carlos puts the pack back in his pocket. Jorge grabs a sanding block from the tool box, which Juanito has started digging through.*

JORGE: Okay. Let's get started.

CARLOS: Hold on. We need to *scrape* the paint off. If we use sand paper the dust from this old paint will get everywhere.

CAROLINA: What's wrong with that?

*Carlos searches through the tool box. Juanito watches him closely.*

CARLOS: It might be fine, but it looks like this was painted back when they still put lead in paint.

*Carlos looks up at Jorge.*

CARLOS: Do you have a putty knife in here?

JORGE: I think so.

*Carlos continues digging through the tool box. Carolina picks Juanito up.*

CARLOS: Anyway, lead's a metal that can be toxic to people. It's worse for kids because their brains and nervous systems are more sensitive, but it's bad for adults too, especially pregnant women.

*Carlos looks at Carolina.*

JORGE: He knows?

*Carlos finds the putty knife and stands.*

CAROLINA: I told him yesterday! *(to Juanito)* You're going to be a big brother!

*Carolina embraces Juanito.*

CARLOS: The thing with lead is that it builds up over time in your body, and it's in all kinds of things. They used to use lead pipes and lead solder, it's been used in ceramics...It can negatively affect brain development, so it's best to limit your exposure.

JORGE: I guess you deal with this at work all the time?

CARLOS: Yeah, we are mostly concerned about older paint, but if we aren't sure we just paint over it to be safe.

JORGE: You're the expert.

*Jorge puts his hand out for the putty knife.*

JORGE: Should we get started?

CARLOS: Hold on. We're going to need a drop cloth or some plastic to make sure we catch all the paint chips so that Juanito doesn't play with them.

JORGE: Yeah, you know how babies like to put everything in their mouth.

*Carlos looks at Carolina and Juanito.*

CARLOS: And you two should go inside until we get all this scraped and cleaned up.

*Carolina begins walking toward the house.*

CAROLINA: Did you hear that, Juanito? It's break time!

**SCENE 2: Carolina and Jorge's Living Room**

*Carolina and Juanito are playing on the living room floor. There are toys and books scattered around them. A tablet and a sonogram image are sitting on an end table.*

CAROLINA: Tomorrow is your Birthday, Juanito!

*Carolina tickles Juanito. Juanito giggles. Jorge and Carlos enter. Juanito looks up and smiles.*

JORGE: Do you remember that old bed sheet we use for painting? I can't find it!

CAROLINA: I thought it was in the garage...

*Carlos grabs a ball off the floor and rolls it to Juanito.*

JORGE: I thought so...I'll look again...

*Jorge leaves. Juanito laughs and rolls the ball back.*

CAROLINA: So...I have some other news to share, Carlos.

CARLOS: Okay...should I be worried?

*Carlos sits down next to Carolina. Juanito chews on a book.*

CAROLINA: No! I told you I was pregnant...

*Carolina pauses dramatically.*

CARLOS: And...?

*Carlos shoves Carolina. She laughs.*

CAROLINA: Well...I'm pregnant...with twins (but there are two)!

CARLOS: Are you serious?! That's great news! Congratulations!

*They hug. Juanito throws his book down. Jorge returns, sheet in hand.*

JORGE: Found it—oh! I guess Carolina told you the *other* news.

*Juanito waves at Jorge.*

CARLOS: We've been together all day! Why didn't you say anything?!

JORGE: Carolina wanted to tell you herself!

CAROLINA: Do you want to see?

*Carolina grabs a sonogram image from an end table and hands it to Carlos. Carlos examines it for a moment.*

CAROLINA: (pointing at the image) That's one baby...and that's a second one...

*Carlos looks up. Jorge chuckles. Carlos hugs Carolina, stands, and shakes Jorge's hand.*

CARLOS: That is great news. Congratulations to both of you!

*Carlos looks at the image again.*

*Exposure + Genetics Version*

CARLOS: I wonder how they end up looking like us.

CAROLINA: Who? Babies?

CARLOS: Yeah.

*Carolina reaches over and grabs the tablet.*

CAROLINA: Well, let me show you this video. It talks all about how we get traits from our parents.

*Carolina plays the video.*

VIDEO 1: People all have the same genes, but each person has slightly different forms of those genes. Those different forms make us a little different. That's why some of us have green eyes, black hair, and specific shaped

noses, for example. We look so much like our parents because we get exactly half of our genes from our mom and half from our dad. That's why we often have similar noses, hair color, and eye color. We also inherit some of their other traits, like chances of getting some diseases. The dad's genes are contained in his sperm. Each sperm contains half of the dad's genes, but the genes he received from his parents are shuffled. In other words, each sperm contains a unique mixture of dad's genes. The mom's genes are contained in her eggs. Each egg also contains half of the mom's genes, and they are also shuffled and unique. When a baby is made, one sperm and one egg fuse together to make a single cell. This is called fertilization. This cell divides over and over, forming a group of cells. Each cell in this group has the exact same genes. The group of identical cells then starts making different kinds of cells – heart cells, lung cells, brain cells, and all the cells that form each part of the body. As the baby grows, the genes from both parents provide the instructions for development. That is why children have traits from each parent.

*Carlos reaches for his phone. Carolina sets the tablet down.*

CARLOS: Oh! This video we had to watch at work about lead and brain development makes so much more sense now!

CAROLINA: What do you mean?

*Carlos plays the video.*

VIDEO 2: Lead can cause harm to babies and children, even if it doesn't affect their genes. Lead prevents normal brain development. Lead interferes with the communication between cells in the brain, affecting the way cells work. Lead affects babies and children more because their brains are still developing.

JORGE: So *that's* why Carolina and Juanito shouldn't be around the paint chips...

CARLOS: Exactly.

**SCENE 3: Carolina and Jorge's Patio**

*Later in the day, Jorge and Carlos have begun painting. Jorge has a paint roller and Carlos is on a ladder, painting the edges with a brush.*

JORGE: Thanks for helping out today. I know you do this every day and probably don't want to spend your weekends painting too.

CARLOS: It's no problem!

JORGE: If you weren't willing to help, I'm sure I would have sanded a lot of this down...and with Juanito, and Carolina pregnant...

*Carlos stops painting and looks over at Jorge.*

CARLOS: Hey, we kept everyone safe. And now you know for next time.

*Carlos goes back to painting.*

CARLOS: The only reason I know about it is because I had to learn this stuff when I first started at my job.

*They continue painting.*

*Exposure + Genetics Version*

CARLOS: What if the twins are identical...? What if they're identical girls? What if they're identical girls but they look like you?!

*Carlos laughs. Jorge playfully swings the roller in his direction.*

JORGE: I'm still trying to adjust to having more kids and you're giving me a hard time?!

*They laugh and resume painting.*

*Carolina comes out to the patio, carrying Juanito.*

CAROLINA: (to Juanito) What are these guys up to out here?

*Jorge looks back at Carolina.*

JORGE: We're getting everything perfect for your Birthday party, Juanito!

CARLOS: We have to do a good job because when your siblings turn one, there won't be any time to paint!

*Juanito points at Carlos.*

CAROLINA: Your uncle is making jokes, but the garage looks so good!

JORGE: And safe for us!

*Carolina's cell phone rings.*

CAROLINA: Oh! That's probably Isabela. She's coming over to help make the piñata!

*Carolina takes Juanito back in the house. Jorge and Carlos continue painting.*