

RECURSO GRATIS • NIVEL PRINCIPIANTE

La promesa de Lucía

A B1 story about ambition, family responsibility, and learning that a promise should not require silence.

DREAM

PROMISE

BALANCE

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ANTES DE LEER

Prepare to read

Lucía has promised to help her mother during the most important week in their family business. Then a scholarship interview creates a conflict she is afraid to explain.

Think before you read

Can keeping a promise ever prevent someone from being honest about what they need?

Reading goal

Notice vocabulary for goals, family obligations, and negotiation. Infer why Lucía hides good news from people she loves.

THE STORY · PART 1

Good news at the wrong time

Lucía read the email three times before she believed it. A nursing program had selected her for a scholarship **interview**.

For two years, she had attended community college in the mornings and worked for her mother's cleaning business in the afternoons. Becoming a nurse was no longer a distant wish; it was a carefully planned **goal**.

The interview, however, was scheduled for Thursday at three o'clock—the same time as the final inspection of the company's largest new **contract**.

Her mother, Teresa, had spent months trying to win the contract for a medical center. If the inspection went well, she could offer regular hours to six employees.

Lucía had promised to organize the team and interpret during the meeting. Teresa trusted her because she understood both the cleaning requirements and the client's formal English.

That evening, Lucía almost mentioned the email. Before she could speak, Teresa placed a folder on the table.

'I could not do Thursday without you,' she said. 'Once this contract is secure, you can reduce your hours next semester.'

Lucía closed her laptop. She told herself that family **responsibility** came first and that another opportunity would appear.

Still, she did not decline the interview. Instead, she allowed the confirmation deadline to move closer.

THE STORY · PART 2

The promise becomes heavier

By Tuesday, Lucía was distracted. She entered supply numbers incorrectly and forgot to send an employee's schedule.

Her younger brother, Nico, noticed the scholarship email when he borrowed her laptop. 'Why haven't you told Mom?' he asked.

'Because she needs me,' Lucía replied. 'I made a **commitment**.'

Nico reminded her that Teresa had also worked extra hours so Lucía could study. Hiding the interview did not protect that sacrifice; it prevented Teresa from helping decide what to do.

Lucía became defensive. 'It is easy for you to say that. You are not the person everyone **depends on**.'

The words hurt Nico, and he left the room. Almost immediately, Lucía regretted them.

On Wednesday morning, the nursing program sent a reminder. She had six hours to confirm.

Lucía finally showed Teresa the email and prepared herself for disappointment.

Her mother read it slowly. 'I am not upset that you received an opportunity,' she said. 'I am upset that you decided my answer before asking me.'

Teresa admitted that the inspection mattered, but so did the future they had both worked to create. They began looking for an **alternative**.

THE STORY · PART 3

A promise with room to grow

Lucía contacted the scholarship coordinator and explained the conflict. The interview time could not change, but she was allowed to join by video from a private room at the medical center.

Next, Lucía trained an experienced employee named Maribel to lead the inspection. They reviewed the checklist and practiced how to answer likely questions.

Teresa arranged for a professional phone **interpreter** to remain available. It cost money, but relying on one bilingual family member for every conversation had never been a permanent solution.

On Thursday, Lucía helped the team prepare, then entered a small conference room for her interview. She spoke about balancing school and work, communicating across languages, and caring for people under pressure.

When she returned, the inspection was almost finished. Maribel looked confident, and Teresa had handled an unexpected question without Lucía.

The medical center approved the contract. A week later, Lucía also received the **scholarship**.

She apologized to Nico and thanked him for challenging her. He accepted the apology but made her promise not to call him irresponsible simply because he expressed a difficult truth.

Lucía kept her original promise to support the business, although not in the way she had first imagined. She created bilingual training documents and helped Maribel become a permanent supervisor.

She learned that responsibility was not the same as making herself **indispensable**. A strong family could share a burden without asking one person to abandon a dream.

The best promises do not close the future. They give people enough trust to build it together.

Words for goals and responsibility

interview	entrevista
goal	meta
contract	contrato
responsibility	responsabilidad
commitment	compromiso
depends on	depende de
alternative	alternativa
interpreter	intérprete
scholarship	beca
indispensable	indispensable

COMPREHENSION

Read between the lines

A. Choose the best answer

1. Why is Thursday important to Teresa? a) College begins b) A contract is inspected c) Nico graduates
2. Why does Lucía hide the interview? a) She expects Teresa to need her b) She dislikes nursing c) She missed the deadline
3. What solution does the program offer? a) A new date b) A written test c) A video interview
4. Who leads most of the inspection? a) Nico b) Maribel c) The coordinator

B. Interpret

1. What does Teresa mean when she says Lucía decided her answer before asking?
2. Why is becoming less 'indispensable' a positive change for Lucía and the business?

C. Write

Write a message requesting flexibility for an important conflict. Explain the situation, recognize the other person's needs, and suggest a solution.

ANSWER KEY

Review and reflect

A. 1. b 2. a 3. c 4. b

B. Suggested answers

1. Lucía assumed Teresa would reject the interview, so she removed her mother's chance to understand the situation or help solve it. 2. Sharing knowledge makes the company stronger and allows Lucía to pursue nursing without abandoning her family.

Sample message

I have an important scholarship interview during Thursday's inspection. I understand that the client needs bilingual support and that the meeting cannot be delayed. Could I attend the interview by video from the medical center while Maribel leads the checklist? I can prepare her and arrange an interpreter in advance.

KEEP GOING

Discuss: When does self-sacrifice stop being helpful?