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## Being Mixed

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## Being Mixed

By Maya J. Brightman

Did you ever think you'd fall in love on vacation? Well, that's what happened with my mom and dad. My mom is Colombian and my dad is from the U.S. They met while he was on vacation. He didn't plan it, he just decided to go to Colombia one day. Once in Colombia he explored lots of places like the Iglesia Ermita, and the Zoológico en el Baile de Cali. A few weeks go by and he goes to a club, the same club my mom used to go to. They started talking and they liked each other so they started to date. They then quickly fell in love. That's when my mom decided she wanted to move to the U.S. to live together. My older sister also came to The United States, she was around 5 at the time.

My parents got married 2 months after my mom came to the U.S. (because of the K-1 visa). When my sister was 9 my mom was pregnant with my brother and I. People said my mom had the biggest belly they've ever seen. When we were born my brother came out first. Yes, we are twins! I had a little difficulty. My umbilical cord was wrapped around my neck and I almost died. But to this day I'm still alive!

Nowadays when people look at me they automatically think I am white. Yes, it does bother me, because I am mixed. My mom is black and my dad is white. For me I only look like my twin brother Matthew because he is mixed too. But not so much my sister because she is full Colombian. I think it is rude when people stare, although I do like the attention, but sometimes it can be annoying. In Colombia my mom always tells my brother and I to be super safe in Colombia because it's easy to get robbed or kidnaped, especially if I am very light skinned. This always scared me when I was younger. But other than that matter Colombia is really cool.

Growing up was really fun. Even though my first language was English my mom taught my brother and I to speak Spanish. She would always make my brother and I speak and read Spanish to her. At the time I hated it and I would cry but I'm glad she did because now I can communicate with my family.

Every year for about a month I go to Colombia and we rent a finca with a piscina. My cousins and I are in the pool almost every day. They always make fun of me because I always get the worst sun-

burn even after being outside for only 30 minutes. They don't even call me by my name they just call me a tomato! I don't like that but at least I always win in Marco Polo so we're even. After the pool we walk to la tienda at the corner and eat paletas de hielo. I love the chocolate kind, it's my favorite.

Even though my Spanish isn't great, we still make our way around it. I have 5 aunts and 2 uncles- my family loves to rumbear they can party until the sun goes up. It's always fun because my cousins and my brother and I always play tag or hide and seek when they are partying. it never gets old. When I'm there at times I feel out of place, because I'm white and my Spanish isn't great. It's hard sometimes, but other times I feel really good because they're family and family loves you no matter what.