

# IT HIPS! IT HOPS! IT DIPS!

## The Last Cuentista *Call and Response*

You will be	A fire snake
A great cuentista	Not yours, mine
A storyteller	El cuento
I have hope	En los tiempos viejos
For your to take on your trip	This is her story
All the cuentos	My version of the story
The stories on a new planet	Esto es verdad
You have to go	Como me lo contaron,
I'm scared	lo cuento
You need a cuento	This is true
Había una vez	Listen
A fire snake	To the story
Mother Earth	Listen and learn
A new planet	Today we celebrate our arrival
I promise to make you proud	A new planet.
A true storyteller	A better future
A true cuentista	Fill with stories
I'll have to make the stories my own	You will be
A world without a story is lost	A great cuentista
Not now	A storyteller
Years from now	You will fill the new world

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With stories	bringing stories to a new world
Of our ancestors	I know in this instant
Embrace our differences	who I am
A New planet	I am a storyteller.
A better future	I will take the chance
Fill with stories	to tell the story
Ours, from our ancestros	I will take the risk trying
My voice trembles	I let my memories fill me.
trust where the story is leading you	I'm bringing them to this world.
It was magical	Ssssh, this is my cuento
Like your cuentos	I will share stories
Each story,	We've come so far.
Each person is different.	I won't let our story end here.
Messy sometimes.	I'll share the stories
But colorful, mismatched, and beautiful.	I will make sure the folklore
Do you remember?	soaks into the soil.
Everything we do	I will speak
will bring great pride to our ancestors	my mind's magical library
by honoring the past,	"What is that?"
our ancestors,	"That, is home."
our cultures	We will be
remembering our mistakes	Great cuentistas
we become better.	

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## **The Last Cuentista** *Story Nuggets*

1.

LITA TOSSES ANOTHER PIÑON LOG ONTO the fire. Sweet smoke drifts past us into the starry sky. Her knees crack as she sits back down on the blanket next to me. The cup of hot chocolate with cinnamon she's made me sits untouched this time.

2.

“You need a cuento,” she says, referring to one of her tall tales.

We lie back looking up at the night sky. The warm desert wind blows over us as Lita pulls me into the tightest hug ever. I never want to leave this spot.

She points up at Halley's Comet. From here, it doesn't look so dangerous.

“Había una vez,” she begins her story, “a young fire snake nagual. His mother was Earth, his father the sun.”

3.

“So, every seventy-five years, he retraces the journey, hoping to reunite with her.” She points again at the fire snake. “Close enough to sense his mother, but never to embrace.”

“Except this time,” I say, heat running up my back.

“Yes,” she answers, pulling me closer. “In a few days, the fire snake will finally find his mother. Y colorín Colorado, este cuento se ha acabado,” she says, ending her cuento.

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4.

She sits up, legs crossed, facing me. “A storyteller, yes. It’s in your blood.” She leans in. “But just like me? No, mija. You need to discover who you are and be that.”

“What if I ruin your stories?” I ask.

Lita cups my chin in her soft, brown hand. “You can’t ruin them. They’ve traveled hundreds of years, and through many people to find you. Now, go make them your own.”

I think of Lita and her mother, and her mother’s mother. How much they knew. Who am I to follow them?

5.

She wipes a tear from my cheek. “It’s impossible for you to leave me. I’m part of you. You’re taking me and my stories to a new planet and hundreds of years into the future. How lucky I am.”

I kiss her cheek. “I promise to make you proud.”

Gripping my obsidian pendant, I wonder if Lita will watch the fire snake through the smoky glass, when he finally reunites with his mother.”