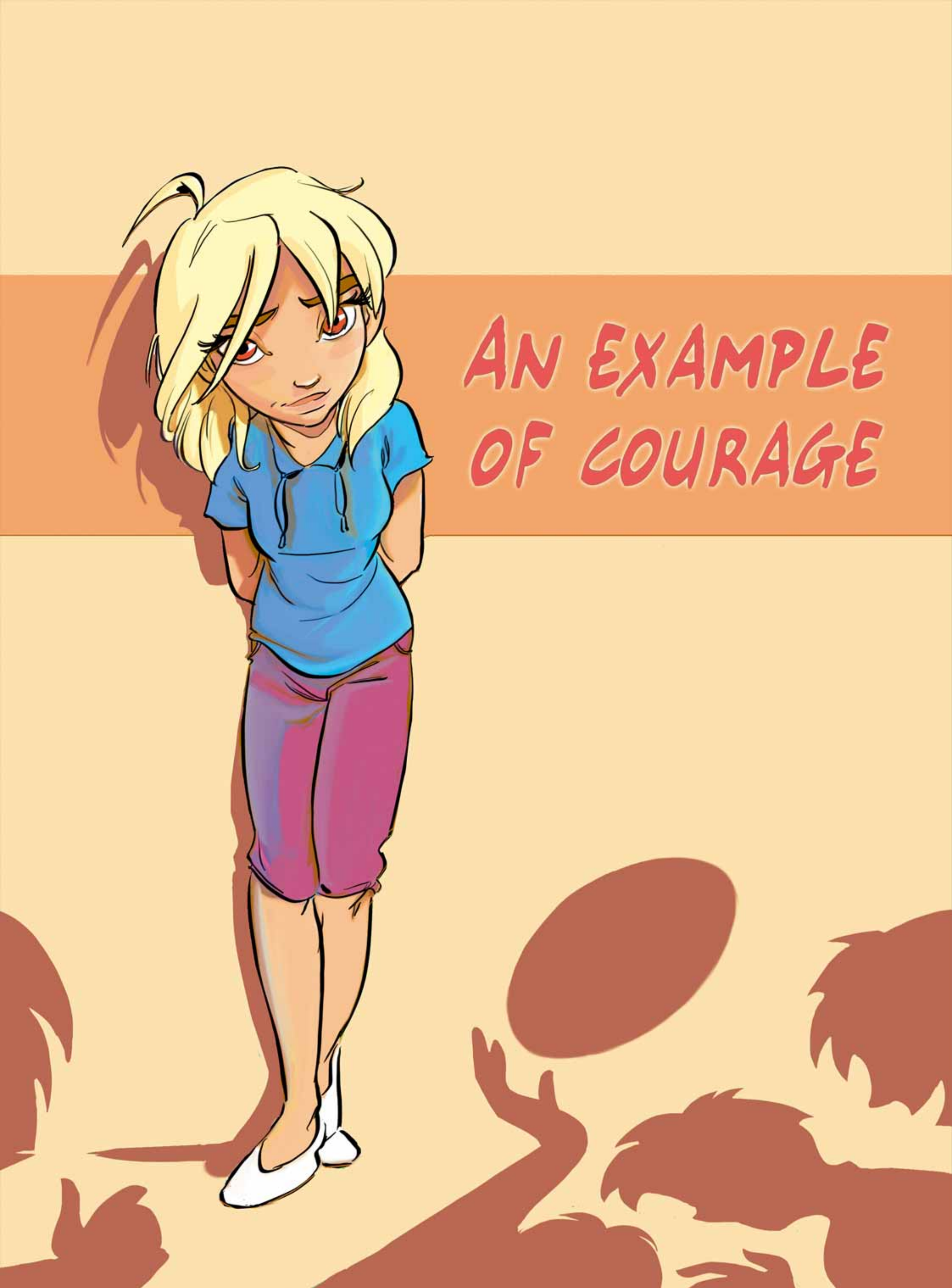

AN EXAMPLE
OF COURAGE

dear friend:

This comic was originally created and produced by the Spanish Patient's Association Menudos Corazones. It has been translated into English for teenagers in the UK by GUCH Patients Association.

The writing of this comic was a real adventure and started with the question: What are the subjects that interest or worry teenagers who were born with a heart condition?

When parents were asked, they didn't have a very clear idea, so Menudos Corazones then asked young people for help and a small group got together. Marimen, Sonia, Natalia, Marta and Regina, who all have a congenital heart condition offered to share their personal experiences, coordinated by a teacher called Marta they met over a period of five months and created stories like this one.

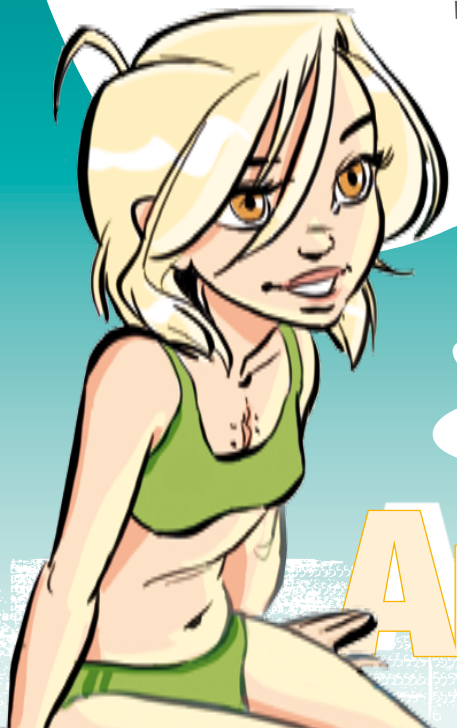
Funded by GUCH Patient's Association, some of our members attended the Young Hearts European Conference in Finland in July 2008. Here, through sharing ideas and experiences we heard about the Menudos Corazones Spanish Association's comic books. We thought they were great and so have worked together to bring you the English version.

The story, although made up, describes personal experiences that all of the group members, in one way or another, have lived through and that might also be familiar to you. We hope the story highlights some of the issues that can affect teenagers growing up with a heart condition.

If you would like to share your story, or have any worries or concerns you would like to talk about please contact us at GUCH Patients Association.

Enjoy!

GUCH Patients Association
Supporting young people and adults born with a heart condition.
www.guch.org.uk



An Example of Courage

WHY DON'T YOU COME FOR A SWIM?

I DON'T KNOW ... I DON'T FEEL WELL ... I MIGHT HAVE CAUGHT A COLD ...

SUIT YOURSELF!

DURING THE NIGHT ...

YOU ARE SO PRETTY, I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU DON'T WANT TO PUT A NICE TOP ON.

I LIKE THIS T-SHIRT. LEAVE ME ALONE!

PERHAPS MAYA IS RIGHT, IT'S NOT TOO BAD ... IT'S HARDLY NOTICEABLE IN THIS LIGHT. MAYBE I WILL GO FOR A SWIM TODAY.

COME ON ALICE, JUMP IN!

WHAT'S THE MATTER? ARE YOU AFRAID OF THE WATER?

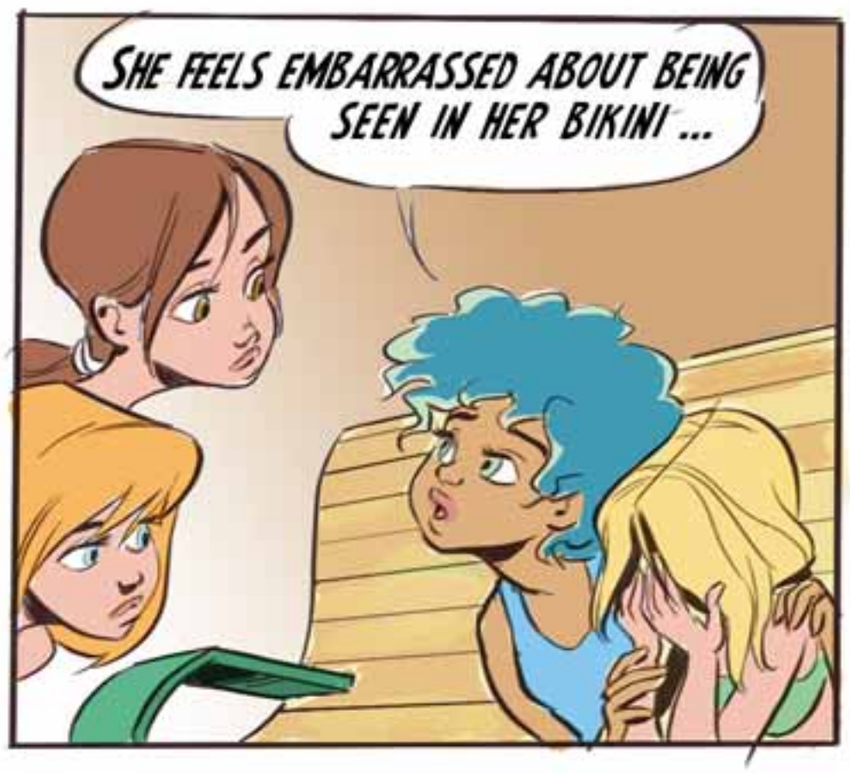
¡SPLASH!

HA, HA, HA!

HA, HA, HA!

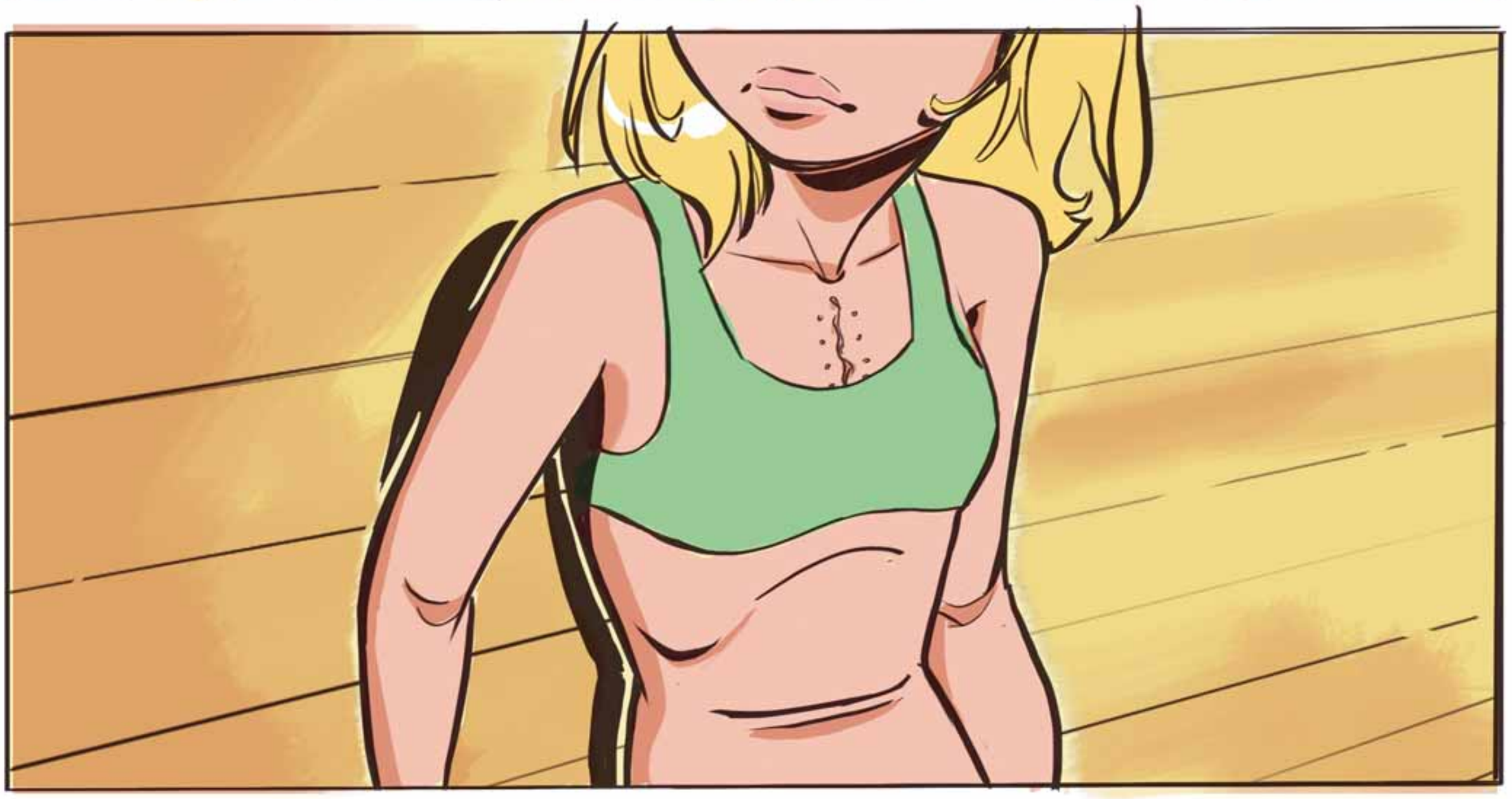
ALICE! STOP!
COME BACK!

ALICE, WHAT'S THE MATTER?


SHE FEELS EMBARRASSED ABOUT BEING SEEN IN HER BIKINI ...

WHY?

I HAVE A SCAR ON MY CHEST.



HOW CAN YOU FEEL EMBARRASSED TO WEAR A BIKINI JUST BECAUSE OF THAT SCAR? ALL THE BOYS ARE AFTER YOU!

I HAD TO WEAR BRACES THIS YEAR. I LOOKED SO AWFUL THAT I DIDN'T OPEN MY MOUTH FOR A WEEK AND ONLY USED SIGN LANGUAGE!

I LOOK FAT IN A BATHING SUIT AND MY MUM WON'T LET ME WEAR A BIKINI BECAUSE SHE SAYS THAT MY TUMMY SHOWS.

I THINK WE SHOULD ALL AGREE THAT ... WE ARE ALL FANTASTIC AND ARE GOING TO LOOK SO GREAT TONIGHT THAT WE WILL DAZZLE EVERYONE.

I HAVE ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT HALTER NECK TOPS LOOK BEST ON ME. RIGHT?

RIGHT!

HA! HA! HA!

PERHAPS I OVERDID IT THIS MORNING ... SORRY IF I SCARED YOU OR SOMETHING ...

YOU DIDN'T SCARE ME ... I WAS JUST EMBARRASSED IN CASE YOU SAW ... YOU SAW MY SCAR.

YOU ARE JOKING! I'VE LOADS OF SCARS! LOOK, I GOT THIS ONE CHASING MY BROTHER WHEN WE WERE SNOWBOARDING.

SO, NEXT MORNING ...

LET'S GO!

WHOEVER CATCHES MY WATCH FIRST, WINS!

HOW DID YOU GET THE SCAR?

I DIDN'T GET IT IN AN ACCIDENT. I HAD AN OPERATION BECAUSE I WAS BORN WITH A HEART CONDITION.

A HEART CONDITION? IS THAT LIKE A HEART ATTACK?

NO, NOTHING LIKE THAT. I USED TO GET TIRED A LOT AND WHEN THEY DID SOME TESTS THEY FOUND OUT THAT I'D BEEN BORN WITH A PROBLEM IN MY HEART AND THAT I'D HAVE TO HAVE AN OPERATION.

I WAS VERY SCARED TO START WITH BECAUSE I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO DIE. BUT THE DOCTORS TOLD ME I WOULD BE ALRIGHT AND THAT MANY PEOPLE HAVE THE SAME THING. THEY SAID THEY'D HAVE TO OPERATE AND I'D LEAD A NORMAL LIFE EVEN THOUGH THERE'D BE THINGS I COULDN'T DO.

MY FAMILY ARE PLEASED I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO COME TO THIS CAMP AND SPEND A FEW DAYS ON HOLIDAY WITH OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE MY AGE. THEY HAVE ALSO BEEN VERY WORRIED.

WE'RE VERY HAPPY THAT YOU ARE HERE TOO ... AND WEARING A BIKINI!

WELL, I ALSO HAVE A SCAR. GUESS WHERE?

WOW! HOW DID YOU GET THAT?

I'VE HAD A GREAT TIME, I DIDN'T EXPECT TO FIND PEOPLE ... PEOPLE LIKE YOU ... CAN I HAVE YOUR MOBILE NUMBER SO WE CAN ARRANGE TO GO OUT SOME TIME?

YEAH, OF COURSE! GIVE ME A CALL NEXT WEEK IF YOU LIKE ...

MY NUMBER IS ...

EMMA! REMIND ME TO GIVE YOU YOUR TOP BACK BEFORE I FORGET!

DON'T WORRY. KEEP IT! IT LOOKS BETTER ON YOU THAN ON ME.

TO US!

THE END

Sometimes the going gets tough.
Don't bottle it up and keep it to yourself. Talk it over!
Find out what s there to help.

GUCH Patients Association is a charity that supports young people and adults who were born with a heart condition. Don't feel alone, you can connect up with others like you. We provide:

- advice, support and information to people born with a heart condition as well as their family and friends
- a website with message board
- organise events, groups and conferences
- campaign for great medical care for people born with a heart condition

GUCH

Get in touch with us

By post:
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Website: www.guch.org.uk

Join us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1213938078

MySpace: www.myspace.com/guchpa

We look forward to hearing from you!

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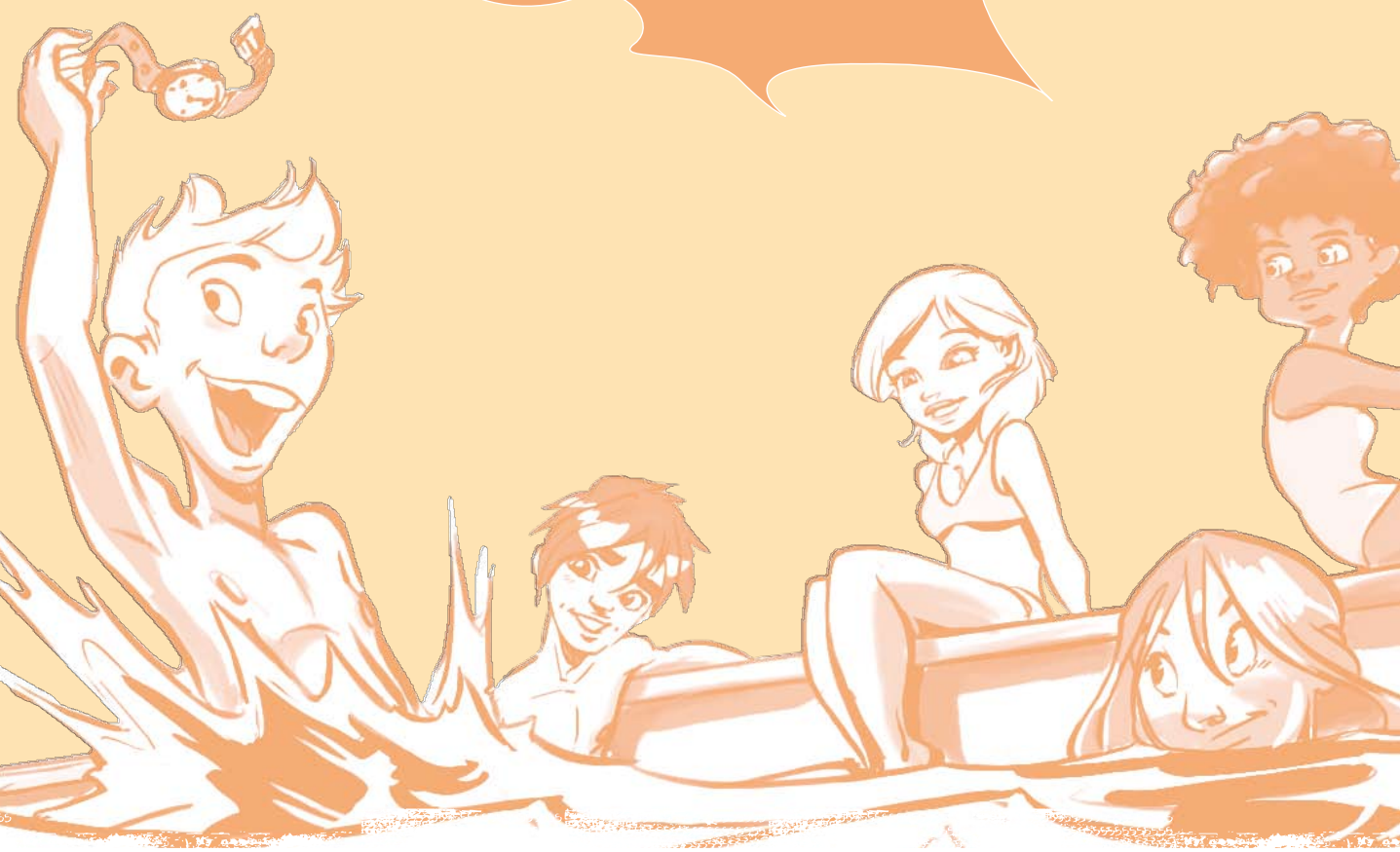

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Menudos Corazones

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