

# **Big Cousin, Big Responsibility**

By Kelly Hashway

Charla sat on her Aunt Monica's front porch swing and stared at the birds perched in the big oak tree on the lawn.

"Lucky birds, you can fly to the beach. I have to stay here all day and work." Charla was visiting Aunt Monica for the week, helping her around the house. Aunt Monica was eight months pregnant, and since Charla was on spring break, her mother thought it would be nice to help Aunt Monica set up the house for the new baby. Charla wasn't happy about it though. Monica was her favorite aunt, and now she'd have to share her with a new baby.



"What are you doing out here?" Aunt Monica asked, stepping onto the porch.

"Getting some fresh air." Charla had been helping Aunt Monica paint the baby's room all morning.

Aunt Monica took a deep breath. "It smells like spring. Hey, how about we go for a walk?"

Charla looked at Aunt Monica's big belly. "Are you sure you're up for it?"

"Yeah, it's good for me. Come on."

Charla and Aunt Monica always took walks together. The beach was only about a mile away, but Charla wondered if that was too far for Aunt Monica now.

They headed down the road and to the end of the development. Charla wanted to turn right like they usually did, but she hesitated. "We can turn back if you want."

Aunt Monica shook her head. "To the beach."

It took longer than usual, but they made it to the beach. Charla sat down on the swings