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# Smarty got a little sister



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This is Marta, but everyone calls her Smarty.

Smarty is a first-grader and loves school. Her favorite day is Wednesday because she has art class, and for snack they have fruit salad. Yummy!

When she grows up, Smarty wants to heal penguins. Or lions. She hasn't decided yet.

For now, he only heals his stuffed animals when she is playing, and sometimes Roko, his younger brother. Roko is in kindergarten and loves spending time with his older sister.

Not so much with his younger sister.

Two weeks ago, baby Nora came into their lives and suddenly everything changed.

When mom and Nora came home from the hospital, Smarty and Roko were overjoyed. Smarty almost doesn't remember the moment her brother was born because she was too young. Now she's big enough to hold the baby, help with changing, bathing, and enjoy being the oldest sister.





At least that's how it was for the first two days after Nora's arrival. Roko and Smarty were overjoyed that their family had grown and tried to help their mom. But on the third day, everything went downhill.

It seemed as if the apartment had suddenly become smaller and more crowded.

As if the nights had become too long and very, very noisy.

As if dad had more and more work to do and less and less time for them.

But all this would have been easier to bear if at least mom had stayed the same.

But with the arrival of the new baby, mom had changed too.

It seemed to them that they hardly saw her at all. And when they finally saw her, baby was always stuck to her.

Mom's hands were no longer free to fry eggs or pancakes for breakfast in the morning, before school and kindergarten, or to cuddle Roko and Smarty whenever they wanted. Mom's imagination no longer had as many ideas for new bedtime stories or funny crayon drawings.

Mom became too busy with the baby, and jumble moved into their home.

The jumble was growing and becoming louder, and one Wednesday she decided to take matters into her own big hands.

– Mom, I'm hungry! – Roko shouted while his mom was feeding the baby in the room.

– Sweetie, ask your dad to make you dinner, I can't right now! – his mom said.

– Daddyyyyy!!! I'm hungry! – Roko was calling him, but his dad was on the phone in the study room. He had a lot of work to do these days, even after work.

Smarty was also hungry, so she decided to make pancakes mixture herself. Mom or dad will fry them later.

She put two eggs, flour, water, milk, and a little vanilla sugar in a large bowl.

She stirred and churned.

She churned and stirred.

She was about to put the bowl of mixture in the fridge to cool, Roko ran past her and accidentally pushed her. The bowl flew into the air and all the mixture spilled all over Smarty, Roko, and the kitchen.

They both screamed and began to argue loudly.

– What happened?! – dad came running, and Smarty and Roko burst into tears.







They cried in their dad's arms for a few minutes. When dad hugged them and soothed them, Smarty told him while crying:

– Mom is always with the baby, and you're always on the phone!

– It's hard for you, I understand. A lot of things have changed. – dad explained to them.

– Why do you have to work so much? – Smarty asked angrily. – It would be easier if you didn't work and spent time with us! – she said.

– You're right, Smarty. You're the most important thing to me, I'll think of something! – her dad told her and cleaned the kitchen.

The next day, dad came home from work and brought wonderful news.

– I won't have to go to work for a while and we'll all be together! – he announced.

Because of Nora's birth, dad will use paternity leave for ten days, and after that he will take a few more days off to be with his family.

– Yay! – Smarty shouted cheerfully



Since dad has been on leave, Smarty and Roko have been looking forward to every moment spent with him and mom. You don't go to bed without hugging, cuddling and talking.

– There were four of us, and now we are five. It's a big change for all of us. And it's okay if sometimes it's hard for you. It's not always easy for me either. – dad admitted to his kids.

– It's hard for me to tie my shoes, but now you're teaching me how to do it. – Roko chimed in.

– Yesterday my math homework was hard, but you helped me. It's so good to have you home! – said Smarty.

– Now that baby Nora is with us, mom and I will be a bit busier for a while because babies require a lot of attention and time, so we will need your help. Smarty, you already know how to make snacks for you and your brother, you both know how to set the table and put the dishes in the dishwasher. You can put away your toys and feed the kitten. – their dad explained.

– I know how to change Nora's diaper! – Smarty boasted.

– Yuck! – Roko was disgusted.

In our family, everyone does the best they can to make things better and easier for all of us, right? – dad concluded.

– Everyone, except the kitten! All she ever does is lick her fur and sleep! – Roko added.





And mom is less tired since dad has been home. Dad washes and irons the clothes piling up day after day, and he also prepares delicious meals for his family.

Dad loves zucchini, so his menu often includes some kind of zucchini stew, fried zucchini in zucchini sauce, zucchini cake with chocolate, or zucchini soup with zucchini pieces.

– Zucchini again! – Roko protested.

Smarty, Roko and dad prepare breakfast together in the morning, and after school and kindergarten, mom picks them up and takes them for ice cream, while dad stays home with baby Nora. They are happy because they can spend more time alone with mom and tell her about everything they did at school and kindergarten. They all soon start to miss Nora, so they are happy to go home to her.





Dad has already had two babies so far and knows very well that taking care of a baby is never-ending. Dad likes to bathe and change his baby Nora, and Smarty and Roko often help him.

When Nora is restless and crying, dad rocks her and sings her lullabies until she calms down.

Sometimes, in the middle of the night, Nora's crying wakes Smarty and Roko up and they run to mom and dad's bed. To lull them to sleep, mom and dad tell them stories about dinosaurs and unicorns.

Smarty also has brilliant ideas, so sometimes she tells the story. She loves when everyone falls asleep and they wake up in the same bed in the morning. Just like in the old days.

The drawing of the family that Smarty drew at the beginning of first grade has been hanging on the fridge for a long time. Today she added Nora.

Although most of the time it seems she just coos, eats, cries and fills her diapers, baby Nora is actually very interesting and smells wonderful. Roko and Smarty can no longer imagine their lives without Nora.

Some days are hard, and some are magical. Luckily, their mom and dad are always there.

Nothing is like it used to be, but to Smarty, it seems like everything is getting a little better day by day.



## Equal Parenting

We invite you to visit the website of the Ministry of Demography and Immigration at [mdu.gov.hr](http://mdu.gov.hr) and learn more about maternity and parental benefits, responsible and equal parenting, and the active involvement of fathers in childcare.

## e-Card for Children Smarty

The e-Card for Children Smarty is a project intended for parents, foster parents and guardians of children up to the age of 18, and the use of the card in cooperation with the public and private sectors provides various benefits and discounts on products and services.

More information about the project Smarty can be found at:

- Website [e-djecjakartica.hr](http://e-djecjakartica.hr)
- Facebook: [@edjecjakartica.mudrica](https://www.facebook.com/edjecjakartica.mudrica)
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Partners, discounts  
and all information  
can be found at  
[e-djecjakartica.hr](http://e-djecjakartica.hr)



Something very, very important recently happened to Smarty and her little brother Roko! Two weeks ago, their baby sister Nora came into their lives and suddenly everything changed.

In the first days after the baby's arrival, Roko and Smarty were overjoyed because their family had grown and they tried to help their mom. But on the third day, everything went downhill.

It seemed as if the apartment had suddenly become smaller and more crowded.

As if the nights had become too long and very, very noisy.

As if dad had more and more work to do and less and less time for them.

But all this would have been easier to bear if at least mom had stayed the same.

But with the arrival of the new baby, mom also changed because she became too busy with the baby.

Jumble moved into their home.

Dad realized that his family needed him, so he decided to use paternity leave to help everyone adjust to the change and reconnect in the great happiness that baby Nora brought into their home.

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