

## MORNING STORIES TRANSCRIPT

*You Just Don't Know the Whole Story - part 2:* Eduardo Villamil and his wife waited seven years to have a child. That was just the beginning of the story.

Tony Kahn:

Hi everybody! This is Tony Kahn the producer and director of Morning Stories, from WGBH in Boston. The other day we got an email from a man named Eduardo Villamil in Atlanta, Georgia, whose native language is not English. I'd like to just read it to you the way it was written, if I may. It says:

"Hi! The other day, I heard a story where the writer talk about seeing his mother cry, in the back of the car, in a beautiful scenery in Europe. I really like the story format and encouraged me to write a short story about my son. Hoping one day in the future, maybe in high school, my son can read it and understand part of what we have felt for him, when he was born.

Eduardo Villamil is with us right now on the phone from Atlanta, Georgia. Eduardo?

Eduardo Villamil:

Hi Tony!

Tony Kahn:

We should probably tell people a little bit about the story, that you were referring to. Something called: You Don't Know the Whole Story, told by a man named Tom Cottle, about an experience he had with his mother when he was an adolescent.

Eduardo Villamil:

Yes, that's right.

Tony Kahn:

What was it about the story that appealed to you?

Eduardo Villamil:

What I like about the story was that the boy was seeing his mother crying in the back of the seat in a beautiful scenery in, in Europe and he didn't understand why his mother was crying.

Tony Kahn:

Mmm, hmm.

Eduardo Villamil:

So, the whole story is, is kind of a flashback to tell why she was crying and that's the part that I like, is the flashback and understanding why she was, she was crying.

Tony Kahn:

And that inspired you to turn your thoughts to your own son?

Eduardo Villamil:  
Yeah.

Tony Kahn:  
Eduardo? I wonder if you'd be kind enough to read the story that you wrote, after hearing the story that we told on Morning Stories?

Eduardo Villamil:  
Tony, it would be my pleasure.

Tony Kahn:  
How come you're not very nervous?

Eduardo Villamil:  
I'm trying to avoid that.

Tony Kahn:  
[Laughing] Okay!

Eduardo Villamil:  
I try to not think about it.

Tony Kahn:  
Thank you.

Eduardo Villamil:  
The other day I was watching my oldest son, Nicolas, play in a soccer game. He is five year old. As he was heading with the ball down the field, it looked like a group of players from the opposite team, was going to intercept the ball from him. But all of the sudden, Nicolas stop with the ball! And the other player stop, as well! He look at the other players and no one move for maybe ten second. Then one of the players step forward and it was just at that moment that Nicolas kick the ball and pass it right over the player's head! It was such a nice trick, for a five year old.

All the parents said, "Wow!" Like in unison. One of the mother even said to me, that he will be a good soccer player as his father. She just didn't know the whole story. I'm a lousy soccer player! I also heard another parent saying, "It seems like too much backyard training." He just didn't know the whole story, either.

At that time, we were living in a high-rise condominium, so we didn't have a backyard to play in. It was in that high-rise that I saw him taking his first steps. My wife was holding on to him and when she gently release his hand, he took his first steps. To us, it was like walking on the moon. The moment was so special to us that we both started to cry. If you have been there, you would have said, "Oh yeah, that's part of the joy of parenthood, seeing your child taking his first steps." You just didn't know the whole story.

My son had to wear braces and casts the first year of his life. Being just a newborn, he couldn't move or roll, because the cast was too heavy for him. Then when he was five months old, he underwent surgery as well. The doctor sat down with us and told us that it will be normal for our son to have a very skinny legs, because the casts had been on for so long. The doctor just didn't know the whole story.

My wife had been very determined to help him stay healthy and get good nutrition, so she breast-feed him to help him overcome all of this. You can imagine how surprised the doctor was when she removed the casts, and saw this big, chubby legs on our little boy. We were so happy that day. As happy as the day when we were going to the hospital to await Nicolas' birth. Then, I was the happiest person in the world! I was going to have my first child! We had waited seven years for him. I just didn't know the whole story.

After many hours of intense labor in the delivery room, I could tell from the doctor's face, that something was wrong. She asked everyone except me to step out of the room, and then told me that the baby was having problems. The umbilical cord was around the neck and his face was down instead of up. But, finally the baby was delivered safely, and put into the warmth of the incubator. He was so precious and it was such a relief to have his birth over with. I didn't know the whole story.

Nicolas was born with a condition called, "clubfoot", where the feet point down, instead of to the front and inward. When I became aware of it, I had such a strange feeling come over me. I was so happy to see him! My own blood! But at the same time, I was so worried about him. All I could do at the time was to wrap the baby up and pass him over to my wife, intending this way to avoid having her suffer, at least to delay it for a moment. But she immediately unwrapped him, and saw his condition. It was an intense moment, filled with pain, sadness and happiness, all blended in together. We just didn't know the whole story.

Tony Kahn:  
Eduardo, that's such a beautiful story and the ending never comes.

Eduardo Villamil:  
Yeah, exactly.

Tony Kahn:  
Have you read that story to your son?

Eduardo Villamil:  
Yeah, he heard the story when I was reading to my wife. It was funny because my wife had started to cry and later he said, "Oh! That's the story about me, playing soccer, that I'm very good at soccer." So far I think he's in the first paragraph of the story.

Tony Kahn:  
[laughs] He's in chapter one, where he fakes the other team out completely.

Eduardo Villamil:  
That's right!

Tony Kahn:  
Right?

Eduardo Villamil:  
Nobody see the whole picture . . .

Tony Kahn:  
Right.

Eduardo Villamil:  
I hope that, that will help somebody that have the same issue that I had. When you find any any problem in the life of your kid, you expect to have an answer. It doesn't matter how big or small the problem is, but you want to see the whole picture. You want to see the life of your son at the end. But it's, it's not possible, at that moment and this is kind of the first, the first part of, of the picture.

Tony Kahn:  
More to follow, more to follow. [laughs] Don't think you know it all.

Eduardo Villamil:  
Yeah.

Tony Kahn:  
Eduardo, I know that you are working hard to make English fluent in your life, but I must say, the way you speak it and the way you use it now is so eloquent. I hope you don't change too much.

Eduardo Villamil:  
Oh, thank you.

Tony Kahn:  
Give our best to, to your family and to your son and tell him that I thought it was an incredible story about what a wonderful soccer play he is.

Eduardo Villamil:  
[Laughing] I will tell him that.

Tony Kahn:  
Okay.

Eduardo Villamil:  
Thank you Tony.

Tony Kahn:  
Be well, Eduardo. Take care.

Eduardo Villamil:  
Take care.

Tony Kahn:  
Bye-bye.

Eduardo Villamil:  
Bye.

Tony Kahn:  
Hi! I'm back in the studio now, with Gary Mott. Eduardo Villamil, by the way, Gary, comes from Colombia. And there's something about the Latin American way of telling a story; the magic realism is like boxes within boxes, within boxes, it's so wonderful! I'm touched by the fact that here is a little boy, who's been given an amazing gift by his father. The story of what his clubfoot put his own parents through. That's a story he's a little bit too young to hear or really understand right now. All he gets is what's happening here, now, and life is good and that's wonderful!

Gary Mott:  
And he's a great soccer player.

Tony Kahn:  
And he's a great soccer play.

Gary Mott:  
Which is very important in Colombia, right?

Tony Kahn:  
But I think, I think, I think his father did a wonderful thing, gave him a story that is going to bring him closer to his own parents as he gets older. As he begins to understand what they went through. You went through something yourself when you were twelve years old, you had a, a terrible accident that left you physically impaired. Have you told your kids the story of your accident?

Gary Mott:  
I have.

Tony Kahn:  
Uh, huh. And have you told them the whole story?

Gary Mott:  
I've told them the whole story.

Tony Kahn:  
You think that was important for them?

Gary Mott:  
Well, I think it was very, impressionable, for them because I told them and then I started crying and then they started crying and they immediately started to blame themselves for making me cry. And, I, I. you know, I said, that's not it at all, but that's how their, their little minds work.

Tony Kahn:  
What a moment and memory for all of you though, to have. That's not the whole story, but something wonderful happened. You shared something there and that may be part of their story about you. You know, I think that part of the message, the moral of this is, that one of the nicest things you can probably do for, for your children is to leave them some stories about what you went through, when you were their age and what you went through being their parent. Because they're going to have their own memories and the more they know your story, the more they'll be able to really enrich their own. And, it sounds like you gave your kids a wonderful story there, by telling them what your own accident was like.

Gary Mott:  
They're such sensitive kids, I've found, and that's something that Lori and I really take pride in.

Tony Kahn:  
Yeah.

Gary Mott:  
When it comes to my right hand, my son will, will grab it and just kind of massage it, every now and then. And it feels very loving and endearing and they know that, there's...., this thing happened long ago but maybe they can be instrumental in the healing process and they are. And they have been.

Tony Kahn:  
Yeah. Kids are very responsible and they're especially responsible about taking care of their parents. And the more information they can have about, really, who their parents are [chuckles] and also about the things that they can't make better, you know? But that's okay, you can, that you can live with feelings of hope and despair at the same time.

Boy! That's an incredible gift to give somebody and I expect we're going to hear a lot about this story from, from other people.

I'm hoping that you'll let us know what you think about this story, but that you'll also let each other know, through, maybe writing us a little recommendation at iTunes? Right?

Gary Mott:  
Apple has a little customer review section, so, please, if you have an Apple account, you

know, log in and write a review, 'cause we love those five-star reviews.

Tony Kahn:

You'll hear this in other podcasts as well, perhaps in a, a bolder – maybe even more honest fashion, saying "Write us a review on iTunes because [laughing] iTunes really matters!" It's become a very important place people get some of their first experiences with podcasting. So, hopefully one of their first experiences will be that there are a lot of people out there who are really enjoying Morning Stories and want to pass that word on to them. So if you don't mind, we'd love to have you say something about Morning Stories, in, in the iTunes section.

Gary Mott:

It's the best way to spread the word.

Tony Kahn:

Another way to spread the word, by the way, is to keep supporting our show with a little "apple juice," I guess you could say [Tony and Gary chuckle] and that comes from Ipswitch, a leader in file transfer software and a leader in supporting Public Broadcasting Podcasts. So thank you, all very much and keep up the good work [laughs]; we need you. If you want to find out more about Ipswitch, check out their website at <[ipswitch.com](http://ipswitch.com)>, I-P-S-W-I-T-C-H !

Gary Mott:

And please get in touch with us at <[morningstories@wgbh.org](mailto:morningstories@wgbh.org)> and check us out on line as well at <[wgbh.org/morningstories](http://wgbh.org/morningstories)>.

Tony Kahn:

And we'll see you next Friday. See you then!

[End of recording]

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