

Our Journey



Atherton High School
Spring 2015

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Seeking Mercy

By: Zayanit Cordero

It is almost sundown in Las Anonas, a tiny railside village in the state of Oaxaca, Mexico. I am relieved to be done for the day. As I walk home along the tracks, I see a startling sight. Before me is a battered and bleeding boy, naked except for his underwear.

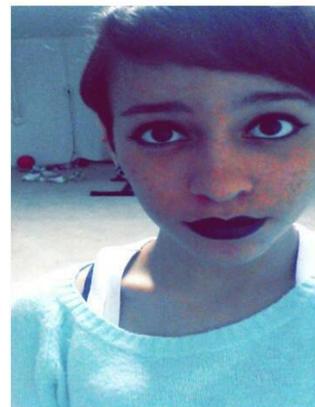
Today I woke up and thought that it was going to be just another day, but instead I find a beaten boy, covered in blood, his face swollen, his upper lip split, and his right shin gashed. He can barely walk and he is crying. He is dabbing a filthy sweater at open wounds on his face.

Who is he? I wonder.

“Give me water. Please.” I hear him whisper. I couldn’t help feeling pity for him. I run into my thatched hut to look for a cup of water and a pair of pants for the boy. Then, I direct him to Carlos Carrasco, the mayor of Las Anonas.

I see him hobble down a dirt road into the heart of the village. I hope that he makes it. I don’t know why I feel like this. I don’t know him and I’ve never seen him before. I wonder what happened to him. Maybe he fell off the train, or maybe he got pushed off the train. Maybe he got beat and left alone to die.

I couldn’t stop thinking about the boy. I wonder how he’s doing. I keep him in my prayers and hope the best for him.





Danger

By: Zayanit Cordero

I've gone mad.
I can't get it out of my head.
I see it when I'm awake,
I see it in my sleep.
What have I done to deserve this?
I ask myself every day.

But what can I expect when I'm a migrant?
What can I expect when I'm from Central America?

I was only looking for a better life *en El Norte*, but instead
I got gang-raped.

If I hadn't gone on that journey, I would still be myself.
I hate the monsters who did this to me,
and I hate myself for what they have done to me.

I still see myself on top of the train where
I was left alone to die,
I was left alone like I was nothing.

I am no longer the girl with bright eyes
and a smile ready for everyone she sees.
Now I'm a girl drowning in her tears
and choking on her pain and misery.

I'm the girl who can't breathe when
someone says the word "rape."

I am the girl who after all this time
still showers in boiling water to try to
scrub away the unwanted touch of monsters
from her skin.

Now I carry an unwanted baby.
Unwanted by one of the 13 men who devoured my soul.
A baby that I can't give a good life to.

Now I cry myself to sleep every night
hoping that it was all just a nightmare,
but it isn't. I know that nothing will change
the fact that I will forever be
the girl ruined by monsters.



***-Predator Poem –
By: Shukriyah Ali***

I sit on the side of the bed
Tears in my eyes
For the boys and girls
From the Train of Death.
I had made a promise to God.

I was seven when I had a disease
Without no money that could be treated
Then the doctor came
He told me I had cancer.

I was blinded, I was a muted person
I was in a coma
My weight dropped - sixty-six pound
My skin and bones were dying off.

I only had one month to live
I wasn't a religious person
The second morning
I had tried to kill myself
I asked myself what I can do
I turned to God, and, said if you heal me
I will heal others, the rest of my life.

Now they are dying in my hands
As I nearly died in the hands
Of someone I cannot remember.
I am keeping my promise to God

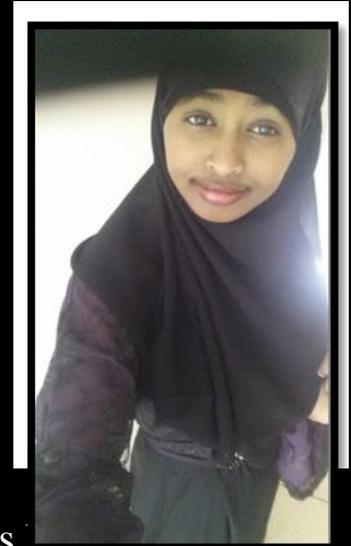
Someday, they will make a promise
And others will live.

Now, the boys, and girls are left behind
In Guatemala, Central American and Somali
Waiting for someone to be there for them and heal them
Like myself.

Monologue:

By: Shukriyah Ali

I was sitting down in my porch, where many trains pass by every night. Every time I see a dozens of migrants go by every day. Most of them are migrants that are really hungry, and don't have anything to buy food. One of my kids go, and stand by the trains, and throw food to the hungry migrants. While I was tossing a roll of crackers to one of the boys, he grabbed me with one hand with the food that I tossed to him, and held the train with his other hand, so that he wouldn't fall of the train. While the train went by I was looking at his eyes, and I saw extreme hungry of his face. Tears started to begin from my eye I remembered when one of my sons died from hunger, so this makes me want to throw more foods to little kids, children, and women that are on the top of the train. Many of people who were right next to my home village came out, and started to do the same thing that I did. A seamstress, a teenager, a carpenter and an old women in her 100's and her daughter came and gave food to the migrants that were fleeing from their home countries, and heading to their journey. They gave pieces of brand, sandwiches, bean burritos, oranges, watermelons, pineapples, coffee, fill bags with tortillas, and beans.





When the MS rob migrants

BY Khadijah Mohamed

Murders- Drug dealer- Thieves
Enrique heard about_ Mara Salvatrucha
Eyes Open!

Enrique sleeping on a warm day
Eyes Open! Most keep eyes open

1 minute took 2 hours
Wake up! Wake up! He's awake
Three guys from Mara Salvatrucha gang

He's scared- nervous-afraid
They're coming!
Hands shaking - faces sweating
They're coming! Where can he hide?
They punch- kick- hit

He begs over and over
Help him!
Teeth broken-naked only underwear bleeds
Help him somebody!



When I help the migrants

BY Khadija Mohamed

"You want know what happen right well seat down" I was watching my favorite show when I heard a train I went to go see it. I saw hundreds of migrants on top of the train ,I felt sorry for them .I saw people throwing food and clothes at them so I ran to my kitchen and started getting food out and I also ran to my room and took some clothes out of my closet that I barely wear anymore or I never wore it. Then I went outside and started throwing clothes at them too because I knew that they have traveled far and haven't eaten .While I was throwing I had a flashback about the time my son was on the train. Since that day I never my son I don't know what happen to him. So I thought them kids on the train was looking for their mom or a new life. I hope they make it because I know a lot of kids that don't make it to American.

Narrative about the Mara Salvatrucha.

By: Carolina Contreras

I learned something new, something that I really didn't know about.

When I first read the story about Enrique's Journey and found out about this gangsters named The Mara Salvatrucha always prowling the trains where all migrants traveled to search for their dream.

They get friendly with migrants telling them that they had already ride there train so they can get close to them and then they can punished their backs.

They might sometimes killed them if they didn't had what they wanted with brutality. Even though that is actually happening in Mexico where I come from. I was blinded to this sad situation.

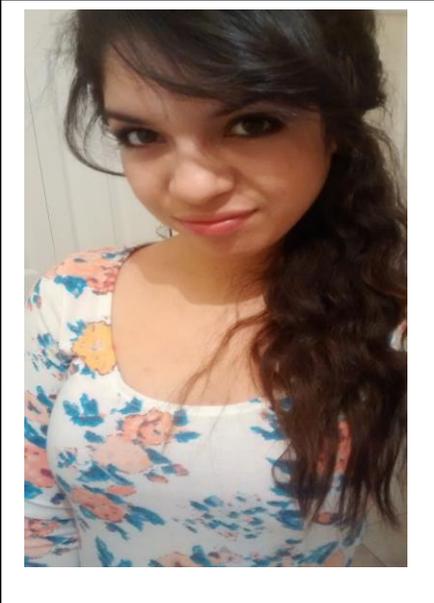
When I first heard of The Mara Salvatrucha, I wasn't surprised by people taking advantage of the needy people.

But honestly it baffles me knowing that there is such people in this case the Mara Salvatrucha who figure out which migrants are the best target to rob,

I wonder why they do that. Why don't they try to correct their lives why do they have to take advantage of innocent people that the only thing they what is a better future, a better life.

I know that I'm not the only person wondering or making questions about this gangsters.





The Devastated Child

By Caroline Contreras

***A boy was walking slowly as a snail
Who's that! Who's that!
He looks lost
Who is he, why is he here
We should help this boy!***

***Boy bloody-teeth, broken
Wearing only underwear, devastated, confused, and bewildered
He needs help
We should help this boy!
Where are his parents? Is he alone?
He has tears in his eyes
We should help this boy!***

***He need clothes, food, help, a place to stay
I can't just watch him!
He looks heartbroken
He's scared, nervous, and afraid
I'm here for you!
Mother let's help this child
He needs money- he's looking for his mom
He looks sad as a baby
We should help him!***

***Come here! Come here!
I can help you with anything
Come here!***

***Look at him! Who did this to him?
I feel like crying
Hey boy!***

***Here is some food
Eat up! Eat up!***

Missing You Mama

By Abdikadir Khamis

I'm young a kid trying to find Mama.

And I'll never give up until I see her face
cause it been a long time that I didn't see her face

I want to see you Mama so bad.

But I don't know what I'll meet on my way.

Packing my things ready for America.

Can't take many things.

Cause I don't know what will happen

These people here coming from nowhere to help me.

I'm making the biggest move that will affect my life Mama.

It was so bad how I was beaten down Mama.

Taken two pants and two T-shirts with me

And your phone number mama

I ain't trying to look cool for girls Mama.

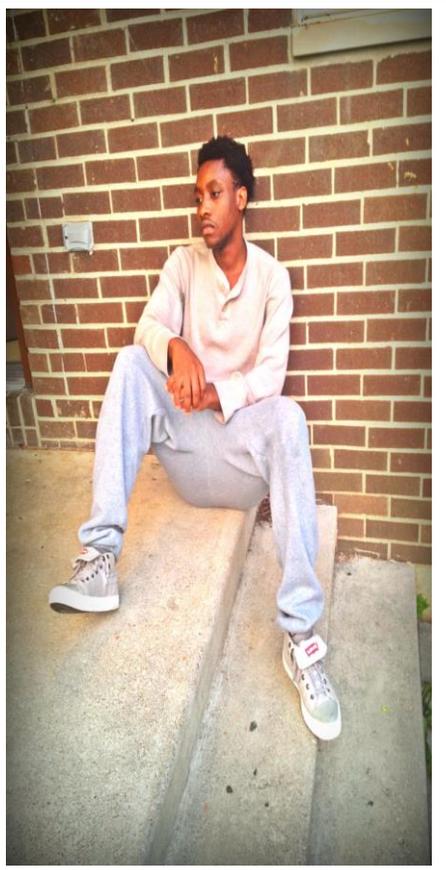
I just want see you

So when I get there I can connect with you Mama.

You're the one that I want, the one that I needed mostly.

The one that I got to have to succeed

When I first saw you Mama I was a little boy.



Missing You Mama

Now I'm grown. Every Christmas
You were telling that you was going to come home
Every Christmas
and I use to believe you mom.
But you never made it happen Mama.

You didn't even attempt to come see me
During Christmas
Do you hate me Mama?
I'm sorry Mama.

I got do what I do to come see you Mama
There are good Samaritans Mama.
I was beaten to death.

I don't know these people.
But they picked up out of nowhere
and helped.
Putting me in their house Mama.
Fixed me up where I can stand on my own feet.

Moving Place to Place.

By Khamis

Don't know where to settle. My life isn't going well now. But my daddy leaving me with his evil wife. my dad's wife selling my bed, game and my jacket without saying my life ain't had to be this way. If mom was here things would have been easy for me. Cause she would have taken everything that I'm facing now. I would see can the differences. In the that I'm in now nobody cares you but you



real parent.

They both left me here with nobody. But I'll be moving with grandmother soon. The change of my

life begins now. Grandmother living in badest neighborhood where kids change so quick. It's the change that mess up my life and make my family my enemy.

But they also didn't give up on me so fast. I was the one that didn't wanted to listen them just on kept doing what I do best and that is my drugs. I cared about

drug.



*Enrique all alone
By Edgar Mendez
sad-scary-hungry-tired
His only hope is Jesus!
All he can think of his food
his mom holding him feeding him
He has faith in Jesus
He prays-he cries
He begs to see his mother again
Jesus is the only one who can help him
He misses his mommy
How she wasn't there for him
Now he is all alone
He needs protection from
Bandits thieves police la migrant
Pray to Jesus!
He carries a small bible
wrapped in plastic bags to keep dry
He fears no evil
He has Jesus
Mostly women and children
rushing out of their houses along the tracks
Clutching small bundles
People throwing something
is it rock?
is food! thanks to Jesus
Enrique sees a woman and a boy
run up alongside his car
Orale, chavo! they shout
Enrique reaches out to grab
with one hand
Now he believes
more in Jesus*



The United States' dream
By Edgar Mendez

I saw three police officers I realize that they caught me up, grabbed my hair, tricked me and beat me with their nightsticks. Predators went to run into the church to arrest the migrants

I heard migrants being abused by police and I realize that the good Samaritans were the church members they said that they've seen many migrants injured.

Migrants were invited by the good Samaritans because they want to protect them from corrupt police. Individuals have

Also invited migrants to sleep in their own homes, one of those individuals was Carmen Ortega. She always was nice with everyone and she has a big smile, she didn't refuse any migrants. Carmen was sympathetic also she offered migrants a cup of coffee, then a place to bathe in her house in Veracruz. Carmen Ortega had empathy to me and those migrants because in 1995 her son was deported from California but she didn't know what happened after all. She never heard from him again that what others migrants heard by townspersons in Veracruz. I think it's terrible.

Fight for what you want you will get what you want.

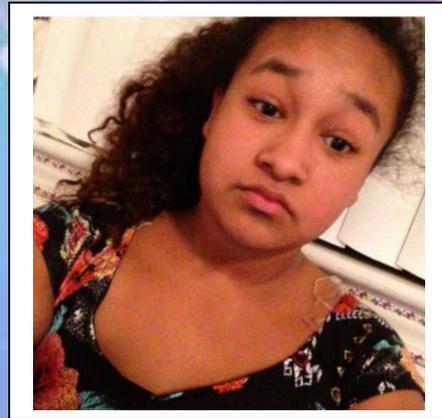
The sky

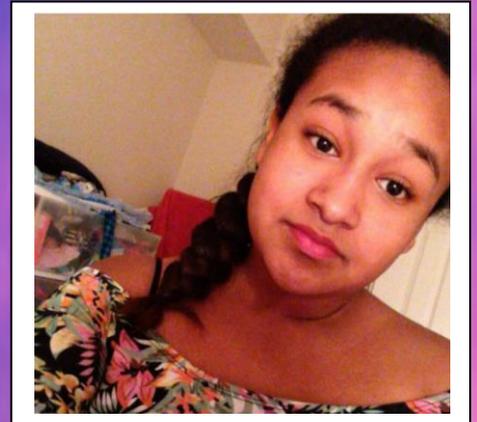
Yesenia Molina

They run from their houses to catch the beast.
Small bundles in hand ready to throw up
To the Central americans on top.
The Central americans on top look down
With hungry eyes and empty bellies.

Curious minds wonder what's in the bundies.
Are they rocks ready to be thrown at them
The Central americans on top look down
With hungry eyes.
And empty bellies curious minds wonder
What's in the bundles,
Are they rocks ready to be thrown at them.

The Central americans on top are delighted by
The crackers and clothes being thrown to them.
The tattered clothes are on more.
The people tell if danger is ahead
To the Central americans
On top yell and wave Gracias!
They yell to the people down on the
Ground then they are gone.
The Central americans. Look inside the
Bundles to see what they have gotten.
The eat the food they have received and
Continue on with their journeys.





The Camp

By Yesenia Molina

I'm Enrique and I am at a camp ruled by El Tirindaro.

**The river was cool to me and others in the river are
trying to get to the other side**

**the water is fast, people are trying to not fall in the river
the rocks are slippery so slippery that people are falling into
the rushing water. Other people trying to help the people
that are close to falling in.**

I watch as El Tirindaro paddles women with babies

El Tirindaro lets people sleep in tents in his camp

He gives them food, even if it's a little.

El Tirindaro sells clothes to the migrants for drugs and beer.

**El Tirindaro smuggles people into the United States by pushing them across the river
on inner tubes while padding. Sometimes heroin so slowed by heroin that he can
barely stand up or move. when the drugs take hold El Tirindaro hallucinate**

LOOKING FOR MOM

By Adams Gordero

One by one

Enrique goes to different houses

Looking for things from kind people to give it to him. He feel happy because the pope helped him escape from the migrant he is dying Honduras boy looking for his mom

And he see a church so he runs to it

The migrant run into the church to arrest Enrique that is when the pope said Jesus was an immigrant too

Him little things like tortillas, beans, and lemonade.

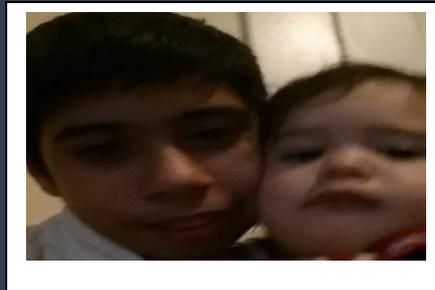
Sometime he had to hide in the boxcars and the grass surroundings by cows and sheep

Yellow and purple flowers surround them as they hide.

Trying to live

By Adams Gordero

I was on the
men went up
started to hit
and choke me
off the train.



train when these
to me and
me with a stick
and throw me
My right shin is

gashed and my upper lip is split. And this man just
walked up to me just walked up and ask me if I was
ok. And help me he took me to a little town the
people from the town give me food, water, and
clothes.

**LIFE IS A STRUGGLE
BY AHMED MOHAMED**



*In world with violence
Living with grandma
Life ain't easy, It's tough around here*

*Not everyone is like you but everyone see the same thing
Nobody understand how you feel inside because they're
Too busy judging you like a book with a platitudinous cover
They look at you and think you're like the rest*

*They came at you really fast
You won't even know it's coming
Jump On a moving train might seem treacherous
Train moving full speed like a bullet
We don't do it for fun
We do it because we want to survive
Not anyone would think this*

*Just cause you in the train doesn't mean it's the end
It's just one, It's Thousand of people on top
Everyone looking to escape but not everyone reason is the same
Can't trust noone on that train*

*Men deceive young ones
They rob you like you're rich
Beat little kids like there the same size as them*

*These people are not just people
They are not just drug dealers
They are very dangerous people
They are very criminal*

Fleeing By Solange

Scene- this is the scene when Enrique was trying to escape from migrant agents.

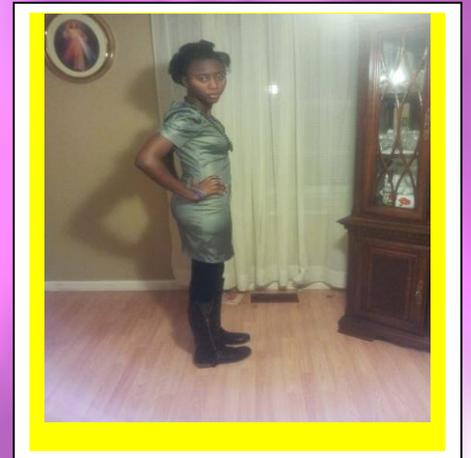
Enrique tried to flee from the Agents.
When my mom tried to flee from the bomb.
It's all about life all about try to survive.
In different dangerous and tough situation.
The world is change oh yeah is change.

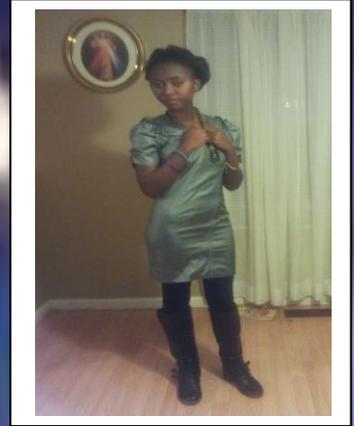
When in Rwanda people were trying to fleeing
Their lives from the war from the terrible killing
That is happening, now there is his little boy
From Honduras try to fleeing his life from the
agent
How is going to robber, beat, torture him if they
get him.

I can imagine the face of Enrique and the face of
my mom

No hope, face of terrified from what was happening to them
But where can they get peace when the people who suppose
To give it to them are the one who are taking it from them.

Look at Enrique a naive kid
His hope is just start protruding like a plant
Sticking out from the ground.
But here he is facing a tough situation.
I wonder what the end of his journey is.
Is it going to be like my mom's journey? But I hope he meet
Some wonderful Samaritan to fulfill him.





**GOOD Samaritan
By Solange**

**Bible talk about how to be a Good Samaritan
Preachers preach about it but all that comes in one ear goes
Out in the other like air blowing
But even though there
Is people out there who can be a Samaritan?**

**Let me talk about those kind people who has comparison
To others. I want talk about a guy called Gomez who met Enrique after
mean,
Evil people were done terrible torturing to him to death. Here is
Enrique laying down**

**He cannot even recognize himself his in forest.
He's naked no food no money no cloth just in his
Underwear his dying. But here comes a Good Samaritan he looked at
him
And felt compassion feel emotion he took him home he ask**

**Other people who are Good Samaritan to help.
They help him they dress his wounds they give him food,
Money, and some clothes.**

**Being a Good Samaritan not about being rich.
Is about having a compassion feeling empathy**

**And emotion about others neither is not about being
Christian is all about having a good heart.**

Is to create your way to heaven.

Just Like Everyone Else

Working with the ELS students has been a very eye-opening experience. I never really took much of an interest in immigration or foreign languages but this class has really educated me in those areas. These kids are nice and accepting and truly work hard and do their best to understand. I've learned they are just like Americans. They love to laugh and have fun, they have their rough days just like us, and they are just trying to learn what they want to do with their lives.

When Obama gave his speech for illegal immigrants to come out of hiding, it probably gave me my best experience in peer tutoring. I had always thought that people traveling to other countries illegally was wrong and unfair. But after hearing the speech, I saw the students' eyes light up when they learned they no longer had to hide. One student was happy for her mother since she could finally get a job without fear of the government. This made me very happy for them and I also felt bad for all the things they had to grow through.

It opened my eyes to this world and I no longer thought they shouldn't be here. They deserved everything Americans deserved. They have been through tough, and awful journeys to get here much like Enrique did. What wouldn't be fair is to take it away from them. These students are here to learn and learn every day. Their English has improved extremely and that's why they went through everything they went through. They work hard and it has been such a fun and refreshing experience. I have created an emotional bond with this entire class and I love watching them learn and grow throughout the year.

When I entered the classroom I was unsure whether or not I should be in this class, I'm Glad I stayed though. In this class I've learned not to judge a person because you don't know their story. I've learned about things that are happening in the world that I had no clue was going on! I didn't know what ESL was before this class, I am glad I was given the opportunity to help these students and learn with them.

-Sydney Roswick

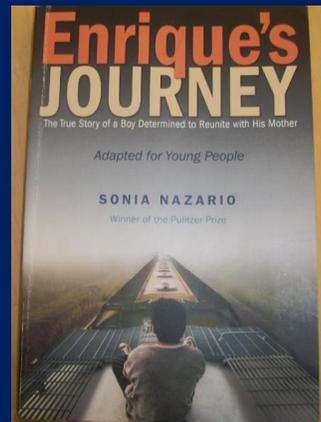
Our Journey

Enrique's Journey

In the Fall of 2014, I heard about a book by Sonia Nazario named Enrique's Journey. Soon, my students were reading and connecting to the theme of the book, survival. Then they began writing, comparing their experiences to those of Enrique.

In this class, three students lived in refugee camps in Kenya. Khadija Mohamed, Abdi Khamis, and Shukri Ali lived in refugee camps in Kenya; Edgar Mendez and Kimberly Zapeta came on top of trains from Guatemala; Carolina Contreras and Yesenia Morales are Mexican, Zayanit Cordero is from Puerto Rico and Adams Cordero is from Cuba. Austin and Sydney were born in America, but have become part of the family. Each reflected on their own journeys as they read Enrique's. We hope yours will be made brighter as you read our stories.

Mr. Scott Wade



Learning together every day.

SIGNATURES