

My Mom Is a Brave Woman

Maria D. Martinez Cruz

A Hard Decision

One day, Mom sat down and told us that we were going to the United States to live with our dad. Mom knew that my sister and I were in danger. I was 11 years old. My sisters were nine years old and five years old.

Many Hard Days

We took the bus to San Luis, Sonora. We met the *coyote*. He was our guide. On the first day, we started walking through the desert. At first, everything was okay. Then, on the third day, gangsters assaulted us. They took all the money.

The next day was worse. We saw another gang. This gang kidnap people. Thank God we were able to hide.

On the fifth day, my sister wanted to pee. I took her behind some bushes. When we came back, everyone was gone. We were very scared. Suddenly, the *coyote* grabbed us and pulled us behind one of the bushes. He told us to be quiet since *la migra* was around. I didn't know what *la migra* was.

On the sixth day, we were out of water. We were very thirsty. We found a cow's stable. Mom took water from the cow's trough and gave it to us. I still remember the smell and the taste of the water. The next morning, mom was crying. She removed her shoes. Her feet had a lot of blisters. They were bleeding.

The last day, we rode in a truck. They piled us on top of each other as if we were pieces of wood. My sisters and I were at the top. They took us to a farm near Houston. The people there gave us water and food. That was my first time trying a cheeseburger and fries. Finally, we were reunited with our dad.

Reward

It was a hard journey to come to the U.S. But now we have new opportunities. Every effort has its own reward. My mom has her reward. My mom is a brave woman.

AFTER YOU READ: What evidence does Maria provide to show her mother is brave?

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* Two versions of this article are available: intermediate (pp. 4-5) and advanced beginner (p. 6).

