

Story #2

A few months ago at the bus station, a father and son were dropped off from the Karnes Detention Center. I could tell immediately that the father was very stressed. He shared with us that he and his son had been separated from his wife and baby girl shortly after crossing the border after a long and dangerous journey and he had no idea where she was. I tried to find her through the locator website to no avail. I called a RAICES volunteer who had spent a lot of time in the detention centers and asked if he could help me find this mother. As it turns out, he was at the Dilly Detention Center that day. He said he would try to find her and set up a phone call which usually takes 5 to 7 days. It turned out that

she was right there in Dilly. He called me back and said he was going to try and get her on the phone and to stand by.

About two hours later and about 10 minutes prior to the father's boarding time, my phone rang and the RAICES volunteer says, I have her here. I handed my phone to the father and his son and they held each other, tears streaming down their faces.

They thanked me at least a dozen times and that father was smiling and laughing with his son as they boarded their bus.

These are the moments that provide some measure of healing for our families and for us.

—Submitted by Jan Olsen

END

FAMILY SEPARATION

Calavera migrante/la caravana

La calavera migrante
muy contenta camina con ellos,
En la frontera mexicana
Muchos los esperan con buena gana

Al cruzar en balsas el Suchiate
los centroamericanos migrantes,
con esperanza y alegría caminan todo el día,
pero en Chiapas ya los espera la policía
y con gases lacrimógenos intenta detener la osadía.

La calavera migrante muy indignada
le reclama a la policía esa inhumana fechoría.
“Déjenlos en paz, que continúen su travesía”
Así mañana mis queridos hijos migrantes
Alejados de la represión su meta ya no será tan distante.

Ay mis hijos inmigrantes sus anhelos son muy sanos
Y su caravana si saldrá adelante
Y aquí entre ustedes caminar como hermanos
Pero si algún loco ignorante no los deja salir adelante
Con mi guadaña en mano verán que le echo el guante.

Cuando lleguen al Río Bravo
muchos uniformados estarán del otro lado
más no se preocupen, ya lo tengo todo controlado.
Al nefasto güero copetón ya lo tengo al tanto
Y si con ustedes se porta mal, me lo llevo al camposanto.

—Victor M. Cortés



La Calaca taquera

Por la dieciocho la huesuda andaba
Vendiendo tacos a todo aquel que encontraba,
Tacos al carbón, del perro que maté en el callejón.
Tacos de tripita, que es cola de ratita
Tacos joven, tacos;

La calaca con sus tacos ya prosperó
Y hasta una taquería en la dieciocho abrió

Tacos Los Comales, para que se curen
todos sus males,
Tacos de carne asada, para acabar con
toda la perrada

La calaca vendiendo tacos, millonaria se volvió
Pero a todos mis amigos de Chicago, al panteón se los llevó

—Victor M. Cortés



EDITOR'S NOTE: *At the Esperanza's Dia de los muertos event, I met Victor who had recently moved to San Antonio from Chicago. He had a chapbook of his own Calaveras. Here are two: one reflecting on the immigrant caravan that is accompanied by la calavera through Chiapas and on to the Río Bravo. She assures the immigrants safe passage or else to the graveyard she will take those that obstruct their journey. La calaca taquera has the "bony one" on 18th St. selling street tacos—all kinds—until she opens her own taquería, Tacos Los Comales, that cures all ailments. She becomes a millionaire, but still takes everyone to the grave!*