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# La Linea: A Novel



## Synopsis

Miguel has dreamed of joining his parents in California since the day they left him behind in Mexico six years, eleven months, and twelve days ago. On the morning of his fifteenth birthday, Miguel's wait is over. Or so he thinks. The trip north to the border is fraught with dangers. Thieves. Border guards. And a grueling, two-day trek across the desert. It would be hard enough to survive alone. But it's almost impossible with his tagalong sister in tow. Their money gone and their hopes nearly dashed, Miguel and his sister have no choice but to hop the infamous *mata gente* as it races toward the border. As they cling to the roof of the speeding train, they hold onto each other, and to their dreams. But they quickly learn that you can't always count on dreams—even the ones that come true. *Latino Interest*.

## Book Information

Paperback: 144 pages

Publisher: Square Fish; Reprint edition (July 22, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0312373546

ISBN-13: 978-0312373542

Product Dimensions: 5.6 x 0.4 x 0.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.3 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 31 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #97,674 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #15 in *Books > Teens >*

*Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Emigration & Immigration* #138 in *Books >*

*Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Family > Siblings*

## Customer Reviews

Grade 5 Up-Six years ago, Miguel and Elena's mother and father left Mexico and crossed *la frontera* into California. On the morning of Miguel's 15th birthday, he receives a note from his father telling him that it is time for him to join them. Miguel is sad to leave his grandmother and sister behind, but is excited about being reunited with his parents. Unbeknownst to Miguel, Elena, 13, disguises herself and joins him on the difficult journey. They are robbed, threatened, and almost perish in a desperate trek across the desert. The pacing of the plot is quick and driven, and the characters are realistically drawn. They interact as true siblings do, sometimes with love and sometimes not. Cultural and geographical background information is expertly woven into the novel. The author creates a mood of desperation and anxiety as the story unfolds and Miguel and Elena

discover that crossing la línea will forever change the way they look at themselves and the world. Although the epilogue illuminates their lives as adults, the novel ends abruptly, leaving readers without the anticipated emotional release of their reunion with their parents.-Melissa Christy Buron, Epps Island Elementary, Houston, TX Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

**\*Starred Review\*** Gr. 5-8. When Miguel, 15, leaves San Jacinto, Mexico, to join his parents in California, his sister, Elena, 13, secretly follows him. Together with their guides they barely survive a harrowing journey through the desert and across la linea, the border. A gripping contemporary survival adventure, this spare first novel is also a heart-wrenching family story of courage, betrayal, and love. The harsh facts of the border crossing are immediate--the horrors of dehydration, the soldiers' violence, corruption, and the migrants' terrifying, often disastrous attempts to hop the trains. Miguel's first-person narrative tells it without romanticism. The young people are brave, but they are angry at each other and at their parents, who left them seven years before. They do make it, but always there is the reality of those who do not. Jaramillo teaches migrant kids in California, and in her final notes, she says her story is fiction, but it is based on real events. Spanish is a natural part of the text; there is no glossary, and no need for one. Add this to the list of books in the Core Collection: "The New Immigration Story" in the August 2005 issue of Booklist. Hazel Rochman Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

As a middle school teacher in West Texas, I, like Ann Jaramillo, have encountered a multitude of stories from young people and their families as they've struggled to come to the US. The struggle obviously doesn't end when they enter; some of the most heart-wrenching stories occur AFTER the child has assimilated into American culture only to run into the bureaucratic red tape of the INS system. I was like the other reviewers in that I couldn't put the book down. Miguel's and Elena's story is gripping and intense. I was, however, a bit let down by the ending. I wanted it to mirror more of what I've seen with my students' experiences. Nevertheless, the fact that the author chose to end the book where she did will make the book more accessible length-wise for my reluctant readers. Awesome find! I will have my own "la linea" in my classroom to read this book next week:)

Anyone who has watched the documentary "Which Way Home," which tells the story of the many

young boys (and girls) who ride the freight trains north through Mexico will appreciate this well-written, engaging book. The characters were well-drawn and I thought the author did a fabulous job of writing about the dangers of crossing the border while keeping it appropriate for younger readers.

The author has written a book that is both fast paced and heartbreaking as it tells the story of two young people who take the risk of illegally crossing the border. Leaving their grandma's Mexican home to make the dangerous journey north to be reunited with their parents, the two experience the fear and danger that any illegal immigrant must feel. The characters that they meet and the experiences that they have are told in a manner that you do not want to put this book down. You root for them as they experience fear, hunger, thirst and exhaustion. This was a real eye opener for me. I strongly recommend this book to anyone who works with immigrants. A great selection for school libraries.

This is a Good book and I really recommend this for everyone. It is a good story. Easy to understand.

Good book , we are reading it in school and it is great

Satisfied with the purchase and will do business again

Works as expected.

Nice short book.

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