

FLASH NONFICTION

Immigrant Sitcom

by Francisco Serrano



"76% of Farmworkers Identify as Latinx" by Tatiana Garmendia

When you are an immigrant on the cusp of being American, meaning you came to America early enough you end up knowing more about *here* than *there* but late enough that the government treats you differently than your classmates, you come to realize your issues and theirs are not the same. Not getting asked to the homecoming dance is not as scary as your family being gone when you come home the day of the homecoming dance.

And if you knew me, you would be asking me, “Why are you worrying so much? You’re not a criminal...and your family is so nice all the time.” American naiveness; still thinking people in uniforms would notice or care about the difference.

In a time where television shapes your outlook, I wish there was a TV sitcom about immigrants; a coming of age tv sitcom episode where the 15 year old learns they cannot get a license or a job or travel abroad after taking French at school and planning their trip with their friends. How will they deal with it? Stay tuned for the next episode!

Or like a Mother’s Day episode where a latina woman is asking her 6 year old son what kind of snacks he wants and suddenly a white woman approaches her with foam in her mouth, screaming at her,

“GO BACK TO YOUR COUNTRY.”

“NOBODY WANTS YOU HERE.”

“SPEAK ENGLISH.”

Then it cuts to the mother putting her child to sleep by giving them a kiss on the forehead, walking to the kitchen and then silently crying under the one single lightbulb. Maybe then America will not look away and finally say “awww,” along with the live studio audience. Or maybe a lighter take on the immigrant experience, like when 14 year old Brenda starts working in the same factory her mom works in during the summer instead of taking the sun by the pool. But it's not so bad, because during lunchtime she sits with the other underage kids working under illegal names. Maybe the audience will want to rewatch them over and over and over like they do with *FRIENDS*. Maybe it would even be on Disney! Then our children would be children. Not baggage, not dirty criminals, not drug dealers. Since people are so tired of the news because it makes them so sad, I think going with a Disney vibe would be so refreshing, right?

Maybe we’ll get more than one season. In season two maybe the main character deals with not being an all straight-A student or valedictorian but still feels like he matters to this country...right? In season 3, the immigrant parents go to therapy and heal all the hurt they have inside. In season 4, if we get confirmed for it, it would be cool to see the immigrant protagonist cry from happiness for once. Not out of relief because the worst didn’t happen:

just pure joy, could be a great plot twist. I think we should see immigrant experiences on a TV screen with lines and plots for people to understand that we are robbing generations of their childhood. How will kids deal with normal teenager problems when they're seeing moms, dads, daughters, sons, and neighbors like theirs being mistreated, being abused, tormented and separated, without warning; without pity. A theme song will play where a nearly bald white man in a classic dark blue suit cuts the umbilical cord and throws it across the border and says, "go fetch."