

crazy? You want to die along the way?" If you are pregnant, they tell her, you could lose the child on the road.

María Isabel listens in silence. She knows they are right. All she can do now is wait.

HEAT WAVES

The Iron Worm squeaks, groans, and clanks its way north. Enrique eyes the scenery over the edge of the hopper car he is riding. Off to the right are hillsides covered with coffee plants. Cornstalks grow up against the rails. The train moves through a sea of plantain trees, lush and tropical.

By early afternoon, it is 105 degrees. The sun reflects off the metal of the train, stinging Enrique's eyes, draining the little energy he has left. His head still throbs. His skin tingles as he breaks into a full-bodied sweat. He moves around on the car, chasing patches of shade. Finally, he strips off his shirt and sits on it. The locomotive blows warm diesel smoke. People burn trash by the rails, sending up more heat and a searing stench. Many of the migrants aboard have had their caps stolen, so they wrap their heads in T-shirts. They gaze enviously at villagers cooling themselves in streams and washing off after a day of fieldwork, and at others who doze in hammocks slung in shady spots near adobe and cinder-block homes. The train cars sway from side to side, up and down like bobbing ice cubes.

Enrique's palms burn when he holds on to the hopper. He risks riding no-hands. He cannot let himself fall asleep; one