

That night, without their protection, he is beaten by the six men on top of the train.

Now that he is riding alone, he must stay extra alert. He is terrified of another beating. Every time someone new jumps onto his car, he tenses. Fear, he realizes, is a tool he can use to keep himself awake. He climbs on top of the tank car and takes a running leap. With arms spread, as if he were flying, he jumps to one swaying boxcar, then another. Some cars are nine feet apart.

The train passes into northern Chiapas. Enrique sees men with hoes tending their corn and women inside their kitchens patting tortillas into shape. Cowboys ride past and smile, fieldworkers wave their machetes and cheer the migrants on: "*¡Qué bueno!*" Mountains draw closer. Plantain fields soften into cow pastures. Enrique's train slows to a crawl. Monarch butterflies flutter alongside, overtaking his car.

As the sun sets and the oppressive heat breaks, he hears crickets and frogs begin their music and join the migrant chorus. The moon rises. Thousands of fireflies flicker around the train. Stars come out to shine, so many they seem jammed together, brilliant points of light all across the sky.

The train nears San Ramón, close to the northern state line. This is where police stage their biggest shakedowns. But it is past midnight now, and the judicial police are probably asleep.

Mario Campos Gutiérrez, the Grupo Beta Sur supervisor, estimates that half of those who try to migrate north eventually get here—after repeated attempts. Migrants know getting