

brought in, Carlos had seen a man get both legs cut off by a freight train. But he had pushed fear out of his mind. He was going to the United States to find work.

Carlos had almost crossed Chiapas. Racing alongside a train, he asked himself: Should I get on or not? His cousins, who were running with him, grabbed on to the sixth car from the end. Carlos panicked. Would he be left behind?

The train came to a bridge. Carlos did not give up. His shoelaces were loose. His left shoe flew off. Then his right shoe. He reached for a ladder on a fuel tanker, but the car was moving too fast, and he let go. He grabbed a railing.

The tanker jerked hard. Carlos held on, but he could feel air rushing beneath the car, sucking his legs in, close to the wheels. His fingers uncurled. He tried to bounce his feet off the wheels and push away. But as he let go, the air pulled him in. The wheels flattened his right foot, then sliced through his left leg above the knee.

"Help me! Help me! It hurts!" he screamed. He began to pant, to sweat, to ask for water, not sure anyone could hear him.

Paramedics from the Mexican Red Cross found him lying by the tracks. He had lost nearly a third of his blood. A doctor cut his bones, then sealed each artery and vein. He stretched skin over the openings and stitched them shut. Sometimes there are no drugs available to stave off infection, but Carlos was lucky. The Red Cross located some penicillin.

Many migrants who lose limbs to the train end up back in Tapachula, a dozen blocks from where they first boarded the