



FRIENDSGIVING.



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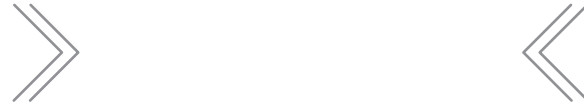
ALFONSO is a 17-year-old boy from El Salvador. His path from home to school took him between two rival gangs' territories. After one of the gangs killed two of his classmates and the police officers guarding his school, they threatened to kill him if he continued coming to school. This same gang had recently killed a friend of his in the park, so Alfonso fled his hometown to seek protection.

NOUJAIN is a 16-year-old Syrian girl with cerebral palsy. She made the treacherous journey from Syria to Germany, where she is seeking asylum, in her wheelchair, keeping up her positive attitude the whole way. "I've tried many things for the first time, a train, a ship, so I enjoyed it!" she told a reporter. She loves Days of Our Lives and wants to be an astronaut.

GABBY is a 23-year-old transgender woman from Honduras. She was abused and ostracized her whole life by her family and community. One night when she went out dancing, gang members threatened Gabby and told her they would kill her if she didn't leave. With no other choice, she escaped to Mexico to seek safety.



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YAFET is a little boy from Honduras. He fled to Mexico with his mother, father, aunt, brother and sister after gangs threatened to kill him and his family. The family lives in a bare two-room apartment with no furniture and little light, hoping for a better and safer life.

MARITZA is 15 years old and from El Salvador. Gangs in Martiza's hometown "take young girls, rape them and throw them in plastic bags," she said. When a gang member developed an interest in her, another member of the gang warned her uncle that she needed to get out of there to survive. She fled days later, just one day before the gang said they would come "grab" her. Martiza misses her grandmother back at home, but knew she had no choice but to leave.

MARIO is a 17-year-old boy from El Salvador. A gang tried to recruit him and, when he refused to join, repeatedly beat him up and threatened to kill him. He knew this threat was credible having seen "many friends...killed or disappeared" after refusing to join. He even went to the police, but decided to flee after realizing they would not do anything to help. "I want a future...I didn't want my mother to suffer the way mothers of gang members suffer," he said. U.S. immigration officials did not accept his police report as evidence for his asylum.