The Far Away Brothers: Two Young Migrants and the Making of an American Life

by Lauren Markham

“Twins Ernesto and Raul Flores grew up on their family's farm in El Salvador in an era when gang violence spread across the country. To escape threats, Ernesto and Raul took out loans to pay a guide to take them north across the U.S.-Mexico border. The boys were part of a wave of unaccompanied minors escaping violence in their home countries. After a traumatic crossing, the twins moved to Oakland, California, to live with their older brother, Wilber. They worked to earn money to pay down their debts while attending high school, learning English, and attempting to gain legal residency in the U.S. Markham met the Flores brothers while working at their school.

Markham's book is a stark examination of youth migration and the extreme risks taken to access a better life. Ernesto and Raul's story is interspersed with reporting from stops along the route north, in which Markham explores the dangers of migration and of staying home. Markham questions the accessibility of the American dream while compassionately narrating Raul and Ernesto's experiences.”


Ask a librarian to help you find more resources on this topic.