



Title: We Are Not from Here

Author: Jenny Torres Sanchez

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Publisher: Penguin Young Readers

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Age Range*: 14 and up

Grade Range: Gr 9 up

BOOK RESUME: WE ARE NOT FROM HERE

BOOK SYNOPSIS

A poignant novel of desperation, escape, and survival across the U.S.-Mexico border, inspired by current events.

Pulga has his dreams.

Chico has his grief.

Pequeña has her pride.

And these three teens have one another. But none of them have illusions about the town they've grown up in and the dangers that surround them. Even with the love of family, threats lurk around every corner. And when those threats become all too real, the trio knows they have no choice but to run: from their country, from their families, from their beloved home.

Crossing from Guatemala through Mexico, they follow the route of La Bestia, the perilous train system that might deliver them to a better life--if they are lucky enough to survive the journey. With nothing but the bags on their backs and desperation drumming through their hearts, Pulga, Chico, and Pequeña know there is no turning back, despite the unknown that awaits them. And the darkness that seems to follow wherever they go.

In this striking portrait of lives torn apart, the plight of migrants at the U.S. southern border is brought to light through poignant, vivid storytelling. An epic journey of danger, resilience, heartache, and hope.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

★"A brutally honest, not-to-be-missed narrative...gripping, heart-wrenching, and thrilling." —*Kirkus Reviews*, Starred Review

★"A candid, realistic story that will leave readers thinking about the characters--and about our own world--long after the last page." —*School Library Journal*, Starred Review

"Gripping, poignant...this soul-shaking narrative [recalls] the works of Gabriel García Márquez." —*Booklist*, Starred Review

"A devastating read that is difficult to put down, this unforgettable book unflinchingly illuminates the experiences of those leaving their homes to seek safety in the United States." —*Publishers Weekly*, Starred Review

Updated 3.24.2025

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Contact BannedBooks@penguinrandomhouse.com

*Publisher suggested age range covers the wide range of readers publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate range for their diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- A CLASP Américas Award
- A YALSA Top 10 Best Fiction for Young Adults Selection
- A ALSC and REFORMA Pura Belpré Author Honor
- A SLJ Best Book of the Year Selection
- A Center for the Study of Multicultural Children’s Literature Best Books Selection
- An Alaska Battle of the Books Award
- A California CDE Recommended Book
- A California Reads Teacher Recommended Book
- A DC Capitol Choice
- A DC Three Star Book Award
- A Florida Teens Read Award
- An Illinois Abraham Lincoln High School Award
- An Iowa High School Book Award
- A Michigan MISelf in Books
- A New Hampshire Isinglass Teen Readers’ Choice Award
- A New Mexico Land of Enchantment Book Award
- A North Dakota Flicker Tale Book Award
- A Rhode Island Teen Book Award
- A Tennessee Volunteer State Book Award

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- [TeachingBooks.net resources](#)
- [Educator Guide](#)

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