



Tangerines in Season

By Claudia Armann

My superpower? Never losing my way on the clogged freeways and byways of Los Angeles, my hometown. Even detours don't defy my sense of direction. But today, the detour in my life is both literal and figurative as I abandon L.A. in the wake of the layoffs.

Tom and I depart after morning rush hour, but there's no speedy exit. Our Subaru crawls along Beverly Boulevard, past all the touchstones that defined my existence. My favorite Moroccan restaurant where I've eaten tureens of couscous and stewed vegetables while watching Orthodox Jewish men—in their distinctive black hats and long curls—stroll to synagogue. The Portuguese bakery with the city's best napoleon. Flaky layers of puff pastry and crème, topped with a decadent slab of vanilla and chocolate frosting. And the taco truck with the charred tomatillo salsa that burns just right.

At La Cienega, we stop behind the orange Metro bus which transported me to my dream job at the *Times*. Before the layoffs. With our household income slashed in half, Tom suggested moving to his family citrus ranch to save money. To survive.

When we merge onto the 405, I know my L.A. life is lost. Each exit—Sunset Boulevard, Getty Drive—takes me farther from my mother, my friends, my professional life. Tears streak my face.

"Crying won't change anything." Tom turns up the radio volume and runs long fingers through his wavy brown hair that's messier than usual after cleaning the condo. There's dark stubble on his chin and cheer in his eyes. He's going home to Ojai at last.

When we reach Ventura and head inland, we turn our backs on the Pacific Ocean. My heart lurches. Ojai has less than 8,000 residents and is ninety miles from my city, from Diego Rivera's *Dia de Flores*, from pupusas made by Salvadorian immigrants, from the working-class Mexicans whose struggles I chronicled with articles that bore my byline: Elena Solis. Not sure when I'll see my name in print again. The roots of my existence are being yanked out like rotten teeth.

Ojai is tucked into a mountain valley where citrus and avocado orchards sprawl into the foothills. Tom and I drive through the village, postcard charming with its Spanish-style tower and plaza hung with wisteria. Hippies, hipsters, and socialites flock to Ojai, known for its New Age gurus and retreat centers.

Tom points to an ice cream parlor. "Gina and I rode our bikes to get ice cream there. My favorite was vanilla with peanut butter."

He has told me this on prior visits. Taken me to his high school, the spot where he had his first kiss, the corner where he toppled off his skateboard and broke his wrist. His hometown memories are as precious as mine.

The town center is anchored by an arcade with boutiques and galleries. I'm desperate to note what's here: wine bar, Italian restaurant, dress shops. None of the grit and diversity I'm accustomed to, but hell, I won't snub the farm-to-table fine dining and fresh air.

Tom turns onto a road shaded by stalwart oak trees. I recall my anxiety when I first came to Bishop Ranch. An alien world with poison oak, snakes, and isolation a city girl only reads about in books. And a family so unlike my immigrant Mexican familia.

Now, we follow the driveway to the farmhouse, passing neat rows of orange and tangerine trees. Tom's dad stands by his battered truck with its *Don't Believe Everything You Think* bumper sticker. Hudson Bishop is tall and tanned with white tufts of hair sticking out of his baseball cap. He welcomes us with a wide smile and hugs. His calloused hands brush against my forearm. I think of the hikes I've taken with Hudson into the mountains here and the enthusiasm he's shown when I dragged him through the art museums in L.A.

We spend a few hours unpacking, then relax on the porch drinking fresh-squeezed tangerine juice and watching yellow birds feast at Hudson's feeders. Maybe I'll be okay here.

Before dinner Hudson takes Tom and me into the orchard to see the old bungalow he's offered to restore for us. As children, Tom and his sister lived there with their parents when their grandparents still occupied the farmhouse. We walk up to a one-story home with wood-

siding and a tired-looking porch. Bedsheets serve as curtains while a hot pink camellia bush blooms gloriously alongside red chili plants.

"Does someone live here?" I ask.

"Some of my workers," Hudson says. He knocks on the screen door. "*Permiso*." He doesn't wait for a response, but opens it.

"*Pase*," I hear from inside. Come in.

We come inside to find a man and two teenagers seated on plastic outdoor chairs, a card table between them. Tortillas, avocado, onions, and pork are piled on their plates. Several perspiring cans of soda. The living room serves as their makeshift dining area.

"*Muchachos*," Hudson says. "*Les presento mi hijo, Tom. Y Elena, mi . . . come se dice?*"

"*Nuera*," I supply. Daughter-in-law.

"Hey," Tom says.

"*Mucho gusto*," I say and they stand up.

"This is Oscar." Hudson puts his hand on the shoulder of the short, round man. A mustache crowns Oscar's effusive smile. He has fleshy ears like dried pears. "*Pues, bienvenidos*." Well, welcome.

"*Salud and Hilo*," Hudson continues. "They're brothers." A pair of skinny teenagers. Salud, the taller one, is missing the tooth behind his eyetooth. The shorter brother wears his lustrous hair in a ponytail. They avoid my eyes. Shouldn't they be in school rather than picking fruit?

"*Mucho gusto*," I reply as warmly as I can.

Hudson tells them he's going to give us a tour of the house, and I shudder with shame. No way will I displace these people. We enter the kitchen first. The stove is cluttered with dirty pans and spilled salsa. I glimpse cans of Goya beans and La Costeña jalapeño peppers—the same foods Mamá keeps in her kitchen.

"I'll knock down that wall," Hudson says. "Extend the kitchen into the laundry room."

We walk down the hallway to the bedrooms. I cross my arms and hang back. We're invading these guys' privacy. I loiter in the hallway and just peek into the rooms.

"You still have our bunk beds!" Tom says. "Elena, this was the room I shared with Gina."

The other bedroom has one bed and a plastic bin overflowing with dirt-stained jeans. A Virgin Mary candle sits on a bedside table.

"The bathroom is a Jack and Jill," Tom says. "Know what that is, Elena?"

I shake my head, and he pulls me through one bedroom into the bathroom that connects to the other bedroom.

“

"This is Oscar." Hudson puts his hand on the shoulder of the short, round man. A mustache crowns Oscar's effusive smile. He has fleshy ears like dried pears. "Pues, bienvenidos." Well, welcome.

”

"I'll tear up the linoleum in there," Hudson says. "Elena, you can pick out some nice tile."

Hudson and Tom inspect a termite-eaten window frame while I return to the living room. Tension ripples up my spine. I apologize for interrupting dinner. Oscar offers me a cola. I thank him, but decline. We could be evicting him, yet he's so hospitable. I compliment their chili pepper plants.

"*¡Son míos!*" They're mine, Oscar says with pride, and offers to collect some peppers for me. I don't want to turn him down again, so I say, "*¡Sí, gracias*."

I ask the boys where they're from. Oaxaca, they say. I'm about to ask their ages when Hilo addresses me in English. His thin arms are stacked against his chest. "Don't think you'll like living here, Miss. It's cold at night. We only have that wall heater over there. Doesn't keep the bedrooms warm."

"Is Oscar your dad?"

They both laugh and tell me, no. They all work on the ranch. Tom and Hudson return as Oscar hands me a plastic baggie with peppers. His eyes are animated when I accept, but they mask the aura of helplessness that floats among the trio. Losing their housing would be a harsh disappointment in the pressure cooker of their lives.

"*Muchas gracias*," I say.

"*Pícan*," he warns me. They're hot.

I want to reach out, reassure him in some way, but feel helpless. We say good evening and leave the bungalow.

"Dad, you really let the place go to hell. One camellia is all that's left of Mom's garden."

"The son who hightailed it off the ranch is giving me grief?"

"Admit it. It's totally shabby."

Hudson waves his hand dismissively.

I speak up. "Do you charge the farmworkers rent?"

"Nah, they stay for free. If you offer housing, it reduces turnover."

"Where will they live if we move in?"

"Not your problem," Tom says.

I tuck the bag of peppers into my pocket. "Can they find a place in the village?"

"There's some apartments, mobile home parks," Hudson says.

As we reach the farmhouse, anxiety and guilt crest inside me. We find Tom's sister Gina who has arrived with a salad for a welcome dinner. After a round of greetings, Gina asks, "What do you think of the bungalow?"

"It's a dump," Tom says. "But it has potential. Dad's got great ideas. Our bunk beds are still there."

"Yep." Gina slaps her brother on the arm. "I took down our Star Wars poster and sold it on E-bay."

"How much?" Tom asks.

"Enough for a new pair of boots."

I lean against the refrigerator, my thumbnail between my teeth.

"Oscar and I fixed the roof on the bungalow last year, so that's in solid shape," Hudson says.

I tug on a strand of hair and wonder what rents are in this pricey town.

"Let's add goat cheese to the salad," Gina says and turns toward the fridge. I'm blocking her way. She glances into my troubled eyes. "What's wrong?"

"I don't think we should evict those guys."

Tom grunts.

"I am not going to move in there and displace them," I say.

Hudson shakes his head, scratches his jaw.

"The house is really shabby," Gina says. "They'll be better off somewhere else."

"Our room upstairs is fine," I say.

"If you're in Ojai for the long haul, you'll want your privacy," Hudson says.

I turn pleadingly to Tom. "We're going back as soon as I get a job."

"Come on, Elena," Tom says. "You need to be open to the possibility of staying."

Gina tosses the salad. "You're lucky Tom has a remote

job, and you guys can make this work."

I close my eyes and slouch. Three against one.

"How many ranchers actually give housing to the workers?" Tom asks.

Hudson pours glasses of water. "Some do. It's required for laborers who come over on visas. But our guys are undocumented, so there's no obligation."

"It feels unjust to toss them out," I say.

Hudson puts his hand out. "Hold on, now. I treat them very fairly. Even pay them overtime."

"That's the law," I retort.

"Not every grower follows the law," Hudson says.

I take a deep breath, exhale. "I won't move in there."

"Dammit, Elena," Tom says.

Hudson stops filling glasses. "If Elena doesn't want the bungalow, Gina can have it instead."

Silence. Tom doesn't want to surrender the house to his sister. And Gina? She's a city girl now with no interest in ranch life.

Hudson shakes his head at us. "Goddammit. All I've ever wanted was to help my kids," he says, voice quaking. He waves a hand at us. "Figure it out and tell me what you decide." He grabs his baseball cap from the hook on the wall and goes out. "Just eat dinner without me."

A week passes, then another. No one mentions the bungalow. Tom and I are guests here, and I feel guilty being obstinate about Hudson's generous offer. But not terrible enough to take away that home from the farmworkers. I offer to help Hudson at his rounds of local farmers markets and we settle into a congenial rhythm. I'm grateful for the distraction from my fruitless job search and from my research. To maintain a semblance of self-worth I convinced myself to write a book. About Latino social movements. The L.A. Walkouts, the farmworker movement, etc. But most days, I'm too demoralized to turn on my laptop.

My other distraction is that I've started tutoring the two boys in the bungalow. Yes, they are boys. Not yet eighteen. They should be in school, on skateboards. But on the ranch, they do the work of men. When I bring up the subject of school, Hilo and Salud rule it out. "We have to work if we're going to eat."

I think about those words as the months in Ojai pass. Aside from helping sell fruit at the weekend markets, I don't work. Just collect my unemployment checks. The State of California is paying me for doing nothing. Pay to the order of Elena Solis, a nobody.

When Gina suggests applying at the dinky Ojai newspaper, I cringe.

"Ojai has a weekly newspaper," she says. "Submit your resume. You never know."

Working at a weekly rag in this insignificant town? Never. I worked at the *Los Angeles Times*! The goddamn consequential *Los Angeles Times*. Readership of more than a million in the nation's second largest city. No, I will return to L.A. and resurrect my career there.

Winter in Ojai arrives with a dusting of snow atop the Topa Topa Mountains. Tom and I stack two quilts on the bed in our drafty room. One morning, I'm the kitchen stirring oatmeal when the phone rings. Hudson still has a landline which he snatches off the wall.

"Goddamnit!" he barks into the phone. "I can't lend you a wind machine. I've got hundreds of trees to protect."

"What's going on?" I ask when he hangs up.

"A hard freeze tonight. Below twenty-eight degrees. Just a few hours below freezing and we could lose the crop."

"Oh shit. Can I help with anything?"

"We need to get the guys irrigating the orchard and putting out mulch." He clenches his jaw, zips his jacket to his chin. "Wake up Tom. Then meet me in the barn."

When Tom and I report for duty, it's so frigid we see our breath. The wind stings my cheeks. I pull a knit hat over my uncombed hair. Oscar gives me a shovel and shows me how to spread mulch.

"The mulch is like insulation," he explains in Spanish. "If we keep the soil and air moist, the trees can survive."

Tom is checking the anti-freeze on the colossal wind machines. He's been through freezes during his youth on the ranch. Hilo, Salud, and a handful of temporary workers are deployed to pick as many ripe tangerines as possible to prevent them from being damaged.

I spread mulch with delicate precision while Oscar's powerful arms heave pound after pound with mechanical speed. My help here is rather symbolic. He cracks jokes and we laugh until Hudson marches past us with a desperate look in his weary eyes.

"Dammit, Elena," he yells. "Don't waste the mulch on worthless lemon trees."

I squeeze the handle of the shovel. He's been angry with me before, but his tone has a nastier bite today. The pressure bearing down on him has pushed him past civility.

"Pay attention or get out of the fucking orchard." He

storms off, and Oscar waves me over to the tangerines.

I work past hunger, even though I'm surrounded by fruit. At midday, Gina arrives with sandwiches and hot coffee. Oscar and I sit companionably on the tailgate of Hudson's truck, while she checks her phone for weather updates.

“

She presses a hand against her forehead. "The Weather Service extended the freeze warning to four nights. Oranges might make it, but no guarantee the tangerines will. That's where Dad makes most of the money."

”

She presses a hand against her forehead. "The Weather Service extended the freeze warning to four nights. Oranges might make it, but no guarantee the tangerines will. That's where Dad makes most of the money."

I shake my head with worry and pick turkey out of a sandwich. Just cheese, avocado, and bread for me.

Oscar is aghast. I explain I'm a vegetarian.

"Give me that turkey," he says, and stuffs it into his mouth.

Tom wanders over. "Where are the brothers? I tried to work with one of the guys to set up the smudge pots, but his English is rotten."

"And your Spanish is non-existent," Gina counters.

Oscar laughs. He knows enough English to get the gist of the conversation.

"I don't know where they are," I tell him. "But when you find them, let them know there's food."

Tom disappears after riffling through the sandwiches. He discards the bread as he's back on the Atkins diet. I explain this to Oscar and his laughter comes in booming waves. "You won't eat the meat, just the bread. He won't eat the bread!"

Gina and I laugh at the absurdity of it. A moment of levity in this bleak day. She grabs a sandwich and goes in search of her father. I take a break to deliver food to the boys. By the time I'm back in the farmhouse that evening, I'm exhausted. Gina has started a fire in the fireplace and I collapse in front of it.

The men will work in the orchard all night, checking

the temperature, turning on the wind machines, tending smudge pots. Gina will supply them with soup and coffee, scarves and gloves. "Can I help?" I ask her.

"Go to sleep. So you can feed them breakfast."

I do as I'm told. I get cozy in flannel pajamas and a pair of Tom's wool socks. Before dozing off, I imagine farmers and farmworkers across the Ojai Valley following the same rituals underway at Bishop Ranch.

Three cloudless, frigid nights follow. Temperatures dip to seventeen degrees. One blisteringly cold morning, I pull on a sweatshirt and tuck my head into a beanie before heading downstairs. Hudson is on the bottom step, his body misshapen like a crumpled paper bag. I climb down towards him.

"The entire tangerine crop is lost," he announces.

I open my arms to hug him, and he accepts my embrace. His weary body heaves. All the rough words and judgment between us evaporate.

"I'm so sorry," I say.

"We gave it all we had, goddammit."

He pulls away, unzips his coat.

"What does this mean for the ranch?" I ask.

Hudson's shoulders hunch forward in defeat. He leans his tired, aged body against the stair railing. "I'm screwed."

Hudson disappears upstairs, to sleep now that the fight is over. This harsh reality will take time to absorb. Yesterday Tom told me about Hudson's debts—the mortgage he took out on the ranch to pay for his wife's cancer treatments, the loan on the new tractor.

I turn on the radio while I make coffee. The news program reports that the Sheriff has declared a local disaster, a must so farmers can apply for loans from the Feds. "On the bright side," says the reporter in a chipper voice. "Farmers whose crops did survive the freeze can expect higher prices for citrus and strawberries." What a fool. The reporter clearly didn't spend four futile nights trying to nudge orchard temperatures just a few degrees higher.

I check my email while drinking coffee. Ever hopeful for a job interview. My heart gyrates when I see Russell in my inbox. The editor who fired me. Subject line: Freeze. No communications between us in six months and now what? I click on the message.

"Hi E- They're predicting a billion dollars in crop losses statewide. Ventura County especially hard hit. Can you take a few photos thereabouts? Can't promise A-1, but good chance of it. Call me ASAP. R"

That's it? All business? What did I expect? That he'd ask how I've been since he fired me? My heart won't stop racing. I shut the laptop, sweep my arms into my coat, and walk outside to process my emotions. I'm a storyteller. I don't do photos. I wander aimlessly as if sleepwalking. The bitter cold seeps up my sleeves, pinches my ankles. The smell of woodsmoke, cozy and sweet, lulls me. Not an L.A. scent.

“

"Hudson won't have jobs for all of us," he says.

"The campesinos in Oxnard are out of work with the strawberry fields frozen."

”

When I reach the orchard, I notice the curled and yellow leaves on the tangerine trees. I feel Hudson's loss anew. I'm not alone. Salud is taking photos of the damage. He walks over and his eyes are puffy. So little sleep among us all.

"Hudson won't have jobs for all of us," he says. "The *campesinos* in Oxnard are out of work with the strawberry fields frozen."

"I'm sorry. If you need help, I'm here." There are no unemployment payments for undocumented workers. The worry I felt for Hudson multiples. It's a disaster that ripples outward and crushes many.

The farmworkers' perspective on the freeze must be told. It has to be part of the Times' story. I'll promise Russell photos *if* he hires me to write a sidebar about the impact on farmworkers. I imagine interviewing laborers in the damaged fields, my notebook brimming with quotes, my fingers flying across the keyboard as I string together a compelling story. My byline in the *Times* again.

Can I put aside my resentment toward Russell about the layoff and collaborate with him again? I scroll to his email on my phone and type swiftly. "I have a proposal. Assign me to write a story about the impact the freeze will have on farmworkers. Then, I'll send you photos."

I explain the crisis looming for the workers and their families, and why I'm the best journalist to tell their story. I wait for a reply and it comes moments later.

"Thanks E. Yes on both fronts."

A surge of energy courses through my body. I run inside to give Tom my news, but he has something to say to me too.

"Dad's in trouble. I want to help him."

"What do you mean?"

"I want to give him twenty thousand from my retirement account. To help him with his debts. Get him through to the next harvest. What do you say?"

We lock eyes and I see the kindness and love Tom has for his family more acutely than ever. No question what we should do. "Yes, let's help him."

"Alright. I'll go liquidate some investments." He turns back. "And Dad's idea about renovating the old bungalow for us. That's out for sure. Not the time to be spending money."

I nodded. Even if they didn't have work, Oscar and the boys would have a roof over their heads. A small relief. An hour later, Russell has sent details of my assignment. I'm to interview farmworkers in Oxnard and Santa Maria. The United Farm Workers union will hook me up with those affected. I have three days to file my story. I'm so excited, I want to dance through the orchard. But my good fortune is due to the hardships that have crushed Hudson, the farmworkers, and their families. That dampens my small triumph.

I stand in the chilly basement of a church in Santa Maria, a farm town midway between Los Angeles and San Francisco. On the drive in, I saw fields and fields of disfigured strawberries, broccoli, and lettuce. My first time in this town, so I cruised the main drag to get my bearings. Mexican eateries, a modern library, and roadside motels that now house migrant farmworkers. A foodbank has set up a food distribution at the church for workers left unemployed by the freeze. Battered folding tables are piled high with canned beans and corn, bags of rice, clusters of bananas. Jesus on his wooden cross presides over the musty hall filled with bustling volunteers unpacking packages of diapers.

The doors open and families are ushered inside. A petite young woman with a bundled baby in her arms is the first through the entrance. She speaks to a toddler in an indigenous language I've never heard. A musical tongue that reminds me of the birdsong in Hudson's garden. The woman's companion, in a threadbare jacket, places his weathered hand on her shoulder. This is not their first crisis together. The people who shuffle in are surrounded by young children. Their dark eyes dart around the shadowy basement with a weary desperation.

I plan to interview the farmworkers while they wait their turn at the rows of food.

"*Disculpe, ¿habla español?*" Excuse me, do you speak Spanish? I ask a couple in the line. My words don't register at all. How foolish of me not to have arranged for an indigenous interpreter. Many farmworkers in the region hail from Oaxaca and speak Mixteco and other indigenous languages.

"I speak Spanish," says a man farther up the line. "Who are you?"

I introduce myself and explain I'm a reporter writing about the impact of the freeze on the farmworkers. He blows air through twisted lips. "People care?"

I assure him they do. He agrees to speak to me after he's collected his food. I settle into a stiff folding chair and stuff my hands between my thighs to keep them warm. I observe the hands of the last man in line. Small, compact hands covered in Band-Aids. These are the hands that feed us, nourish us. Indispensable hands. Like the millions of hands that harvest apples, walnuts, tomatoes. Hands that make everything our bodies do possible.

My eyes drift to a small girl with a Minnie Mouse backpack. Her mother fills it with crackers and jars of peanut butter. Unfamiliar food to get her family through the weeks ahead.

My interviewee approaches and settles into the chair adjoining mine. He places his paper bag of groceries between his feet. "*Me llamo Rodrigo Cuevas,*" he introduces himself. He's about my age and sports several days of stubble on his face. I introduce myself, but don't have a chance to ask my first question before he takes charge.

"This food helps a little, but how will we pay the rent?"

"I wish I had an answer for you."

His shoulders collapse. "I don't know what to do. The crew boss told me I can get a loan. Interest is thirty-five percent."

"That's outrageous."

"These people need to give us more than cans of food." He yells his comment so others in the room can hear, but the farmworkers look away or stare down at their demolished shoes.

"How many weeks of work will you miss?" I ask.

"Who the hell knows? Six days so far."

"Do you have a family?"

"Three children. But listen, we need more help than we're getting. What can you do for us?" The look in his eye is a plea and a judgment. His desperation whips something loose inside me.

"Let's ask the volunteers," I suggest.

I spend the morning not conducting interviews, but serving as interpreter for Rodrigo, overstepping my role as a journalist. For better or worse, this isn't new for me. People in the communities I've covered began to see me as a trusted ally, and I was inclined to direct them to resources or offer advice.

The chat with the volunteers leads us a few blocks away to an office where a sharp young woman, daughter of farmworkers, provides interpretation for the indigenous workers. Young, energetic Veronica helps families with young children apply for food stamps. She tells us she has a meeting that afternoon with a foundation to pitch her idea of a fundraising drive to get the workers the cash they need to survive.

"I want to be at that meeting," Rodrigo declares, clutching his groceries against his chest.

"Good idea," Veronica says. "They need to hear from you, my friend. Maybe you can find a few more *campesinos* to come with me."

Back we go to the church and Rodrigo begins hustling. I return to my interviews, but Rodrigo is soon at my side again. "I got a couple more *campesinos* from the broccoli fields. Can you give us a ride to that office?"

I love Rodrigo's spunk, but I have a job to do, a story to file, professional distance to keep from my subjects. "I have more interviews across town."

"*Por favor*," he adds. Please.

I tell myself that whatever happens at the meeting

might yield more material for my story. I say yes to Rodrigo.

Later that night, my task of interpreter and chauffeur behind me, I sink into a stiff sofa in the lobby of the Santa Maria Inn. I drink the local Cabernet by the fireplace. I'm tired, but exhilarated. A cold winter night alone in a strange town, and I love every minute of it. I text Tom an update and a few photos.

He texts back: *U sure you'll get reimbursed for hotel and mileage?*

I sigh and don't reply. He just withdrew twenty thousand for his dad and he's worried about a few hundred dollars. I watch the flames and wait for Veronica to send the link for the new Campesino Freeze Fund she helped launch. I promised to work it into my story. The wine slides down my throat, warming me. I want more days like today. More people like Rodrigo and Veronica to introduce to the world.

After days of driving around the Central Coast interviewing farmworkers, I return to Ojai and write like a maniac. I file my story on time—amazing how a deadline can cure writer's block. I include the website for the Campesino Freeze Fund and hope Russell doesn't cut it from the article. After I submit the story, I nap on the soothing chenille quilt atop my bed. When I wake, I rearrange my limbs into child's pose and allow tranquility to spread into every beleaguered corner of my body. I make a decision. I will send my resume to the little local paper. I'm a journalist. I won't surrender my profession, even if I've tumbled from the top of the media pyramid. After that, I'll help Oscar and the boys apply for relief from the new fund.

AUTHOR

CLAUDIA ARMANN



California author Claudia Armann writes contemporary fiction featuring Latina protagonists. She's currently on submission with one of her five unpublished novels. The daughter of Guatemalan immigrants, Claudia's background and career working in philanthropy with the Latinx community inform her writing. She is represented by literary agent Eric Smith.