A Child's Trek From Ecuador Ends in Death

In March, a month after she left home, the police picked up Noemi and brought her to Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. The authorities took her to a children's shelter. She was described as crying incessantly after being questioned by a government official who asked her where she was going. She was placed in a small cell and later moved to a larger one. From there, she was transferred to a shelter in the border town.

Noemi was the fifth grandchild of María Jesús Guamán and Cipriano Quillay. They had raised five grandchildren, including Noemi, whose parents had emigrated. "My four children went to find decent lives," said Mr. Quillay, whose home, above, lacks running water.

As the children grew, their parents "made the arrangement directly from there, and they didn't tell us when we'd have to send them," said Cipriano Quillay.

Noemi had to be persuaded by her parents. "She was crying, she said she didn't want to go," said Sara Yupa, one of her cousins, recalling "then she was quiet." Little is known about Noemi's travels until about 4½ months later, more than a month after she left home.

On Friday, March 7 in Ciudad Juárez, police detained Fermando Urquiza, 33, according to Alejandro Maldonado, a police spokesman. Urquiza had been monitoring Noemi as she traveled to El Tecoco, Mexico, according to El Diario of Juárez.

Urquiza described Noemi as being "terrified," according to a report in El Diario of Juárez.

In an interview, Ms. Choglio, the regional high school principal, said education in Ecuador is no good and that the parents "made the arrangement directly from there, and they didn't tell us when we'd have to send them." She's studying here, she's doing well,'" Ms. Guamán said. "But my daughter said it was too difficult to discuss."

The parents "made the arrangement directly from there, and they didn't tell us when we'd have to send them," said Ms. Guamán. "We don't know anything, not how they go or where they go," Mr. Guamán said.

The official account, Mr. Ferma told reporters that the girl was part of a network of smugglers linked to the girl's family. The man said he had found remnants of human remains in the car's trunk. The man said he had found remnants of human remains in the car's trunk.

The girl's mother said she argued with her daughter, the girl's mother. "I said to her, 'Why take her away?'" she said. "But my daughter explained that Ecuador is in need and that she had to be there to study."

Both grandparents say they and Noemi were obstructed for help in finding her. Ms. Guamán said she argued with her daughter, the girl's mother. "I said to her, 'Why take her away?'" she said. "But my daughter explained that Ecuador is in need and that she had to be there to study."

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