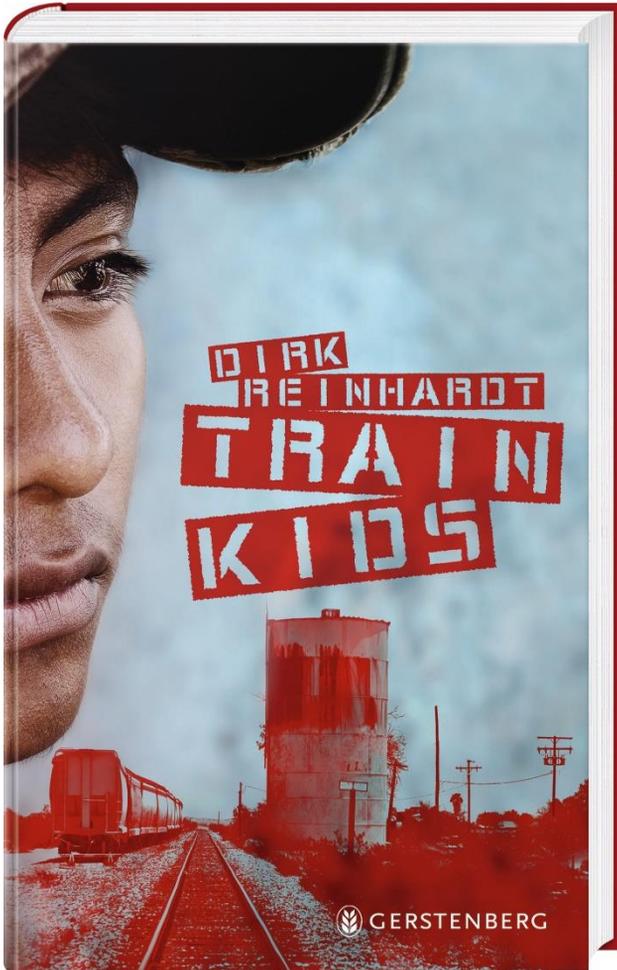


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The 14-year-old Miguel leaves his village in the Guatemalan mountains to find his mother. Years ago, she left him and his sister Juana to work in the United States. She has stayed in this far-away land for many years, never coming back, although she has been promising to do so again and again.

13+

Dirk Reinhardt



Train Kids



320 pages

14 x 22 cm, hardcover

€ 14.95

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(Spanish and Catalan), Japan
and Slovenia**

But Miguel doesn't want to be put off anymore. He needs to find out about his mother's disappearance. Has she stopped loving him and his sister?

With a heavy heart Miguel leaves his sister behind and starts out on a long northbound journey. At the Mexican border he meets others who have the same destination: mysterious Fernando, little Ángel, smart Jaz and silent Emilio. They decide to take a chance together.

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Dirk Reinhardt

was born in 1963 and studied history and German studies. He worked as a researcher at the University of Münster and as a freelance journalist before devoting himself entirely to writing books. His novels Train Kids and Over the Mountains and Over the Sea were both nominated for the German Youth Literature Prize.



All of them are driven by their longing for the people they have lost and by their hope for a better life. Freight trains are the only way to cross Mexico. And soon Miguel and the others realize that they are part of a much bigger trek rolling northbound. Thousands of people are travelling as blind passengers on the trains, facing many risks. One false step when jumping on the train, one unattended moment on the roof, one careless slumber at night and their lives might be over. Corrupt police men and greedy robber bands are hunting them. They are suffering from thirst and hunger, from the heat in the jungle, the coldness in the mountains and the drought in the desert.

Miguel is happy to be with the others. As different as they are from him they are soon becoming the best friends he ever had. And he finds out something else as well: no matter how repellent and hostile this country they are crossing may appear – it is in the worst moments and when they are expecting it least that they are offered help. Miguel is torn between desperation and hope, anger and gratitude.

The novel “Train Kids” is based on thorough research on location in Mexico. The author has spoken with many affected kids as well as with members of aid agencies. With the fate of Miguel, the novel showcases the consequences poverty and a torn family may have on kids. But it also displays the courage and the energy of these kids to fight their fate with all their might.

