

# Esperanza Rising

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Adapted Text

## Chapter 1 – Las Uvas (grapes)

Vocabulary: Esperanza, Papa, Mama, Abuelita, ranch, grapes, harvest, vaqueros, campesinos, fiesta, tradition



<sup>1</sup> **Esperanza** is 12 years old. She lives with **Papa** and **Mama** on a large farm called a **ranch**. The year is 1924. Everyone is getting ready for the grape **harvest**. Many people live and work on the ranch. The house servants take care of the house. The **vaqueros** take care of the cows. The **campesinos** work in the fields. Tomorrow is a special day.

<sup>2</sup> **Esperanza** begins the grape **harvest**. She cuts a cluster of **grapes** and takes it to **Papa**. **Papa** kisses it and holds it high in the air for all to see. The **harvest** begins!

**Tomorrow is Esperanza's birthday!**

<sup>3</sup> After the **harvest**, they have a **fiesta** for Esperanza's birthday. It is a **tradition** for **Papa** and other men from the **ranch** to serenade her at sunrise with the birthday song.

<sup>4</sup> She will open gifts on her birthday. **Papa** always gives her a special doll. She is excited. Tomorrow is Esperanza's birthday.

**Tomorrow is Esperanza's birthday!**

<sup>5</sup> **Esperanza** is worried because **Papa** is late. **Mama** sends men to look for him. **Esperanza** waits in Papa's study with **Mama** and **Abuelita**, Mama's mother.

<sup>6</sup> **Abuelita** teaches **Esperanza** to crochet. Esperanza's row is lopsided. **Abuelita** gently unravels the yarn. She tells her not to be afraid to start over. **Abuelita** is a patient person.

<sup>7</sup> Papa's brothers come. **Mama** is kind to them, but she does not like them. They are not good men. Then, a wagon appears with a body in the back.

**Tomorrow is Esperanza's birthday!**

## Chapter 2 – Las Papayas (papayas)

Vocabulary: ambushed, bandits, papayas, funeral, estate



<sup>1</sup> Papa is singing the birthday song. She should go to the window and wave kisses to him. But, it is only a dream. Yesterday, Papa and his vaqueros were **ambushed** and killed. The **bandits** stole their boots, saddles, and horses.

<sup>2</sup> Mama and Abuelita have gone to see the priest about Papa's funeral. Senor Rodriguez brings **papayas** for the fiesta. Papa orders them every year to make Esperanza's favorite salad for the fiesta. Esperanza tells him about Papa.

### **Esperanza misses her Papa.**

<sup>3</sup> The **funeral** lasts three days. Many people come to the ranch to pay their respects. They bring lots of flowers and food. Esperanza is calm in front of the adults. But, when she is alone in her room, she cries.

<sup>4</sup> Papa's brothers come every day to take care of the family business. This makes Mama uneasy. Then the lawyer comes to settle the **estate**. Papa leaves the house to Mama and Esperanza. The land he leaves to his brother, Tío Luis. In those days, women did not own land.

### **Esperanza misses her Papa.**

<sup>5</sup> Tío Luis wants to marry Mama and send Esperanza to a boarding school. When Mama refuses, he gets angry and threatens her. He tells her he will get what he wants. Mama asks the lawyer if he can take her house. The lawyer says yes. He is a powerful man. She does not want to marry Tío Luis. But, she does not want to leave the ranch either.

### **Esperanza misses her Papa.**

## Chapter 3 – Los Higos (figs)

Vocabulary: servant, poor box, travel papers, orchard, figs



<sup>1</sup> Mama shakes Esperanza awake. The house is on fire. Esperanza grabs the doll Papa gave her for her birthday. Miguel, a **servant** a little older than Esperanza, carries Abuelita out. The fire spreads from the house to the stables and the vineyard. Soon everything is gone.

<sup>2</sup> Tío Luis comes in the morning. He asks Mama to marry him again. He promises to build a bigger house and replant the vineyard. Mama does not want to marry Tío Luis. She asks Alfonso what choices she has. Alfonso has worked for them for many years. Mama trusts him.

### **Esperanza and Mama must leave their home.**

<sup>3</sup> Alfonso says she has two choices. She can marry Tío Luis or come to America with them. He is moving to California with Hortensia and Miguel. His brother is helping them find work. They will start a new life. Mama decides to move to America.

<sup>4</sup> Abuelita cannot go with them. She hurt her ankle in the fire. Her sisters will take care of her until she can travel. They bring Mama and Esperanza clothes from the **poor box** and **travel papers**. The **poor box** is a place where people give clothes they don't want anymore. Esperanza and Mama are poor now and have no money for clothes.

### **Esperanza and Mama must leave their home.**

<sup>5</sup> Mama has a plan. She asks Tío Luis for a wagon to visit Abuelita. But, it is a trick. Mama really wants the wagon to escape. That night Mama and Esperanza escape through the **fig orchard**. Esperanza is sad and angry about leaving the ranch. She smashes **figs** beneath her feet as she walks away.

### **Esperanza and Mama must leave their home.**

## Chapter 4 – Las Guayabas (guavas)

Vocabulary: guavas, board, pheasant, crocheting



<sup>1</sup> Senor Rodriguez is waiting for them with the wagon. The wagon has a new second floor. Esperanza, Mama, and Hortensia lie between the floors. Crates of green **guavas** are placed into the wagon. No one can see them beneath the crates.

<sup>2</sup> They ride in the cramped wagon for two days. Then they arrive at the train station. They do not **board** the fancy car like she did once with Papa. Instead, they get on a car lined with benches and crowded with people. The car is loud and dirty. They ride on the train for several more days.

### **It is a long journey to America.**

<sup>3</sup> Esperanza has never seen so many **pheasants** before. Some people have animals with them. She doesn't want to ride in the dirty car. Mama tells her it is all they can afford. Mama passes the time **crocheting** lace doilies. She asks Esperanza if she would like to learn. She shakes her head no. She is sure she does not belong here.

<sup>4</sup> Esperanza takes the doll out of its case. It is all she has left of her old life. A dirty **peasant** girl tries to touch it. Esperanza jerks it away. The girl starts to cry. Mama apologizes to the girl's mother and makes a doll from yarn for the girl. The girl smiles and thanks Mama.

### **It is a long journey to America.**

<sup>5</sup> Miguel is as happy about going to America as Esperanza is cross. Miguel wants to work for the railroad. In Mexico, he was a servant and could not work for the railroad. In America, he can do anything if he works hard.

### **It is a long journey to America.**

## Chapter 5 – Los Melones (cantaloupes)

Vocabulary: border, immigration, papers, Mexican National, patchwork, cantaloupes, waiting



<sup>1</sup> The next morning they reach the **border** between Mexico and America. Esperanza and Mama have to pass through **immigration**. The officer questions Esperanza first. Esperanza is afraid she will say something wrong. She does not want the officer to send them back to Mexico. Mama gives the officer their **papers**. He looks at them a long time. Finally, he stamps each page with the words “**Mexican National**”.

<sup>2</sup> They board another train for Los Angeles. Alfonzo’s brother, Juan, and his family are waiting for them. Josefina is Juan’s wife. They have three children: Isabel, Lupe, and Pepe. Mama greets the campesino family warmly. She is touched by the help they have given them. She thanks them for their kindness.

**Esperanza has a new home.**

<sup>3</sup> They crowd into an old truck. The Mexican camp where they will live and work is a long way away. The San Joaquin Valley spreads out like a blanket of **patchwork** fields.

<sup>4</sup> Juan stops at a field where the field markers are down. When the field markers are down, that means the field has been harvested. They can take as many **cantaloupes** as they can carry.

**Esperanza has a new home.**

<sup>5</sup> Juan also stops to pick up a young girl named Marta. Isabel tells Marta that Esperanza is from a big ranch in Mexico. Her father was a rich man. She had lots of servants and beautiful dresses. Marta calls Esperanza a princess. She says no one will be **waiting** on her here. Esperanza does not like Marta.

**Esperanza has a new home.**

## Chapter 6 – Las Cebollas (onions) and Chapter 7 Las Almendras (almonds)

Vocabulary: horse stall, platform, shed, brittle, onion skins, Cinderella, almonds, flan, strike, wages, working conditions



<sup>1</sup> Esperanza is not happy about the cabin. It looks like a **horse stall** - not a place to live. Mama tells her she can be miserable or happy. Mama chooses to be happy.

<sup>2</sup> Everyone must work. Esperanza is not old enough to work in the **shed** like Mama. Instead, she watches the twins and sweeps the **platform**. The **platform** is a large wooden floor in the middle of camp used for meetings and dances. When she goes to sweep the **platform**, it is covered with dry, **brittle onion skins**. Marta sees Esperanza trying to sweep and laughs at her. She calls her “**Cinderella**”.

**Esperanza must learn to work.**

<sup>3</sup> Esperanza is embarrassed. She runs back to the cabin. Miguel teaches her to sweep. He tells her that she might make a good servant someday. This makes her laugh.

<sup>4</sup> Esperanza and Isabel shell **almonds** for Josefina. Josefina is making **flan** to sell at the fiesta tonight. **Flan** is like an open pie with a custard filling. Esperanza is worried that Marta will be at the fiesta. She doesn't want to be made fun of again. But, she decides to go anyway. She really likes **flan**.

**Esperanza must learn to work.**

<sup>5</sup> The **platform** is lit up for dancing. Women sell food on tables covered with bright tablecloths. Other tables are set up for bingo. The fiestas are very popular. Many people come from all over to attend the fiestas.

<sup>6</sup> Esperanza sees Marta. She is standing in a truck holding a small kitten in the air. A crowd is gathered around her. She tells people that they are like this kitten – little and meek. She tells them to **strike** for **higher wages** and better **working conditions**. A man yells at her to get out of the camp. They don't want to **strike**. They need their jobs.

**Esperanza must learn to work.**



## Chapter 8 – Las Ciruelas (plums) and Chapter 9 – Las Papas (potatoes)

Vocabulary: dust storm, Valley Fever, infection, contagious, depressed, potato eyes



<sup>1</sup> Marta and her friends are planning a strike. Esperanza's camp has voted not to strike. One day, Esperanza is watching the babies outside. A blast of hot air makes her look up. She sees a brown cloud near the mountains. It is a **dust storm**!

<sup>2</sup> It takes Mama and the others a long time to get to the cabin from the shed. It takes the men even longer to come from the fields. Everyone is covered in dry dirt. They look like pottery. Mama cannot stop coughing.

**Esperanza must be brave.**

<sup>3</sup> The **dust storm** stops the strike. Still, many workers have no work. The dust storm ruined the cotton. Alfonso's family is working grapes and grapes grow higher off the ground. They still have work.

<sup>4</sup> The doctor comes to look at Mama. She has **Valley Fever**, an **infection** in the lungs. It is not **contagious**. The doctor gives Mama some medicine and says she must rest. She will not be able to work for a long time.

**Esperanza must be brave.**

<sup>5</sup> Mama does not get better. She is **depressed**. It happens sometimes when a lot of sad things happen to a person. Mama lost her husband, her home, and her mother. Mama goes to the hospital. Esperanza knows what she really needs is Abuelita.

<sup>6</sup> Esperanza needs a job to make money. She gets a job cutting **potato eyes**. Esperanza cuts the potato so that each piece has two eyes. New potatoes will grow from the eyes when they are planted.

<sup>7</sup> There is talk of another strike in the spring. But, if they refuse to work, they will lose their cabins or be sent back to Mexico. If they do not strike, they might get hurt. Esperanza is afraid. Papa is dead. Mama is in the hospital. Abuelita is in Mexico. Esperanza misses her family.

**Esperanza must be brave.**



## Chapter 10 – Los Aguacates (avocados)

Vocabulary: estimates, money order, avocados, glycerin, pneumonia, market, piñata



<sup>1</sup> Esperanza **estimates** that if she works until peaches, she will have enough money. Every other week, she buys a **money order** with the money she saves. Soon she will have enough money.

<sup>2</sup> Esperanza's hands are rough from work. She makes a green lotion from ripe **avocados** and **glycerin** to soften. She remembers Mama did the same thing when her hands were rough. Mama is not getting better in the hospital. She now has **pneumonia**. Esperanza can no longer visit her.

### **Esperanza saves her money.**

<sup>3</sup> Esperanza and Miguel go to the **market** for groceries. She sees a **piñata** shaped like a donkey. Mama gave her one like it when she was little. She buys it and fills it with sweets. Miguel asks about her purchases. Esperanza tells him she is saving money for Abuelita's travel. The **piñata** is a gift for Mama.

<sup>4</sup> On the way home, they see Marta and her mother walking along the road. They offer them a ride to their camp. They are living at a strikers' farm. The entrance to the farm is guarded by armed men. Many people are living on the farm. Some live in tents. Others live on the ground.

### **Esperanza saves her money.**

<sup>5</sup> A man from the camp asks Esperanza for food. His family is starving. Too many people have come to the valley. There is not enough work for everyone. Esperanza fills his hat with beans. She gives his children the **piñata**. Marta tells them that there will be a big strike in a few weeks. If they have not joined them, they should be very careful.

### **Esperanza saves her money.**

## Chapter 11- Los Esparragos (asparagus)

Vocabulary: strikers, asparagus, picket line, sweep, immigration



<sup>1</sup> Marta is right. There is a strike. **Strikers** want more money for working. Not everyone strikes. Esperanza does not. She goes to work packing **asparagus** at the shed. Armed guards stand outside the shed to protect them.

**Esperanza is afraid.**

<sup>2</sup> But to get to the shed, they must cross the **picket line**. **Strikers** do not want people to work during a strike. They shout and throw rocks at them to keep them from working. The **strikers** frighten Esperanza. She wants to tell them that she needs money for her sick mother. But the **strikers** only listen if you agree with them.

<sup>3</sup> The strike goes on for days. The **strikers** hide rats, snakes, razor blades, and shards of glass in the **asparagus**. This makes it hard for the workers. They have to slow down so they don't get hurt.

**Esperanza is afraid.**

<sup>4</sup> One day, there is a **sweep**. It goes quiet outside. **Immigration** officers and police appear. They bring many buses and police cars. They stop **strikers** and demand to see their papers. It does not matter that some are Americans. They make them get on a bus and send them back to Mexico.

<sup>5</sup> The guards keep Esperanza and the other workers safe from the **immigration** officers. The farmers need them to harvest the fields. But Esperanza wonders what will happen after the crops are harvested.

**Esperanza is afraid.**

## Chapter 12 – Los Duraznos (peaches) and Chapter 13 - Las Uvas (grapes)

Vocabulary: peaches, second-class citizens, valise, furious



<sup>1</sup> Esperanza is working in **peaches**. Life in America is not right. Mexicans are treated like **second-class citizens**. Isabel has the highest grades in her class, but does not win Queen of the May award. Miguel can work on train engines, but has to dig ditches. She has to cross a picket line to go to work.

**Esperanza wants Mama and Abuelita to come home.**

<sup>2</sup> Miguel says to be patient. But, Esperanza is tired of waiting. She is tired of Mama being sick. She is tired of Abuelita being far away. She tells him he will never understand. He was a servant in Mexico. He is still a servant in America. This makes Miguel angry. The next morning, he is gone.

<sup>3</sup> Mama comes home. Esperanza tells her about the money to bring Abuelita to America. Esperanza looks in her **valise**, but the money orders are gone. Miguel must have stolen them. Esperanza is **furious**.

**Esperanza wants Mama and Abuelita to come home.**

<sup>4</sup> One day, Miguel comes home on a bus. They meet him at the bus station at 3:00 o'clock. When the bus arrives, Miguel says he has brought Esperanza proof that things will get better. Then he turns and helps Abuelita off the bus.

<sup>5</sup> Mama and Esperanza are so happy to see Abuelita. Abuelita says that Tío Luis was very mad with they left. Then, she tells everyone how Miguel came to get her. He is very brave. Esperanza tells Abuelita everything that has happened since they last saw her. She does not measure time by the usual seasons. Instead, she tells their story as a campesino. Time is told in spans of fruits and vegetables and by what needed to be done to the land.

**Esperanza wants Mama and Abuelita to come home.**