

Born One parent thought normal mom worked long hours at Wal Mart My sister, Irma and I alone  
father married again another woman Didn't want us in life Maybe it was his new wife  
neighbor watched us Her name Chela had 7 kids One day Chela left to Fresno for emergency  
Mom worked late We slept on concrete outside someone placed a blanket on us  
Thankful to this day Mom cried when she saw us More than I ever remembered It hurt me  
to see her cry so much We never had enough money used clothes used dolls didn't care mom  
worried Money was always a problem Father didn't help  
married a younger woman she didn't want him to see us he never objected hurts me to this day  
boards slowly breaking at the first few steps I could feel tacks and splinters and hard wood

## BROKEN BOARDS

Ms. Gomez bad teacher made boy put gum on nose had dunce hat made us stand in corner  
said illegal aliens ruined country Repeated how stupid we were. Especially Hispanics all gang members Didn't value  
education  
Didn't want to bother mother but I could sleep hated going to school first grade mom taught us respect teachers  
respect authority Finally one morning I broke down I cried mom asked why I finally told her she called work  
said she'd be late She spoke to the principal Got me new teacher a new class This teacher was different she was good She  
cared  
My boards started to get repaired I liked school again New teacher Ms. Herrera gave me a book Said I must always read  
I treasured that book I read it five times Mom took Irma and me to library I never saw so many books I always read  
Sometimes I wrote about the characters I wondered what it would be like to live in another city another country  
My stairway was getting fixed I was happy again