"I was going crazy – I would ask officers where my daughter was and they would tell me they didn't know anything."

- JM, A HONDURAN FATHER FORCIBLY SEPARATED FROM HIS DAUGHTER

These first-person accounts were shared with Caitlin Dickerson for her definitive investigation into the Trump administration’s family separation policy in The Atlantic, which won the 2023 Pulitzer Prize for Explanatory Reporting.

"I was going crazy – I would ask officers where my daughter was and they would tell me they didn't know anything. I was so worried - I had never been separated like that from my daughter. I asked again and another officer told me that if I filled out a paper -in 8 days there would be a response about whether I could speak to my daughter or not. I did what that officer asked me to do - then 8 days later they told me I had a call with my daughter."

"A woman came and spoke to a group of parents like me – she said she was a deportation officer. She said that my daughter and other kids from other parents would be in the U.S. for months and we could only speak to them twice a week and eventually we would be deported. She said we weren’t doing anything in detention - just causing a problem and taking up space - and we would be better off deported because then we could speak to our children. So each of the parents signed a piece of paper accepting our deportation. But that was all a lie to get us to accept our deportation."

"When I was deported, I suffered tremendously. We were kept in a room that was freezing - la hielera - for 3 days and it so difficult. My bones hurt from the pain. An officer was there who was making fun of us - but we couldn't really do anything. I put it in God's hands."

"Then they took me and others to the plane. They called names and said I couldn't leave until I signed some documents. I hadn't slept in days and didn't know what to do."

"Another night without sleep - but this time I was actually deported."

"When I got to Honduras, it was very difficult and I don't even want to remember because it is so difficult to think about. I was in so much pain - my wife didn't understand why my daughter hadn't come back with me. People who knew me in my town accused me of leaving my child."

"Then I had issues getting my daughter out of detention - she was detained another 6 months while I waited in Honduras. My daughter eventually got out of detention and went to live with my cousin in Texas - at first the government said she couldn't because my cousin was a man. But before that happened - I felt terrible."