

Jackson Heights Chronicles: When Crossing the Border Isn't Enough

Orlando Tobon



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From his small travel agency tucked away in an area of New York City known as Little Colombia, the "Godfather of Jackson Heights" does far more than make travel arrangements. Fernando Padrón is a social service fixer to many of the tens of thousands of Latino immigrants living in his neighborhood. Tax accountant, job hunter, fund-raiser, and missing persons detective are just some of his roles. Fernando also earned the title of Undertaker for the Mules after helping families repatriate the remains of the dozens who die every year smuggling drugs into New York when drug-filled capsules in their stomachs explode. The riveting experiences shared in this collection of connected stories are based on the author's life. In scenes at once fascinating, inspiring, and heartbreaking, Orlando Tobón reveals not only what it means to be an immigrant, but also what it means to be an American.

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