

Yixuan Sun

Mrs. Angelo

English Language Arts 8-1

17 October 2025

Chapter 19

El Silbon: “Aunque su canción esté lejos, ten cuidado, porque él está cerca...”

The Whistler: “Though his song is far away, beware, for he is near...”

(Pick up from pg 299:)

...I was pondering my resistance when suddenly the twins' bedroom door flew open.

Papa froze, took a deep breath, and then turned to look. "What is going on?" he asked, releasing my sisters to stand up. Two pasty-faced girls emerged from Velia and Delia's room, whining about a foul smell. I tried to dismiss the intruders, but a odd figure outside the window in their room grabbed my attention.

A cold feeling, familiar and unwelcome, coiled in my gut. It was the same suspicion I'd felt with Cecilia, with the nagual, with Chencho. Something was definitely off. I shifted into the room, eyeing the window.

There, in the fading daylight of the yard, stood a tall, impossibly slim figure. Its skin was a ghastly white, and it was dressed in tattered, rugged clothes, a straw hat covering its face. Slung over its shoulder was a large sack, lumpy as if something was in it. The air around me suddenly seemed to grow cold and still.

"What the..." I muttered, my blood suddenly turning cold.

I quickly shifted my attention to my sisters, "Velia! Delia! Come look!" I yelled, my announcement interfering with their argument with the strangers.

"What? Do you not care about these squatters in our home?" Delia shot back, her voice sharp and stubborn.

"This is more important!" I insisted.

Delia gave me a curious yet annoyed look before stomping over to peer out the window. She scanned the empty yard. "What? Theres nothing out there. Unless you're talking about that raccoon digging through the trash?"

The figure was gone, vanished.

"It was there! A tall slim man, holding a sack!" My voice trembled with fear as I tried to sound convincing.

"Are you seeing things Odilia?" Delia teased with an exasperated look before scampering off to argue with the "squatters." The feeling of isolation closed on me as I realize theres no use.

The argument with the unfamiliar girls eventually fizzled out, the two strangers retreating with a "I'm gonna tell mom!" The sight of the two strangers running off should have brought me at least some relief, but the silence that followed was thick and eerie because of what I had just saw.

Papa sighed, running a hand over his face. "Enough!" He looked exasperated and annoyed. The feeling of unwelcomeness being supported by his word.

"We have more severe problems." I said, my voice low yet firm.

"Yeah, our room does smell like a skunk died in it." Velia chimed.

"It's not about the room!" I insisted. "It's about what's *outside* the room. Don't you remember anything from our journey? The warnings? The creatures that look one way but are another?"

A uncomfortable silence fell. Pita clutched Papa's legs, her wide eyes fixed on me.

It was then that we heard it. The whistle.

Faint, as if from a large distance away, a whistle. It was a simple melody, the kind a person might make out of pure boredom. But it sliced through the walls of our house and into my very soul, like a knife going through butter. I was the butter.

Velia looked utterly terrified as Delia's defiant posture fell.

"What... What is that?" Juanita asked, her voice barely a whisper.

The legend echoed in my mind: "Though his song is far away, beware, for he is near."

The pieces clicked into a terrifying whole. The pale figure. The sack. The whistle.

"El Silbon" I said more to myself than to the others.

Papa looked a bit unsettled but still tried to brush it off, "What are you talking about Odilia? It's just someone outside."

"No it's not," I say sharply, heading to the front window and peeking through the curtain blinds. Our porch was empty. Suddenly, the whistle came again, slightly clearer this time, sending a shiver down my spine. "His whistle sounds distant, but they say if you can hear it close, it's actually far away. And if it sounds like it's far away..." I trailed off, letting their imaginations finish.

"Then he's probably already at our door." Juanita joked nervously, her knowledge of the folklore surfacing as her face became paler by the second.

And as if it was on cue, a slow and heavy dragging sound, like a sack being pulled across wooden floorboards could be heard outside the door.

We all froze. No one dare spoke.

From the other side of the door, a low, raspy voice whispers, so quiet that I had to concentrate to hear it.

"¿Tienes alguna especia para mi padre?"

The legend finally came clear... To offer him spices was an invitation for a quick death. To refuse him was a invitation for a horrible curse.

Papa, confused and frightened, moved towards the door. "Who's there? Who's asking?"

"No!" I hissed at him as I grab his arm and pull him from the door. "Do *not* answer! Do *not* acknowledge it!"

But my attempt was futile. The handle of the door began to slightly jiggle. Our journey was not over yet, it had only followed us home.

The jiggling of the doorknob suddenly stopped. For a brief moment, there was only silence, which was then broken by the whistle that seemed to be coming from inside the house itself. Papa masked his fear and tried to put on a paternal and confident look. "This is my home, no one frightens my girls."

He took a hesitant step forward before opening the door.

El Silbon was right behind the door, waiting for Papa to open it. He towered over Papa, his ghastly white face covered by his straw hat. The smell of decay and wet earth emanated from him, making me gag. His large lumpy sack was open at his feet.

Papa stumbled back with horror on his face as he looked up at the looming figure, his face slowly turning as pale as El Silbon himself. "Dios mio—"

Before he could finish, El Silbon suddenly swiped at Papa with unnatural speed. His long, ivory-white, skeletal arm grasping Papa by the neck and lifted him as if showing off a trophy. Papa clawed and thrashed at the grip of El Silbon, his feet kicking uselessly around the air.

"LET HIM GO!" I screamed at the monster, the spell of terror shattering.

We rushed as one. Juanita, ever the fighter, launched herself at the monster's leg, punching and kicking. Velia and I grabbed at the arm that was holding Papa, attempting to pry him loose. They were like iron shackles- cold as a corpse.

Delia and Pita stayed back unmoving and screaming, petrified by the monsters appearance.

El Silbon didn't even flinch at our assault. It was as if we weren't even there. The monster suddenly chucked Papa at the far wall without any effort at all. He crumpled to the floor with a sickening thud, unmoving.

A low sound guttural sound emanated from El Silbon. He turned his head at us. And for the very first time, we saw the darkened hollow of where is face should've been. No eyes, just carved out holes of where they should be. But we could all tell that his attention has shifted towards us.

"The sack..." the monster rasped, his voice sounding like dry leaves skittering over a concrete sidewalk. "For misbehaving children."

He suddenly dashed at Velia and Pita who were the closest to him while they clutched each other, screaming in fear. The large sack he left on the porch seemed to open on its own, a maw of void, hungry to swallow them.

"No! Run!" I shouted, while I throw myself between El Silbon and my sisters, attempting to shield them.

It was futile and useless. His long bony arm swept again, this time directed at me. He backhanded me across the whole room. I crashed into a table as pain erupted from my side. Disoriented, I could only watch as he grabbed my sisters, Pita first, stuffing her into the sack with a terrifying ease as if he has done this many times before. Her screaming were instantly muted by the leather of the sack. Velia tried running, but it was no use, El Silbon quickly grabbed at her hair, and with the same fluid motion, she too was swallowed by the sack, which now wiggled and writhed with their struggling.

The creature slowly turned to face me, his hollow gaze piercing through my soul. I tried to scramble backwards, but my body was already out of commission. His whistle suddenly became deafening, completely flushing the thoughts out of my head, promising a quick end within the dark confines of a sack.

He loomed over me, the stench of his clothes suffocating. He reached down for me. I closed my eyes expecting the worst to come...

"Alejate de ella, monstruo!"

Juanita's voice suddenly pierced through his whistle, sharp and commanding.

El Silbon paused, tilting his head towards Juanita's voice. At the kitchen entrance, there Juanita and Delia stood. Delia's face was stained with tears but was set in fury. In her hands, she held the large cast-iron skillet Mama used for frying

peppers. The skillet was smoking. The air suddenly filled with a burning, intensely spice smell.

Juanita, her eyes filled with rage and wisdom far beyond her age, stood beside her holding a cloth over the bottom half of her face. "You feed on people's sorrow and fear," she states, her voice was trembling yet crystal clear. "But you cannot stand the flame of life! The burning of a family's love!"

"Eat this you monster!" Delia screamed, and with all her might, she chucked all the contents of the skillet at the creature.

It wasn't just oil. It was a mix of the many peppers we own, habaneros, jalapenos, and gaujillos that Juanita probably ground and heated. It was a weapon born from our kitchen, from our culture.

The burning, spicy blend of peppers hit El Silbon with a direct hit.

A sound erupted from him, nothing human or earthly at all, a high pitched shriek that drowned out everything, even his own whistle. He staggered back, clawing at his chest, as if the blend of peppers was acid eating away at his body. Our culture was a bane to his own being.

The writhing sack at his feet became still for a moment before twitching violently. The distraction was everything I needed.

"Save them Odilia!" Juanita yelled.

Ignoring the pain that was piercing my side, I scrambled up and lunged at the sack, fumbling with the roughly knotted cord that tied it shut. Delia was already there, her hands working frantically, mirroring mine. The cord at last came loose, Velia and Pita tumbled out, coughing and crying, they looked deeply unsettled but unharmed.

Neither me or Delia waited, we dragged them away, and we all huddled together as El Silbon continued writhing and shrieking. His form suddenly began to flicker, like a candle being blown. Finally, with one last enraged howl that seemed to shake the whole earth itself, he dissolved into a foul smelling wisp that retreated back out the door he originally entered and vanished into the dark night.

The whistle was gone.

Silence came over us, only broken by our sobs and Papa's groans as he began to stir on the floor, still alive.

(End of narrative)

Graded Assignment:

End of Unit 2 Assessment:
Narrative
Summative Assessments

Oct 17 by 11:59pm

Oct 21 at
2:44pm

late

20 / 22

Narrative Rubric (1)					Pts
Criteria	Ratings				
I effectively use information from sources to craft the characters, setting, or events in the narrative.	2 pts Advanced	1.5 pts Proficient	1 pts Developing	0.5 pts Beginning	2 / 2 pts
I engage and orient the reader by effectively establishing a context.	2 pts Advanced	1.5 pts Proficient	1 pts Developing	0.5 pts Beginning	2 / 2 pts
I introduce a narrator and/or characters and establish a point of view.	2 pts Advanced	1.5 pts Proficient	1 pts Developing	0.5 pts Beginning	2 / 2 pts
I provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the events or experiences in the narrative.	2 pts Advanced	1.5 pts Proficient	1 pts Developing	0.5 pts Beginning	1 / 2 pts
I organize events in a sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.	2 pts Advanced	1.5 pts Proficient	1 pts Developing	0.5 pts Beginning	2 / 2 pts
I use a variety of transitional words and phrases to sequence events and to show changes in time or in setting.	2 pts Advanced	1.5 pts Proficient	1 pts Developing	0.5 pts Beginning	2 / 2 pts
I use transitional words and phrases to show the relationships among experiences and events.	2 pts Advanced	1.5 pts Proficient	1 pts Developing	0.5 pts Beginning	2 / 2 pts
I develop experiences, events, and characters using techniques such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection.	2 pts Advanced	1.5 pts Proficient	1 pts Developing	0.5 pts Beginning	2 / 2 pts
I use descriptive details, sensory language, and precisely chosen words to capture the action and convey experiences and events.	2 pts Advanced	1.5 pts Proficient	1 pts Developing	0.5 pts Beginning	2 / 2 pts
My words and sentences follow the rules of writing.	2 pts Advanced	1.5 pts Proficient	1 pts Developing	0.5 pts Beginning	1 / 2 pts
The spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are correct.	2 pts Advanced	1.5 pts Proficient	1 pts Developing	0.5 pts Beginning	2 / 2 pts

Total Points: 20