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## A Place to Call Home

This piece was a moving one called “The Barrio” that tells of an outcasted neighborhood coming to life. Robert Ramirez tells the story of the place he once called home. He breaks down everything from the layout of the neighborhood to the sounds you could hear if you ever found yourself there. He tells how this place viewed to outsiders can be cold and isolated. However, to him, The Barrio is a place of refuge from the harsh sufferings of the outside world. The Barrio brings people together in a place that most would not want to live in, but to the locals, it is forever home.

“There is no want to escape, for the feeling of the Barrio is known only to its inhabitants” (Ramirez 309). This sentence truly conveys what the Barrio is to the people who live there. An outcast who are angry at the seeds of rejection society has given them find themselves amongst friends here. There is no reason to want to leave the Barrio because all of the necessities for life are found there. He tells of a grocery store that feeds its customers every meal. The owner of this store also provides credit to people who are unable to pay for their meals. Everyone is treated like family. There is also no need to look for fun outside of the Barrio cause it can all be found there. A pool hall is a place where young men get together to shoot pool and rap. The cantina a place where people come to drink, and where the young become men. The Barrio follows you through all the stages of life. It follows you forever because it's family.

The Barrio is much different from the Anglo world. There are no privacy fences, cause there is no need for privacy. Some yards can be found to have metal slung fences or none at all. This means that familial relationships get stretched down to the neighbors to all the way down the block. The houses are not the same as the outside either. “The gardens mutely echo the expressive verses of the colorful houses” (Ramirez 310). They are very colorful with no sense of matching. “The denseness of the multicolored plants and trees give the house the appearance of an oasis or tropical island hideaway” (Ramirez 310). Just vibrant colors that seem to arrest your eyes in awe. It keeps the feeling of the neighborhood alive and not dull. In the evenings you will always find children playing outside or adults socializing on lawns or porches. He moves on from the outside of the home to the inside. He tells of the oldest boys always helping out the family in contributing everything they can. Life isn't always easy in the Barrio as is everywhere else. Ramirez reminisces on the poorer families in the neighborhood. Saying that they are trapped in the 19th century and survive as best they can. Hardships come with any neighborhood, but in the Barrio, they are made just a bit easier.

The Barrio is forever a place the locals can call home. It is a place that is sheltered from the

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Anglo world. A place where many would not want to live, but to the people that live there is no other place they would rather be. The Barrio is a place of security where people can find themselves comfortable amongst family, friends, and friends who are family. A barrio is a different place where the laws of color are played with and the streets dance with color. A place where each morning its breath comes to life and extends its vibrancy to anyone who finds themselves there.

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