

On relation between a book and a topic



We all have heard the saying, “ Every coin has two sides”, and likewise Los Angeles (L. A) has two faces. One face of L. A shows its rich culture, the beautiful skyscrapers and its blooming financial status but on the other side we see the poverty and the helplessness of the people who have immigrated over here. Los Angeles was the most popular getaway for immigrants during the 1980’s. The violence, killings by the death squads, financial turndown and worsening political situation of Guatemala forced its natives to immigrate to United States of America (Hong, n. d) Hector Tobar’s book “ The Tattooed Soldier” is a heartfelt story of tragedy and revenge. It shows us the real picture of the poverty stricken and depressing lives of the immigrants to L. A. The main story of “ The Tattooed Soldiers” revolves around a young man Antonio Bernal who is a citizen of Guatemala but forced to immigrate to L. A. He used to live in Guatemala along with his family when one day his wife and infant son were killed by the leader of the death squad, Guillermo Longoria (the tattooed soldier). Antonio immigrates to L. A in the hope to lead a better life but to this despair he finds only poverty and homelessness in such a big city. During the 1980’s, the immigrants believed that L. A was a place where one could live safely with his family and be financially well off but the reality was entirely different. As Tobar himself states, “ At its root, The Tattooed Soldier is the story of conflict between the ideas of Los Angeles as a place of unlimited freedom and opportunity and, the truth of poverty and decay that have come to eat away at the heart of the city” (Tobar, 1998). The book “ The Tattooed Soldier” depicts the eternal struggle of an immigrant in Los Angeles. It reveals the real political and economical scenario of United States and Latin America. Antonio is treated as an illegal immigrant and there is no room for sympathy for him. On one

side are the tall skyscrapers depicting the richness of L. A and on the other side is the homeless and helpless Antonio. Hector has revealed the real face of L. A and the cruel life of all the immigrants who shifted there in the 1980's through his main protagonist, Antonio and various other characters in his book. Works Cited Tobar, Hector. *The Tattooed Soldier*. New York: Penguin, 1998. Print. Hong, Maria . *Guatemala Americans*, n. d. Web 01 June, 2011 [http://www. everyculture. com/multi/Du-Ha/Guatemalan-Americans. html](http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Du-Ha/Guatemalan-Americans.html)>.