

FOGO Episode 5 “A Serious Hike”

Transcription:

{{Sound cues}}

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Ivy Le, content warning:

Before we get into today's episode, a quick content warning that this week, we do bring up some real life events around race, violence, and our guest talks about an eating disorder too. It's heavier than what you've heard so far on FOGO. We don't go into much detail, but please take the care and space that you need. We have some resources linked in the show notes.

Whenever you're feeling ready, I hope you'll join me.

{{Soothing wave sounds}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

“Years ago, waaaay before I met the person I would marry, I was at a lake on Memorial Day with a boyfriend's entire extended family. There, because I speak Spanish, his mother asked me to talk to a Mexican family that had just arrived. They were unpacking at our tables, and they had a bag of coal for the grills.

I was very respectful. You know, I was in my early 20s—I was still sitting at the kids table at parties. I explained that our family had reserved the space for the day. They were like, “how is that a thing?” And I was like, “I know! I said the exact same thing! But se lo juro, it's for real. They got a whole sign up with our rental info over there.” I said, “Please do grab some picnic tables, but I'm so sorry, our group is so big, we really do need both grills to cook.” They said, “ay, no problem,” got the kids, got their stuff, left. About 20 minutes later. I remember the parking attendant had told us that all of the picnic tables around the whole lake had been reserved. I felt horrible. I just forgot when I was talking to them, and now, they were probably going around the whole lake being asked to leave.

You see, my family came to America in 1980. And we'd been in similar situations. If you get a random day off like that when everyone can be together, that's rare if you don't work an office job. Your parents think, “Oh, let's enjoy this. Let's buy some chickens, some charcoal, take the kids swimming. And this thing that was supposed to be easy turns into this humiliating ordeal! How is anyone supposed to just know that public outdoor spaces have to be paid for months in advance?”

A few weeks later, I found out that the boyfriend's mother had been telling people how “Ivy ‘took care’ of the Mexicans.” I was livid! They thought I was a bully?! And they were proud of it?! The guy I was dating didn't see the problem. He thought it was good that his mom liked me. But his mother only liked me because she didn't understand the truth. That my family is like the Mexican family, and I am not at all like her.... Nor do I want to be.”

{{FOGO Theme Music: fun bouncy music with electronics fades in}}

Ivy Le, narrating (cont.):

“This is Ivy Le with one E, and you're listening to FOGO: Fear of Going Outside where I venture to find out what's so great about the outdoors. I am an avid indoorswoman, attempting everything it takes to literally go camping. So far, I've figured out some search vocabulary, taken professional camping lessons, gone to therapy for mental preparedness, and acquired supplies. Today's episode: I take a serious hike. I'm not talking about the trail.”

{{FOGO Theme Music: fun bouncy music with electronics fades out}}

{{Exciting saxophone solo}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

“I'm meeting Rocio Villalobos. She's an indigenous outdoor activist who helps women of color, like me, on their first hikes and camping trips in her spare time. You met Rocio in the last episode when she showed up at REI. Today she's taking me on a hike up the Barton Creek Greenbelt. Hiking is a must-have survival skill because you have to hike to get to everything on a camping trip.”

Rocio, hiking with Ivy:

“So they recommended going down this way, to the left.”

Ivy, hiking with Rocio:

“Okay.”

Rocio:

“Less mud is what I heard so... So a little rocky going down, but we can just take it, take it nice and... nice and easy.”

Ivy:

“Yeah, give me the easy route. That would be...”

Rocio:

“Yeah”

Ivy, narrating:

“Barton Creek Greenbelt is a network of trails in South Austin that I've heard of because the local outdoor people are very loud about it.

Rocio goes here all the time, and she tells me exactly where to park. I'm parking by a boutique grocery, across the street from an entrance I never would have noticed otherwise because directly at the greenbelt entrance, above the trees and to the left, I am in the backyard of

Austin's many luxury condos. The residents can literally look down upon me. The Green Belt connects all the wealthy subcultures of West Austin in a little swoosh: the boomer hippies in the south, up to the Lululemon moms of Westlake, to the tech bros further North.

I never spend any time down here because the Asian food sucks.

Rocío Villalobos grew up in Austin. Her parents moved here from Mexico, and they live on the east side. East Austin, which means Austin east of Highway 35, is historically the side of town where Black and brown people have lived, but gentrification is displacing a lot of longtime residents. People like Rocío's parents."

Rocio, hiking with Ivy:

"We didn't really go to many places outside of East Austin often. Um, my dad worked two jobs, and he was the only person who drove—my mom never learned how to drive. My dad was born in 1936. He grew up as a migrant farm worker. Growing up in Austin, during the periods of segregation, there would be signs that would say, no- I think... "No dogs, no Mexicans, no Negros," and so that was kind of his experience of being back in the city after having been out there picking- picking food to feed people, essentially. So I think his experience is an interesting one because I don't think that he ever felt really welcomed in many parts of town. Even now, trying to get him to visit a new part of town—and new restaurant even—he doesn't want to."

Ivy, narrating:

"Rocio's family life prepared her to be able to do the activism she does in insightful ways. For example, she helped coordinate visitors to the women's immigrant detention center here, deceptively called the "Hutto Residential Center," if you're shopping for a prison to help shut down. And to help dismantle the school to prison pipeline, she organized with the community to get Austin school officials to cease discretionary suspensions for kids Pre-K to second grade."

Ivy, hiking with Rocio:

"So did you grow up... did your dad take you outdoors? Did you grow up going outside in places like this?"

Rocio, hiking with Ivy:

"Not really. Um. We would go to some of the city parks. I have a lot of memories of going to Garrison Park down south, and I think my- my dad's idea was that he would stick us in the pool and, somehow, we would automatically learn how to swim. That did not happen. So I I didn't- I never learned how to swim. That's still a skill that I'm practicing. I can, you know, kind of doggy paddle. I took my first adult swimming lessons last summer. Which were very humbling. [Rocio laughs] And I'm going to sign up for another round of classes this summer again."

Ivy:

"Good for you because I hate being humbled."

Ivy, narrating:

“Rocio’s dedicated to a relationship with nature, even though she didn’t grow up with it. She’s taking swimming lessons! That’s commitment! You have to put your face in the water! Water that is full of piss, from all ages... You know who you are.

It’s not great to find out that neither of us are good swimmers right at this moment, by the way. Technically, there was a little sign that said the trail was closed... But you can’t close the woods. You can’t even close Waffle House! You know how Texans and a lot of southerners will chit-chat with strangers about the weather? We were all doing that about the trail we all weren’t supposed to be on.”

Rocio, hiking with Ivy, talking to strangers:

“Hi!”

Trail Strangers (muffled):

“It’s wet / Lots of water, huh!”

Rocio:

“It is, yeah.”

Trail Strangers (muffled):

“Yeah, this is definitely why it’s closed. Geez!”

Rocio and Ivy:

“Yeah. Mhm. Right.”

Trail Strangers (muffled):

“It’s crazy!”

Ivy:

“Oh, so this is not normal? Okay.”

Rocio:

“No. So I’m assuming that probably a good chunk of this area was underwater, because all of the brush got pushed over there, and you kind of can see the flow of water. And the way that it dragged down the plant.”

Ivy:

“Oh, I wouldn’t have even noticed ‘cause I’m so busy staring at my feet.”

Ivy, narrating:

“I didn’t know what at the time, but actually, it was closed because, in all the flash flooding, someone got swept away and had just been found dead in the lake—which is horrible.”

{{Scientific electronic music fades in}}

Ivy, narrating (cont.):

“If I had known this, I might not have gone down the trail at all. But once I found out, I obsessed about how to survive a flood, of course. Flash floods could happen to anyone! Climate change is causing flash flooding to be more and more common all over the world. Check your weather conditions before you go out—I did not do that.

Here's a few key things to look out for: sudden change in the water speed (that means there's a lot of water). If the water starts looking like chocolate milk, that means it's flooding the banks. And if you see either of these signs, get the fuck out! Turn around the way you came, and get to higher ground.”

{{Scientific electronic music fades out}}

Ivy, narrating:

“Imagine how it was for me. I'm a southerner who actually RSVP's to events with “God willing and the creek don't rise!” If you're not Southern, that means “Count me in! I'll be there, unless there's a flood or a rapture.” In one ear, Rocio's opening up about some of the darkest periods in her life because I wanted to understand how someone with such a similar background to me could end up y'know... out here.

But on the other ear, the water's sounding gnarly. I'm trying not to fall in while I'm also trying to avoid emotionally processing what Rocio has to say because my parents made me that way.

So this is how Rocio—who has encouraged countless women like me to go outdoors—got outside herself.”

Rocio, hiking with Ivy:

“Struggled with depression for a very long time since I was a little kid. I think a lot of that had to do with an awareness of the environment that we were growing up in and, kind of, white supremacy as a culture, and the messages that it fed me about, kind of, my sense of self worth and value.

When I was in my second year of college, I developed an eating disorder. I couldn't afford to go see a specialist in eating disorders, so it was kind of a process that I had to take on my own, as far as finding ways to heal and to cope with it. And the outdoors kind of became that for me.

Maybe two or three years after I reached out and asked for help and kind of started my path to recovery, I started taking walks around the Town Lake Trail, now the Lady Bird Lake Trail. And I think in those moments, I just felt really at peace. I felt like all of the negative self talk that was in my head, all that chatter, was gone when I was out there walking.”

{{Somber, reflective electronic music plays}}

Ivy, narrating:

"I know walking to clear your head is a thing people do. Sometimes I go stress shopping to walk off an existential crisis. But I'm out here walking with her, and I am not experiencing peace. However, I am also not experiencing negative thoughts about myself either. I am experiencing heightened levels of situational awareness. And I can absolutely see how, in the darkest times of my life, that kind of self preservation energy is preferable to something more destructive."

Rocio, hiking with Ivy:

"One day, I decided that I wanted to try running the trail. It was a trail that I normally just walked, but I decided, no, well, what if I- what if I run this time. And I finally ran my first half marathon a couple of years ago. To me, it's all connected because I think being- being outside and spending time in nature, um, it was about finding my strength and, I think, finding my power. And both hiking and- and running, to me, are all a part of that. Just kind of proving to myself that I am capable of doing these things, that I'm resilient, and even when I- when I think I'm crazy sometimes for wanting to run these distances, um, I feel like it's... Yeah, it's just a beautiful experience. A painful one! But also beautiful."

Ivy, hiking with Rocio:

"I mean, I think you are a little bit of crazy, right? [Rocio laughs] I also don't think there's anything wrong with being a little crazy."

Rocio:

"It's true too. [Rocio and Ivy laugh]"

Ivy:

"I think that is crazy to just, like, want to do that for fun. Uh, but there's plenty of things that I do and stuff that people just find inexplicable."

Rocio:

"I think we all do questionable things."

Ivy:

"Right, yeah. And yours is, like, marathon."

[Rocio and Ivy laugh]

Rocio:

"Yeah. Oh man, the water looks amazing."

{{A river gently babbles}}

Ivy, narrating:

“Hm... The water did look amazing. It was crashing and leaping rocks. The rocks we were walking on had pock marks and grooves carved into them. So water beats rock around here. There's no game called “Rock, Paper, Water” because water always eventually wins.

But Rocio! Woah. Rocio's not selling anything or trying to get me to validate the things she likes to do, which you might expect. She didn't go into some nature program to manage eating disorders. She didn't put any expectation on nature. It just did it. She, and her body, and her eating disorder had it out on the trails and came out on the same team. I'm not really grasping yet how that happened, but I'm so glad it did. I can see why people told me to go talk to her. A lot of people talk to her when they're curious about going outside. When we come back, Rocio raises the stakes on my quest to go camping.”

{{Fun bouncy music with electronics fades in}}

Rocio, in a clip:

“Outdoors white culture, I would say, um, gets really annoying because there are all these ideas about what you should have, what you should wear...”

{{Fun bouncy music with electronics fades out}}

{{Rhythmic drum beats; cymbal crash}}

Ivy, narrating:

“Rocio Villalobos and I have been hiking for a little more than half an hour at this point. I've been looking for a quieter path, but we're still close to the water. I think the trail might hug a creek on purpose? Hmm... I guess that's why it's called the Barton Creek Greenbelt. Okay—yeah, okay, that makes sense when you say it out loud.

But as the creek winds up, at least the water has space and the volume gets more and more manageable. Er- like the vol- not- the sound, not like the volume. The sound of the water, but the volume is the same (because volume doesn't change with container), but the sound is like... Oh, alright, this is- this is not a math class. Ok.

I relax a little. And we even stop every once in a while to take pictures for the ‘gram. When Rocio started posting pictures on our social media about her races and camping trips, her friends noticed.”

Rocio, hiking with Ivy:

“I would post about our hiking trips and camping trips on social media, and I eventually had a lot of women—of color in particular—reach out to me and tell me that they were interested in doing these things, but that they didn't know anybody else that was into these things. And they didn't want to do them by themselves. Or, that they didn't know how to do these things and wanted some help in getting out there.”

Ivy, hiking with Rocio:

“So I wasn't special. You're like, “Yeah, I knew this was coming. Because every woman of color in Austin that goes outdoors has emailed me.”

Rocio:

“[Rocio laughs] Not quite-”

Ivy:

“Welcome to the jungle.”

Rocio:

“But one thing that I did find is that, um, of the people that reached out to me about wanting to have a community of other people of color, and other women of color, doing things outside, like, a lot of them also have a tremendous amount of knowledge about plants that I don't have. And so it's been a process of teaching each other some of these skills and looking- looking to each other as experts instead of looking to- to men, to white men, as kind of the holders of this knowledge alone. [Ivy giggles] I know that you- you are more capable than you probably give yourself credit for.”

Ivy, narrating:

“Rocio has achieved something in her spare time that the outdoor industry has been trying to do with “diversity initiatives”. The thing about diversity initiatives is that they always assume something's missing from the people who are missing from that space. [Posh British accent] “Oh, they just don't have our knowledge. We should educate them. They don't have our money; we shall determine who is deserving of our charity.” It's never about what's wrong with the gatekeepers.

By the time friends and friends of friends were seeing her social media posts and asking about them, the only thing she thought BIPOC women were missing was a mansplain-free community to go outdoors with. Now, she's an ambassador for native women's wilderness. They don't call her an expedition leader or an outdoor expert, but she's got me out here! Still! Just walkin'! Just... to walk!

And I'm going with it! Because I am learning things. And... I don't know the way out!”

{{[Electronic music fades into a breakdown]}}

Rocio, hiking with Ivy:

“Yeah, I just had a chance to watch the Kickstarter video. It was great.”

[Rocio laughs]

Ivy, narrating:

“Rocio’s talking about a Kickstarter video my brother and I made to fund the recording equipment for FOGO. I mentioned it last episode at REI. For those of you who haven’t seen it, let’s just say there were a lot of elements in it that I was expecting people to respond to, but I was not expecting so much feedback about... of all things... my shoes.”

Ivy, hiking with Rocio:

“In that video, I wore um, Birkenstocks. Because I live in- I’ve lived in Austin long enough, I own some now.”

Rocio:

“Haha, yeah.”

Ivy:

“And, uh, I got a lot of comments from people being like, “You’re not supposed to wear those shoes outside.””

Rocio:

“Yeah.”

Ivy:

“I did not know that. I thought that was the whole thing about Birkenstocks! All these people who wear them, they seem like they’re outdoor people, so I thought that’s what they were for.”

Rocio:

“It’s kind of interesting. And I think this is one- one dimension of, um, how the outdoors and outdoors culture-”

Ivy:

“Uh huh.”

Rocio:

“Outdoors white culture, I would say, gets really annoying because there are all these ideas about what you should have, what you should wear, that I think are really limiting. So you’ll probably mostly see people wearing boots—like these are- these are hiking boots that I actually won—and I would say close toed shoes are recommended for rocky areas, trail, just so you don’t end up stubbing- stubbing a foot, stubbing a toe. With boots in particular, it can provide a little bit more stability for your ankle, so when you’re on unstable terrain like all of these rocks, you have a little bit more support. But I think, ultimately, like I feel like people should be able to wear whatever you feel comfortable in. There are strange, strange rules, um, about what people should wear outside.”

Ivy:

“But what's strange about them is that, I feel like everyone knows them somehow. But they're not, like, posted anywhere.”

Ivy, narrating:

“I'm not wearing the Birkenstocks today because it's been rainy and those things are expensive. I'm wearing black rain boots with black Adidas leggings, uh, pink stripes down the side, black cotton tank top, a light army jacket, and lipstick!

Rocio doesn't think people should be worried about having the right gear or the best gear or like... gear. Just wear clothes! Wear what makes you happy and enjoy the time you spend outside. This is such a relief to hear, because outdoor clothes are [high pitched shout] SO! UGLY! And maybe it shouldn't matter...

the only living things who'll see you are rattlesnakes and juniper trees. But the reason I know they're ugly is because I see people wear them unironically, publicly all the time! I'm sorry, I don't think I could get approved for a business loan going around looking like that! I don't think I have Patagonia top privilege.

And you know what, when I break open the limitations on what I think of as outdoor wear, it also breaks open what I think of as outdoor experiences.

The first time I went to Vietnam was as a teenager. My parents couldn't go back until after 1995, when the US had normalized relations with Vietnam. I know this seems very old for someone with a TikTok, but I'm a simp for Gen Z, what can I say?

Of course, my parents want to do some touristy things, because they never got to travel their country. Vietnam was in two long wars, back to back, and my parents were born in one of them. So we went on a tour of waterfalls in Da Lat. I mean, it was called a tour, but now I know it was a hike, because we walked in nature. That's hiking! We didn't have sticks or special shoes, so I didn't know that it was a hike until now.

Why am I afraid of the outdoors here? Why do I have the impression that, like, camping and hiking and skiing is stuff white people do? I mean, I know skiing is but, like, this? This is just walking! When and how did white people claim walking? On earth?”

Ivy, hiking with Rocio:

“I mean, Austin's kind of known for that. Of, like, having all this like urban nature. In a place like Austin, where we have so much urban nature, do we have inequality to nature? To access to nature?”

Rocio, hiking with Ivy:

“We do. In the late 20's, one of the documents that people often reference when they're talking about the history of segregation and racism in the city is the 1928 Master Plan that forced the relocation of people of color into East Austin and created a negro district. So, if black people

wanted to get access to utilities, to sewer, to water, to schools, to parks, they had to move to the east side. A lot of time and effort went into protecting nature west of I-35. There are fewer green spaces in East Austin, and it's very much rooted in that- in that plan. And in the fact that East Austin was also zoned for industry, next to people of color, so there was toxic industry next to neighborhoods, and you see that very much reflected, and still to this day, in kind of who goes to what part of town, who feels like they're going to be welcome in certain parts of town. Um, technically, right, these are public spaces, but not everybody feels like it's for them or that they'll be safe and feel welcomed."

Ivy:

"Or like not treated with suspicion."

Rocio:

"Exactly."

Ivy:

"Hm. I guess I always thought that either—people who felt like they were so safe in nature, that they could even take children out here—uh, that they're either a little delusional or that I am maybe, like, overly vigilant. And it could also- but the third option that I had never considered is that: it is legitimately safer for them and it is legitimately comparatively more dangerous to me."

Rocio:

"Yeah."

Ivy:

"Okay. Well, great! So none of us are crazy!"

[Rocio and Ivy laugh]

Rocio:

"No, and, I mean, to this to this day, right? You know, if you- if you're a person of color and your body is perceived to be out of place—"

Ivy:

"—and you're just like barbecuing. Yeah. At the lake. Yeah."

Rocio:

"You- you know, you might have the police called on you, or you get shot. Um. You know, we don't- we don't stop being people of color when we- when we go to- to parks. So even though, I mean, we talked before about how it's partially an escape, I mean, there are other things that you can't escape, no matter what."

Ivy, narrating:

“We don't stop being people of color when we go to the park. I thought about Barbecue Becky, who was a whole meme thanks to the family she was calling 911 on. I thought of the guy who was in Central Park bird watching, Christian Cooper. A lady called 911 as a threat to him when he reminded her to keep her dog leashed. And also that's what most of us learned that bird watchers call themselves “birders”, which implies that bird is a verb that they do, not the noun they watch?”

{{Pensive chiming music fades in}}

Ivy, narrating (cont.):

“And of course, of course, I thought about Tamir Rice. And his mom.

He was 12 years old. Playing with a toy gun. At the park. We logically do not stop being people of color anywhere, but when you take your kid somewhere to play—because they have to play—you can't help but hope that they can have a recess.”

{{Pensive chiming music fades out}}

Ivy, narrating:

“We have finally found a quieter place. We've been hiking for an hour, so we sit a while on this flat rock, overlooking a wide bend in the creek. The water's leisurely here. It's not as obvious that there's been flooding unless you're looking for telltale signs on the other bank. Over here, which is higher ground, it looks like it only rained. The rock is mostly dry by now.

There have been no benches so far that I've seen and no plaques either, actually. I'm a person who reads the plaques anywhere I find one, and that's how I found some historical markers honoring early settlers and the violence they had to endure from the people they were stealing their land from... which is funny because Texas is kind of the poster child for Stand Your Ground values.

It is so surreal, pushing your kid on a swing, and then you see a plaque about some son of a bitch who got stabbed right there! Right where you're standing. Fucking Josiah! But Josiah lives and settles the land so his descendants could donate it, so my kids can go to this birthday party. Sometimes the marker mentions the indigenous group that was there before, but they never mentioned what they did to the guy who stabbed him.

But the point is, there are metaphorical and literal signs everywhere that tell Rocio she's not supposed to be in this space.

I don't think she's ignoring them. She's naming them—she's been saying the quiet part out loud this whole walk—in a way that's admirable. I am also trying to break my own cycles of intergenerational trauma. So I get that that necessitates some level of defiance. But I do it in indoor ways, through art, for example. What makes Rocio stay recreating like this?”

Rocio, hiking with Ivy:

“One thing that I think about too, is the area where Barton Springs is located and, um, some of the springs in San Marcos, those are the sites of, kind of, the earliest evidence of human existence in what is now North America.”

Ivy, hiking with Rocio:

“Oh.”

Rocio:

“So just kind of thinking that, um, people have been coming to this area- people have been coming to Barton Springs for over 10,000 years. I think in San Marcos, it's over 12,000 years. There's something about that that also feels really... grounding. Like, this has been a place of importance and significance for countless numbers of people over thousands of years. You know, now I am a part of that, too.”

Ivy, narrating:

“While she's telling me this, that people have been going to this creek for 10,000 years, I can imagine how ancient moms used this exact spot. Like, over there where there's more dirt instead of rock: that's a safe place for the kids to play and wash up. And a few yards downstream around the bend, that's the mom hangout spot. The faster water is good for laundry. This overwhelming continuity washes over me. The universality of needing to wear your kids out. How sweet is the sound of their splashing and laughing when you're washing dishes after dinner. White people didn't invent this trail. They just put the sign on it.”

Ivy, hiking with Rocio:

“Ah, thanks for letting me sit for a while.”

Rocio, hiking with Ivy:

“Yeah.”

Ivy:

“I'm sweating so much. [Ivy laughs] I'm like, I feel safe from this perch because I'm not moving. And if I'm not moving, I can't break any bones.

So tell me what you mean by, then. Like, healing.”

Rocio:

“Both of my parents' grandparents were indigenous people from different groups, and the message that is very blatant in Mexico, to this day, is that to be indigenous and to be black is something that should be erased and suppressed. And, um, I think that that's very much a part of my family's history. My grandparents didn't pass down any of their language, any of their, you know, kind of customs and ways of being and knowing—you know, whether it's plants or food medicine—they didn't really pass very much of that down to their kids because they felt like it was something that they needed to let go of.

I think our ancestors had a different kind of relationship with the land, and it's not a history that's been positive for many folks. When our book club met up, you know, one person shared a story about how, even though they do work that is related to the outdoors and help with the camp, you know, it's hard for them to understand why people are interested in doing something like a thru hike, where you're hiking for days on end, hundreds of miles, because she thinks of her mom who journeyed for hundreds of miles to cross the border from South America.

I think that can feel especially hard for, um, kids of immigrants to where you know, you don't really feel like you necessarily have a place that you can call home or that feels like home. No, you are, in some ways, without land because of your family's history of movement.”

Ivy, narrating:

“When Rocio goes camping, she is reclaiming a relationship with the land that was taken from her. And I recognize that she's right, that that happened to me too, as a child of diaspora. She doesn't go out there because it's so welcoming. She goes out there, even though she can feel unwelcome, because it's hers. She's taking me here, because she wants me to know, it's mine too.

When people say someone immigrated with nothing, people think they mean like, no money, no belongings. But we also mean, without our old professions, without our old neighbors, or pets. Without our family graves or fresh coconuts. We mean that, from now on, for generations, every birth or marriage will be tinged with sadness for the people we're missing. And apparently, we leave behind, too, a confidence and familiarity with our natural surroundings.

But I want my children to have that confidence here. I mean, I want them to have the confidence of Josiah anywhere they go. It's not that I want them to be white, do you know what I mean? I want them to be safe. I don't think you should have to be white to be safe out here. Or anywhere.”

{{Hopeful, calm electronic music fades in}}

Ivy, narrating (cont.):

“So, I try. I sit there with her, trying to become comfortable on this rock. I finally do my first sit spot! Because that's my work, at this point in history. The generation before me, their work was to survive. My work is to heal so the next generation can thrive. I want more than literally anything for the next generation to thrive.”

{{Hopeful, calm electronic music fades out}}

Rocio, hiking with Ivy:

“No, like this. I take a moment, and when I'm by myself, I just stay in silence and listen to the water that's moving down the creek. Or I listen to the birds that are singing.”

[A long beat of silence. Birds chirp.]

Ivy, hiking with Rocio:

“So is it kind of like, when you're out here, it's a break from the people out there?”

Rocio:

“In part.”

Ivy:

“Okay.”

Rocio:

“In part, yeah.”

Ivy, relaxed now:

“Okay, I feel that. From this perch, I do feel relatively safe.”

Rocio:

“Yeah.”

Ivy:

“I don't feel like floodwaters are gonna come get me. I feel like my back's up against a rock, so no animal's gonna jump out from behind me.”

Rocio:

“Yeah.”

Ivy:

“So maybe right now, I feel that too.”

{{Peaceful, serene ambient music plays. Crickets chirp.}}

Ivy, narrating:

“The way back out feels a lot easier than the way in was. It took a little more than 20 minutes to get back to our cars. We just headed toward the loud water noise, and then we followed the water back up to where we entered the Greenbelt. Luckily, the little “trail closed” sign let me know exactly where that entrance was. We stopped to pet some cute puppies. We saw a dude on a unicycle. We talked about Marvel movies. I think the walk back out was a taste of what outdoor people mean when they say they're going on a hike with a friend. I was tired and sweaty, but unscathed. In fact, most of the trail is wide enough for a half dozen people. I don't think a single plant touched me once!

So Rocio did make my quest to go camping a little easier. Hiking is critical to being able to go camping—you can't just drive place to place out there. But something she made a little harder?

Well, I knew to break the cycles of intergenerational trauma—because, you know, I was just a few years off from being a refugee myself—I knew I'd have to do things like break a cycle of poverty and decolonize our stories, learn to raise my children in ways I've never seen before.

Parenthood is a very scary thing to do with so little certainty. I did not have the reclamation of a whole relationship with nature on my to do list! And I am already a very stressed out mom!”

{{FOGO Theme Music: fun bouncy music with electronics fades in}}

Ivy, narrating:

“So next time on FOGO, I'm going off the grid. Out in the Texas thicket, where there is no trail. If this must be done... I guess I'm doin' it!”

Ivy, in a clip:

“Easy. In fact, I'm like having a grand old time drivin' up these curvy roads.”

Male voice, in the same clip:

“Uh huh. And then you get here, you're immediately faced with the woods.”

Ivy, in a clip (cont.):

“And then I got in- and then I got in here, and uh- and my- my confidence I-lagged.”

Ivy, reading end credits:

“FOGO: Fear of Going Outside is a Spotify Sound Up Series and was workshopped as part of the Spotify Sound Up Podcast Accelerator Program.

We are producing FOGO in a space that was and still is home to many Indigenous people. We acknowledge that the land on which we gather and create is the traditional territory of Tonkawa, Lipan-Apache, Karankawa, Comanche, Jumano, and Coahuiltecan people. We also want to acknowledge and give respect to the various Indigenous people and nations who live in the land we now call Texas. We recognize Indigenous people regardless of federal or state recognition, and we understand: this list is not exhaustive. There are names and nations of people that history is still working to recover and include. We are grateful for the opportunity to work in the community, and on this territory.

FOGO is written, hosted, and produced by me, Ivy Le, and produced and edited by Myrriah Gossett.

Our theme song and original music is composed by Michelangelo Rodriguez.

FOGO is Engineered and Mixed by Robyn Edgar, with additional story editing by Aira Juliet and Minda Wei. Production support by Benjamin Grosse-Siestrup.

FOGO's board of advisors is Jeff Zhao and Martin Thomas.

You should totally follow Rocio on Instagram @thexicanaexplorer. Xicana with an X. Links in the shownotes.

From Spotify, our Executive Producers are Gina Delvac, Candace Manriquez Wrenn, Andrea Silenzi, Natalie Tulloch, and Jane Zumwalt.

Special thanks to Brian Marquis, Teal Kratky, Yasmeeen Afifi and Shirley Ramos for production support.

Listen to FOGO: Fear of Going Outside for free on Spotify!

You can follow me on Twitter and TikTok @IvyLeWithOneE, the phrase all spelled out or on Facebook and Instagram @fogopodcast where I will post pictures of some of those plaques and some pictures from the hike.

Go to fogopodcast.com for the newsletter and transcripts! And merch! Get some merch!"

Ivy, hiking with Rocio:

"I love to look at rocks from the safety, inside my vehicle... with air conditioning and electricity and music of my choosing."

Rocio, hiking with Ivy:

"But then that was part of the premise of Jurassic Park, and look at how that turned out."

Ivy:

"Exactly! So really you should just stay home."