

"Hey, get out of here, they're gonna shoot, get out!"

"In that moment I thought that it was a stick, then I saw people running and I realized that it was a gun. Some malandros [thugs] were looking for the other one. They were hiding behind the plaza and I was coming, but since they already know me and I have seen them grow up, I stood by and told them: 'What's up? I'm going home', so they told me: 'Go Julia, you can pass!', because I know them, and when I was arriving, some friends were there fixing up their cars and between my teeth I said: 'Hey, get out of here, they're gonna shoot, get out!' and so they turned around and saw that the band was coming with the guns and they wanted to come inside. They trashed cars, broke windows, put holes in the cars."

Gun violence is around the corner in many Venezuelan barrios. Julia has gone through multiple of these experiences throughout her life. She has known many malandros, since they were kids, and she has seen them all die. But somethings do change. Their weapons has become bigger and more dangerous with time. You better run, hide and take cover: They're gonna shoot!

"En ese momento yo pensé que era un palo, cuando veo que la gente corre fue cuando me dí cuenta que era un arma. Unos malandros estaban buscando al otro. Estaban escondidos detrás de la placita y yo venía, pero como ellos ya me conocen yo los he visto crecer yo me paré así y les dije '¿qué pasa? Voy para mi casa', entonces me dijeron '¡Pasa Julia, pasa!', porque yo los conozco, y entonces cuando venía estaban unos amigos acomodando sus carros y entre dientes les dije 'miren quítense, quítense, que van a disparar quítense, quítense' y ellos voltearon y vieron que venían con las pistolas y ellos se querían meter. Han destrozado carros, han quebrado vidrios, le han hecho huecos a los carros."

La violencia armada se encuentra a la vuelta de la esquina en muchos barrios venezolanos. Julia ha pasado por varias de estas experiencias a lo largo de su vida. Ella ha conocido a muchos malandros, desde que eran niños, y los ha visto morir a todos. Pero algunas cosas cambian. Sus armas se han vuelto más grandes y más peligrosas con el tiempo. Será mejor que corras, te escondas y te cubras: ¡Van a disparar!