



## THE COMEBACK PART 2 BY JORDANA RUNNE

The most beautiful part of teaching the children in Tikiamp is the deep bond that has developed between them and our family. The kids love talking to us, playing with us, and holding our hands when we come. At one time, it seemed trendy for the kids to hang onto Enoch's arms like a tree and tackle him! They always begged us to play with them after class, asked us when we were coming back, and said things like, "Come tomorrow!" They are so precious.

Sadly, though, kids in the Mosquitia, as unique and wonderful as they are, are too often treated

like they aren't worth much. The good thing is we have the privilege of giving them love and, in so doing, teaching them how to love. And you know, they end up showering us with love! An example is the story of one of my students, Milena.

Milena is a slender girl about eleven years old with straight black hair and big black eyes. Sadly, her mother is a drunk, and her grandmother, who is in charge of her, doesn't want to send her to school, so she is illiterate. Likely, she is the household servant, doing the chores around the house and caring for younger family members. Worse yet,

there are rumors that her mother uses her to make money for a drink. Obviously, she is not treated well and is starved for love. So, we decided to bring Milena gifts of clothes, books, and other items and ensured she knew we were there for her and loved her. She responded beautifully!

In the Miskito culture, we, the “rich gringos,” are generally seen as being fountains of money, and they, the poor ones, are entitled to get all they can from us. But Milena was different. Besides being adorably sweet and loving towards me, she did something strange. One day, when I came to teach, Milena, though very poor and only a young girl, gave me a candy, followed by more in subsequent visits. My heart was warmed and surprised by this touching thankfulness and sacrifice. Those little candies have become some of my most treasured gifts, not because of the objects themselves but because of Milena’s grateful heart.

In Acts 20:35, the Bible says, “...remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” This is true! The laughter and smiles, caresses, and simple acts of gratitude the children of Tikiamp have shown are the most beautiful payment for any sacrifices we may have made in reaching them. If you are looking for true joy and fulfillment, I would consider service. Yes, there may be times when your efforts seem in vain, but when the rewards come, they are golden.



**Your AWA Missionary serving with her family,  
The Runnes, at the AWA Central America  
Mission Project:**



**Jordana Runne**