

MAMÁ SEFI'S TRIP TO THE TEMPLE

One day while I was in the Mexico Mission office back in the 1940s, a sister arrived from the little town of Ozumba, located at the foot of Popocatepetl, an active volcano about 43 miles (70 km) southeast of Mexico City. We all knew her. Her name was Mamá Sefi.

The full-time missionaries lived in her little adobe home, where she always kept a room just for them. Mamá Sefi, not even five feet (1.5 m) tall, earned her livelihood by selling fruit in the marketplaces of towns around Ozumba. Each town had a different market day, and she went to each market to sell her fruit.

She came into the mission office that day carrying a large flour sack. It was full of *tostones*, silver half-peso coins she had saved through the years. Some of the pieces had come from the days of Porfirio Díaz, who ruled Mexico from 1884 to 1911. Mamá Sefi had traveled from Ozumba to the mission home by bus with her sack of money. She told President Arwell L. Pierce she had been saving for many years so she could travel to the Salt Lake Temple to receive her endowment.

She obtained permission to leave the country, a missionary loaned her a suitcase, and we took her to the train. President Pierce telephoned someone in El Paso, Texas, to meet the train across the U.S. border and to put Mamá Sefi on a bus for Salt Lake City. Members of the Spanish branch in Salt

Lake City were to meet the bus, take care of her housing needs, and help her at the temple.

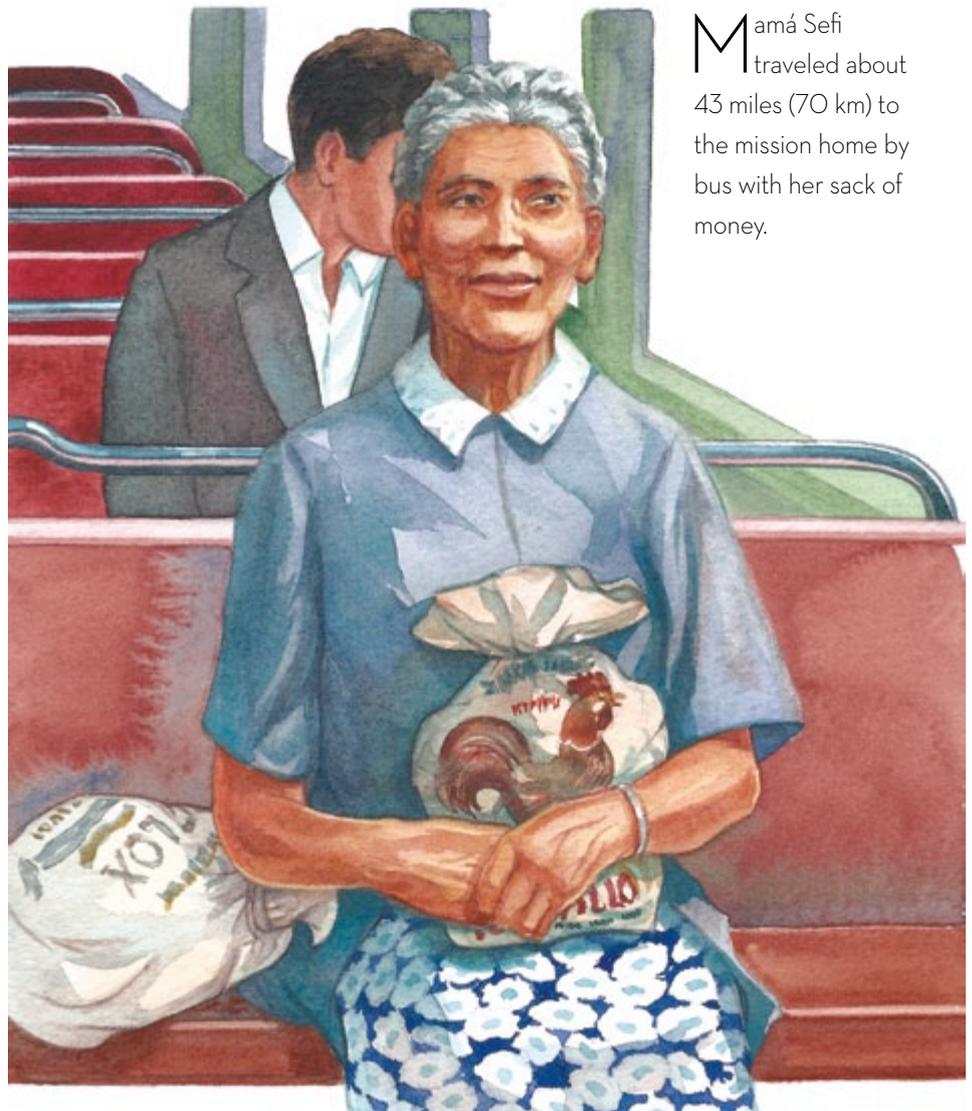
A few weeks later, Mamá Sefi returned to Mexico City and then home to Ozumba. She had made the long journey safely. She then resumed selling fruit in the marketplaces.

Mamá Sefi did not speak English, so we asked her how she had managed to order food while traveling by bus from El Paso to Salt Lake City—a trip

of several days. She said someone had taught her how to say “apple pie” in English, so every time the bus stopped for meals, she would order apple pie.

Because those were the only words she knew in English, she lived on apple pie during her stateside bus travel—going *and* coming. But Mamá Sefi didn't mind. Rather, she returned grateful for and radiant from her experience in the temple. ■

Betty Ventura, Utah, USA



Mamá Sefi traveled about 43 miles (70 km) to the mission home by bus with her sack of money.