Before reading

Instructions. Read the meaning of the following words and expressions before going through the reading below:

- **Snap out of something**: to suddenly recover from an undesirable condition.
- **Black out (verb):** To lose consciousness, to faint.
- **Drown (verb):** to die because you are underwater and cannot breathe, or to kill someone in this way.
- **Kidnap (verb):** to take someone away using force.
- **Approach (verb):** to come close in distance or time.
- **Regret (verb):** to feel sorry about a situation, especially something that you wish you hadn't done.
- **Weep (verb)**: to cry usually because you are extremely sad

La Llorona



La Llorona, the weeping woman, is an urban legend that is well known throughout Mexico and other Latin American countries. This is the background of this legend: a young woman, intended on keeping the man she loved but who did not want to bear the responsibility of being a father, she decided to take her two children to a nearby river and drowned them. She approached that man to bring him the news of how he did not longer have to worry of the burden that were her children. The man rejected this woman for considering her insane, sending her to a state of depression and eventually she killed herself as she could not live with the regret of killing her children. Thereafter, people say she was doomed to haunt the land in search of her dead children, never to be re-united with them. Today, people hear this woman often weeping which is where her name derives from. Other variations say that the man was, actually, the children's father, and he left the woman for a rich woman. People also say that she kidnaps wandering or misbehaved children.

There is a slight variation of the Legend of La Llorona that stems from the country of Honduras. Here, it is said that the woman's children drowned of their own (by accident) while the woman was washing their clothes in the river. Because she was not paying attention to the kids, they drowned and, as she should, blamed nobody but herself.

My brother-in-law recounts a story of his encounter with La Llorona when in Honduras.

"I was about 10 years-old when I was playing hide-and-seek with some friends and my little sister. I thought it was a good idea to hide in the woods by the Rio Choluteca (the Choluteca River) as the sun, being the fall, was setting and they wouldn't look for me there. It wasn't quite dark; however, I was

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able to make my way near the river. I stayed in the woods and took cover behind a Tamarindo Tree. As I was taking cover, I started to hear what sounded like a woman crying. I looked towards the river and saw her there. She had her back to me, concealing her face with her long, dark, wet hair, but I could see that she was using the river to wash what looked like child's clothing. Although I could not see her face, I could hear her calling my name and I slowly approached her without fully understanding why I was doing so. Closer and closer I got, the sound of her weeping growing louder. Then, for reasons I can't explain, I snapped out of it and realized, to some extent, what was happening. I remember some people had told me to never turn my back to her or she could take my soul when least expected and the only way to escape from her was to walk backwards away from her. And so I did. I walked and I walked, then I blacked out (fainted). The only thing I can remember after that was being home with no recollection of how I got there".

It was at this moment where his sister intervened and explains what happened during that blackout.

"Me and a couple of friends finally found him. But when we did so, he did not look like himself. He looked as if frozen or paralyzed with fear. We tried to snap him out of it, but he would not respond. We started to get scared and decided that it would be best if we all carried him out of there as it was almost dark, and we didn't want to get lost in the woods. It wasn't until we got home when he snapped out of it with no recollection of what happened. The last thing he could remember was the woman by the river."

Taken and adapted from: https://www.thefoodieskitchen.com/2012/10/29/guatemalan-folklore-la-llorona-urban-legend/

AFTER READING:

Instructions. Drag and drop the events of this person's anecdote in the correct chronological order:

_____He snaped out of this trance state.

_____He fainted and didn't remember anything after that.

_____His sister saw him laying near the river and try to snap him out, but she couldn't in that moment.

_____While this woman was calling him and washing clothes in the river, he felt the unconscious necessity to approach her.

_____He was playing hide and seek, and he found a place to hide near the river.

_____His sister and friends took him home, and he woke up there.

_____While he was hiding from his friends, he saw a woman calling his name.

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Instructions. What are the two versions of this Latin America story? Discuss with your classmates.

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