

CHAPTER DESCRIPTIONS

Chapter One: Out of the Ashes of Casa Blanca

Meet my family. My grandfather and beautiful grandmother, among them, my father, who at the age of sixteen, ventured to the United States for work. Then, how he met my mother, and reunited with his parents once more.

My mother was always in the kitchen with my sisters. My brothers: the older and the younger. My father's ingenuity to provide for our family never ceased and his love for the Lord are just the beginning of my story.

Chapter Two: The Convention of 1945

My father was well liked among the ministry. He had many experiences among the various doctrines. It was until he was persuaded by a friend to attend the great convention in 1945 of the Church of God of Prophecy that his life would forever be changed. All those who became a member that night threw their credentials to the ground. They were all moved, but there was a mistake that would forevermore affect the Church of God of Prophecy.

Chapter Three: Growing Up

When I was young, I often asked my father to read the scriptures to me. Even though I was young and did not know how to read, I remember my father reading my favorite verse to me over and over.

Chapter Four: That Infelicitous Day

My parents always trusted the LORD to heal me from my illnesses. It was during the time of an orange harvest where I became very ill. For time my body was drenched in sweat from fever, I could hardly breathe and I didn't eat—my father prayed.

Chapter Five: Learning from the Fruit Trees

As a young child I always remember my mother having many proverbs. She was in charge of discipline. She was strict, yet an affectionate woman. It was from the trees that we learned our lessons “bottoms up”.

Chapter Six: Day of the Massacre

In my existence I witnessed a great amount of violence. This was just life as I knew it, merciless, cold murders. A wedding ended in chaos—revenge. From my hiding spot behind a pepper tree I saw brutality and panic. There was no order in Casa Blanca only the members of the gangs could get away with such. Twenty-four deaths would be the price to pay for one man’s moment of selfish passion.

Chapter Seven: The Day I Died

When my father wanted to talk to me this particular day I thought I was in for it. It was time we had a talk, but not like any other. Like always my parents put my health in the hands of the LORD. What my father told me about my death had me shaken up. What the Lord did for me at that age only inspired to become closer to Him. Who was I really in the eyes of the LORD?

Chapter Eight: Cruel Moments

The true criminals of Casa Blanca always seemed to slip through the hands of the law. Another day, another murder I witnessed. These moments—cruel.

Chapter Nine: My Eyes Were Healed

I did not allow gang violence to interfere with my love for the LORD. Ordinary days in Casa Blanca were rare; this day was calm and quiet, as for me an extraordinary event occurred. See, I was mocked for this ailment I had. I asked God for his help, and God answered.

Chapter Ten: Black Horse

A dispute between my brother John, who became a head figure of violence, versus a leader of another gang member. Close in strength, outnumbered and without a weapon was what my brother faced—alone.

Chapter Eleven: Everyday Violence

In the midst of violence I heard a sweet whisper in my soul. My love for the LORD was continuously increasing, but with the way things were in Casa Blanca, I really had to prove that I could be a loner, that I didn't need to be in a gang to survive. I had to learn how to defend myself and with the advice from my brother I began to take action. That was what kept me alive to spread the Word of Christ to those who would listen. It was until John hit me that he experienced something that changed his life.

Chapter Twelve: Gang Wars

Many people in Casa Blanca never reached their twentieth birthday; with twelve gangs in the community it was hard and dangerous. Their methods of disposal were harsh, to put it lightly. This really made the citizens angry and scared, something had to be done.

Chapter Thirteen: Beyond Outer Limits

Outside of the gangs and violence, I was able to remain a loner. It was time for another harvest and another event. What I saw, what I heard happened to me a total of seven times. I can only describe what I saw, because I was caused to forget what I heard. The things I experienced were out of this world, really.

Chapter Fourteen: My Encounter with the Sempiternal God

When I was fourteen years old I decided to stay home instead of going to the grocery store with my family. It was then that I had my encounter with God. The occurrence really changed me. It was like I was a new person and everyone had to know.

Chapter Fifteen: My Stammering Problem

Witnessing to people about Christ was difficult when I could barely speak, I stammered so much. Nonetheless, I did my best. I cried out to God to heal me from my problem.

Chapter Sixteen: My Problem of How to Read

I missed quite a bit of school, children of the harvest workers often did. I didn't know how to read, and I was desperate to learn so that I could read the Word of God. I believed that He would help me. He did.

Chapter Seventeen: Tiny Bug

Money isn't always everything. Bible school was something that was in the grasp of my hands, but I was denied because of "financial issues". For that reason it was the first time I ever asked God to punish someone that was very close to me.

Chapter Eighteen: Became a Member

The battles that I fought on the streets of Casa Blanca were nothing compared to the battles against sin. I became a member of the Church of God of Prophecy where my father was the one that administer the oath. There was nothing that stopped me from witnessing, not even when the gang members mocked me.

Chapter Nineteen: Broken Engine

I took an impromptu trip to Woodlake, California—I didn't even tell my parents. The trip was smooth until the engine broke. A scripture came to my mind and it was through that that I was able to continue my journey, with a broken engine. Along the way I made some stops and had a miraculous adventure.

Chapter Twenty: A Dream within A Dream

A dream I had that led me to an eerie, bizarre dream.

Chapter Twenty-One: The Betrayal

Part of my life as I started in the ministry. I wanted nothing more than to serve the LORD, and to witness to people, I was good at what I did, and others knew this. I could have had the pastoral position that was opening, but because of greed a plan was made so that my preaching partners and I would be “unavailable”. With wondrous detours along the way and my adventure of getting “married” is one that I will, sadly, not forget.

Chapter Twenty-Two: The Placentia Incident

My interesting experience one day while I was working at an avocado packing house.