

My Autobiography
No Way Out, No Choice?
By Francis A. Sepulveda

Francis, why did you get raped at the age of three. ...My earliest childhood memory of pain, which were many.... My first traumatic experience had me talking to myself, I was only three years old. I was in my babysitters house and she left me long with her son who was fifteen years old at the time. He raped me, I could not fight him off, and I was so embarrassed and confused. I thought that I did something wrong, I did not tell my Mother, I thought that she would really spank me if she knew. I kept saying to myself, like a mantra: "I can't wait till this is over." For a little while I had nightmares and I would wake up in the middle of the night in a puddle of sweat. My three year-old self felt unsafe, confused, and unprotected.

When I was five years old my Mother told me: "Do not go outside, there are bad kids out there, I don not want you with them." But watching them play from my window, and wishing that I can also play ball and run with them, it left me making a tough decision. I knew that my Mother was going to whip my ass, but I thought it was worth it. This was the confrontation that I had to face. My Mother would come home from a sixteen hour shift every midnight, get information that I snuck out of the house to go out and play. So while I am sleeping, she would put a pillow over my face smothering me as if she was going to kill me. Then she said: "I told you that I was going to kill you with this pillow if you went outside." I was scared and stayed awake all night worrying, I could not go to sleep, thinking, my Mother is really going to kill me! I did not know if I was going to live or die. I was a nervous and frightened kid, and often I would urinate on myself when my Mother would violently scream at me or beat me like I was a savage. Again, I kept repeating my mantra: "I can't wait till this is over."

At the age of eight, I was getting a slew of ass-whippings, three to five a week, on a bad week six to seven. I wondered if Mother knew I was a human being? One evening I was playing with a toy, and my Mother would shout, "Francis take a shower." I would reply, "just a minute," time would pass, like five minutes, I was really into the toy and forgot to take a shower. My Mother came over and snatched the toy out of my hand and smashed it on my head. Blood started pouring out of my head, meanwhile I'm saying, "I can't wait till this is over." Then what made it worse was that my family and I moved to the suburbs, supposedly to make a better life, yeah right! Imagine that! We lived in a predominantly white neighborhood where I thought I was ending one form

of abuse, but in fact I was entering into a new form. As a Dominican American child in an all-white neighborhood I was often called “nigger.” This is where I began to develop P.T.S.D. (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). I was being chased from my house to school back and forth, chased from my house to the convenient store almost every day. Most of the time I would get beat up real bad. In school I used to day-dream a lot, plus I had A.D.D. (Attention Deficit Disorder) back then I did not even know what this P.T.S.D. or A.D.D. was.

In life my biggest question is why me? There are many days that I find myself drifting off into deep thoughts of my first encounter with pain. Like clock-work I would ask myself, why me ...? Francis, why did all of this happen to you at the age of three? You were only a little child and could not explain or find a name for my spacing out and not being able to focus. I just know that I had issues, that I was strange. Even now I’m considered as the odd one, I watched no sports and have conversations with myself on the regular. I’ve talked to myself, I just don’t answer back (smile). According to my Mother, I was bad and so she sent me to a boarding school in the Dominican Republic. It was rough, I went through a culture shock, I had a nostalgic homesick feeling. Still, it was better than being around my Mother. I finally came back to the U.S. of beautiful America to get more beatings from my Mother.

At the age of fourteen, I was told that if I did not do good in school, that my Mother was going to kill me, and did I believe my Mother would do that? Hell yeah! I was confronted with a tough decision, will I live or will I die. I chose to live, but that meant I would be an up-hill battle. Two weeks later, I came back home, because I got word that my Mother was in the hospital. Much to my surprise, she was worried and scared that something might have happened to me. She always thought the worst. When everything bad that happened to me was because of her! I did not believe that she loved me. She did not know how to go about raising a child. Her intention may have been good, but her actions did not come out good. Maybe because she was uneducated, overwhelmed from working so much, and had been wronged by so many people because of her black color and accent. I tried to come back and work things out, but that did not work out. I left the house again, but on better terms, by letting them know in advance and with notice that it was okay and that I was not holding her responsible for her past actions towards me.

At the age of seventeen, I was struggling as a man to survive. For instance, me trying to be a man I got some fake identification, and got hired removing asbestos. Good pay, but the work was very hard and it was on the graveyard shift. I was only at this job one month, because on my pay off I asked someone for a ride not knowing that

he was carrying drugs. We were stopped by Detectives. At the moment I thought we were clean, but then I saw the owner of the car trembling. A bag was retrieved from under the car seat, then all I heard was, "freeze, nobody move!!" This is the first time I have had a gun in my face. I remember saying, "I can't fucking believe this shit! Just when everything was going well I got caught up in this mess!" "I can't wait till all of this is over!," I scream again. I got arraigned, stayed all night in the police station. The next day they sent me to County Jail. Listen! Prison, back in the day was much more crazy than it is now. Way too many stabbings, everyday prison, I kept saying my mantra, "when is this going to be over." When it was time for me to go to Court, I just plead guilty to get out. But in the back of my head I knew it was not over yet. So I lost my job because of that month in jail. I now see that life has been a curse, from the beginning up to that time. I am living on the streets, I accept my fate with resignation and will remove or hurt anything or anyone that gets in my way. It is somebody's turn to take the ... why me? ... for a change, and have them have a self-talk with themselves, because I had enough.

I found a girlfriend that has two adorable children and an apartment. I moved in with them and wished the best for my new family. I took a vow that they would not suffer how I did. But one morning, my stepdaughter Janil poured some cereal in a bowl, and when she opened the refrigerator to get the gallon of milk, she noticed that there was no milk and looked at me. This hit me like a ton of bricks. I reached into my pockets, hoping to find some change or a bill, but I did not find a cent. I went to the Bodega on the corner to get a gallon of milk on credit, but the owner said no. I couldn't go back home without the milk, or some sort of food for the little ones. So I said wait a minute, there has to be something in our cabinet for me to make so they can have something to eat. So I go back home to find nothing. I ask my girlfriend Iris what happened with the money I gave you. She said, I ran into a problem, there is no money, no food, and I did not want to worry you. I was only worried about the empty stomachs and the hunger pains of Janil and Stephon. My eyes got watery and I began to cry saying, they are not going to go through what I went through. I don't want these kids to suffer, kids should only worry about school, homework, and even with that we adults should help them with that too. I cried, "Lord! When is this going to be over." I am going to feed this family one way or the other. This is when I bumped into my codefendant, and my codefendant says to me, are you willing to do a drug heist? I went along with hit, ... it blew out of proportion ... now I am here in prison doing a Second-degree life bid trying to get out, which is hard to do. So now my self talk is, "Get comfortable, and make the best out of this, because this will never be over." It is

why I try to keep a good sense of humor. We can laugh or cry! I heard that a good laugh is healthy and therapeutic. That is releases harmful toxins from your rbody, that it is good for your arteries and gives you a longer lifespan. So why not laugh about everything in life? My self-talk now is, find humor in everything.

At this time I am in prison, the worst prison that I have been in was my Mother's house, and the Warden was my Mother. Because of this lifestyle I have many flaws, imperfections, that I worked hard as we speak to get rid of. Hopefully in the next life when I reincarnate into another body. Hopefully I will convince myself to get help, and search for the truth and a way to succeed in this dog-eat-dog life, where sometimes I find myself in bacon underwear.

The End