

Gabriela A. Folgar de Shea



I was born in the town of El Progreso Guastatoya in Guatemala on November 7, 1948. I am the second child and oldest girl in the family.

My arduous and, at times, painful childhood is very well described in this book. By the age of twenty I had overcome most of my difficulties, graduating from college, getting married and becoming a schoolteacher in the coastal town of Livingston, Guatemala. Although there have been some setbacks, a divorce, many miscarriages and the death of an infant child, I have not let any of this hold me back.

In 1974, I immigrated to Canada and settled in the city of Edmonton, Alberta. As is the case with many immigrants possessing little knowledge of English I had to settle for entry-level jobs for several years: janitor, assembly line worker, and waitress. Gradually, my English improved and I was able to go back to school and this eventually allowed me to move back into a professional position. I have been working for the City of Edmonton the past nineteen years, first as a family Resource worker and now as a social worker.

This book has been in the conceptual stage for over thirty years, but it has only been in the works for the past two years. It has been very difficult to put into writing the painful events of my ordeal and the events surrounding my family life. Many evenings while writing I had to stop and thought that I could no longer continue. But continue I did and now I can see that this writing has forced me to remember details and to face issues that were long forgotten or repressed.

My next project is to translate my story into Spanish and have the book published for the Latin American market.

I have married to my present husband, Mr. David Shea, for over thirty years. He is also very knowledgeable of Guatemala and is the editor, photographer, layout designer and web master for my book.