

March 16, 2013

Hello World!

I owe my life to the man whose wife I murdered. Try wrapping your brain around that reality.

Followers of my writings know that I have worked with the adult daughters of the woman I murdered through the difficulties of reconciliation. They are courageous, kind, understanding, and heartbroken, but filled with the capacity to forgive. They have reached down into my pit of despair to hold out hands of hope. The painful irony is their mother's name is Esperanza, which in Spanish means hope.

I murdered their mother because in my inability to repay a huge drug debt (\$100,000+) I believed that she would have me or a member of my family killed. If my belief in the potential violence of that family had been correct I would be dead. After the murder, many men over the years went to the grieving husband. They offered to have me killed. The husband repeatedly said, "No. He will live with the blood he shed. I'll have none on my hands."

I am aware of this because it was shared with me by one of the daughters I spoke

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with last night on the telephone. She also expressed that she was torn inside. "I should hate you, but I enjoy talking with you. I should never want to have anything to do with you, but your openness, willingness to accept responsibility, and desire to make amends draws me to you."

The family's charity toward me makes my burden worse. I was not only wrong in choosing to kill but my reasoning to do so has proven to be groundless. My life is proof of that. I have had the privilege of apologizing in person to one of the daughters when she came to visit me. If I am ever set outside these prison walls, it is my hope that I will be given the opportunity to kneel before Hope's husband to not only apologize for killing his wife, but to thank him for my life, for the privilege of bearing this heavy burden.

Try wrapping your brain around that reality.

During the phone conversation, we also spoke of the progress I have made in writing their mother's life story; her rise from an impoverished and neglected child in Cuba to being the Queen of Cocaine in

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Los Angeles. It is finished. A copy of the manuscript is being sent to the family for their review. Its title is Killing Hope. It is a tragic pun lacking humor. The family wanted the theme to be: no good comes from the drug trade. The book is my gift to the family. All proceeds will go toward the education of Hope's grandchildren and grand nieces and nephews, who at the time of the murder, were yet to be born.

As I paused in this writing to take a sip of steaming tea, I looked out through the thick bars securing the window of my pod. It is a beautiful Saturday morning. The sun is shining brightly in a soft blue sky. In the distance, snow glistens pure white atop the Sierra Mountains. A deep sigh escapes from my lungs. It is filled with a swirling mixture of emotions. I know that God rightfully deserves all my praise for the splendor that is outside my prison window, but I have to thank the man whose wife I murdered for allowing me to see it,  
Thank you for checking in on me.

Cordially,

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Novel: A Thundering Wind  
Journal: A Year in a Life Sentence  
(Amazon.com)