

# Claudia Montes's Room.

## Here she was a victim of incestuous rape and child sex trade

My name is Claudia, violence had already appeared in my life before I was born, as my father had taken a young woman 40 years younger than him from his home to be his new partner. The memories of my first years of life are blurry, what resonates most in my head are screams mixed with the crying of my mother, sister and mine, in the face of blows, insults and threats...

My nightmare began when I was six years old... One day, upon returning from kindergarten, my father put a chair in front of one of the beds in the room, made me sit and watch him rape my older sister... What I remember most about that day is when he said "so that you learn what to do when it's your turn." I didn't understand what was happening, until a few months later.

After what happened that day, he would touch me, make me bathe with him and make me sit on his face with my legs spread... I was afraid, but through years of beating and dominance, he had raised us to listen to him without protesting or questioning it. I didn't dare tell my mother... WE LIVED IN FRONT OF A POLICE HEADQUARTERS... even they didn't help me despite seeing us leave the house with bruises, hearing screams... What could my mother do?

A couple of months later the first rape occurred, without mercy, against a 6-year-old girl who only asked him to stop, who couldn't stop crying and who was clinging her life to a single stuffed Dalmatian she had.

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The rapes happened several times a week while my mother was working. He was an elderly retired teacher, so he was most of the time at home or in a canteen. He would beat us or rape us, all in front of a police office.

The seven years came with new attackers.

His teacher friends who came home to drink alcohol, to give interviews to local media about the educational situation, those who carried me as a baby and attended some of my birthdays, they became executioners, taking part in the violations in return. of money and cases of beer, when they left they were once again respectable members of the community.

They made me drink beer so I wouldn't object or cry so much... This became my life for the next 3 years, school, violence, alcohol and rape in the afternoon. Sleeping clinging to my stuffed Dalmatian in my arms near my mother, wishing it wouldn't dawn to repeat...

My father's cruelty not only stayed within the walls of the house, it crossed them. He was accused of raping girls in a situation of extreme poverty who lived on the banks of a river near his house, the police were called and that is where they became aware of the girls he had at home, and although we were called to testify. .. he was an elderly person, so they gave him preventive "jail at home"... but they sent us home with him... so the violence did not stop...

Since he was influential, he obtained permission to move us a few blocks out of sight of the police, where everything continued with the disgusting normality that enveloped my life.

We moved again, a few more blocks where he continued until his violent death. We never realized if he had committed suicide due to the proximity of a trial or if a father took justice that never came into his own hands.

I think it was more the second, because he had everything to win in a trial where he lent money to police officers, did favors to judges and had support from the community, an "honorable" man in the face of extremely poor girls "looking for money."

When she died, I don't know how to describe it... it was a tornado of emotions, pain and relief at the same time... the desire to tell my mother everything I experienced, but at the same time I was afraid that she wouldn't believe me, and also... The others were still there, so I decided to remain silent... what I remember most about the wake and funeral is seeing my other rapists offer our condolences, and give a speech at the funeral mass saying what a good father, man and being. human that he was.

After his death, since he was the main source of income, we had a difficult time, we were almost homeless, if it weren't for a maternal relative who gave us a room for the three of us to live in. I remember sometimes having to look for clothes in the trash.

I had recurrent suicide attempts, I hit myself, injured myself, I stopped eating, I didn't want to go to school and I tried to take my life at the slightest chance, until something important happened in my life at the age of 14, I decided that I wanted to help , so I started volunteering, getting organized, and that's where I managed to feel the pain decrease.

Although I did not dare to express it, depression and anxiety became part of my life, but not in as solitary a way as before.

For many years I resisted going to leave flowers at the grave, I was forced by my mother, who still did not know or understand anything until many years later.

I was 17 when, in a fit of anger because she was scolding me for not wanting to go to masses in her memory, I told her what he did to me as a child... I would have liked to think about it better and say it more calmly, because that night she tried to commit suicide, He felt guilty and said that it was his responsibility to have taken care of us and that he failed us. Fortunately, it did not happen to his death.

## **THE EVIL FACES**

My father did it initially, he made me masturbate him, perform oral sex, he penetrated me with his fingers and penis, he made me drink alcohol so I wouldn't resist, he hit me and even tied my hands several times.

Then 7 of their colleagues and friends joined in in exchange for money and alcohol, whose faces are still captured in my memory... They made me undress, touch myself in front of them, one of them hit me with a broom, bathe with them, Some went so far as to hang me while they raped me. Most of the time it happened at home, in the hours between school and my mother's arrival, in the bathroom at home... but when not, it happened at the house of one of his friends whom we were going to "visit."

## **ADOLESCENCE AND ANXIETY**

I didn't love myself, I rarely bathed because I felt disgusted with touching myself, I always looked down at the street, I felt that other people could see what they had done to me... I spoke very little, I tried to commit suicide several times. Seeing myself in a mirror was quite a challenge and I only did it when necessary, I avoided being the center of attention, to avoid the gaze of others.

The proximity of men more than necessary repulsed me, however, unconsciously, male attention filled a kind of void.

At this stage I never had psychological, medical or any kind of care, I survived with the little I could and as I believed, it was not until I was 17 that I started working on Christmas holidays that I was able to start saving to receive private medical care, but between helping my mother at home, school and other things, it took me years to be able to go to a gynecologist. It was there that I learned that I had internal vaginal injuries and that, if I wanted to be a biological mother, it would be difficult for me to be one.

When I was 21, I managed to go to a psychologist, where post-traumatic stress came hand in hand with generalized anxiety, which explained my constant self-demand, my adherence to stuffed animals, not being able to sleep in places outside the home and without having a wall on the back, the fear of dark places.

As I grew and trained, between school, training in organizations and volunteering, I created a Claudia with a social conscience, who spoke and valued herself little by little more and who wanted justice not only for herself.

## **MY ROLLER COASTER**

Youth has been a roller coaster, having stages in which I feel strong and days or weeks in which I no longer want it.

I tried to commit suicide again a few years ago, it is a thought that still does not completely leave me, it haunts me all the time, achieving a healthy relationship with my body, my sexuality, pleasure, interpersonal relationships is still a challenge. There are seasons of self-harming behavior, and of putting my life at risk, the relationship with my mother did not become what I wanted, we are friends, but I was never able to create a maternal bond with her, although she has made good attempts, I cannot achieve it.

I still have a dependence on stuffed animals to keep me calm. When sleeping in strange places, the first nights are full of fear and anxiety, I still sleep with a wall on my back, so as not to feel that someone will take me from behind...

But that has not been the only thing that has accompanied me, but also the social struggle and hunger for justice. Being part of various organizations and networks defending human rights has given me the opportunity to care for and fight for children who go through situations that I also went through, which also leaves me with a bittersweet taste because I see the same failures in the system in the face of victims and long-term survivors of this murder.

## **HOW DID I DEAL WITH THE TRAUMA, WHAT DID I DO ABOUT IT**

State processes are full of coldness, re-victimization, insensitivity, and with deadlines of months for upcoming appointments...

Facing them... from the beginning was a challenge, since the State never took charge of the medical, psychological, and psycho social monitoring. All of this was self-managed and autonomous, when I had the financial solvency to do it, which was many years after the violations.

My healing depended a lot on activism and social struggle, it was organized and in fighting movements where I did not feel so alone, where I felt that I was helping and that my life had meaning, that I was no longer a stained person, but someone who could help others. the others... However, that has brought dangers. Two years ago I had an assassination attempt for defending a girl raped by a soldier, but that has not stopped me, I have continued in the social struggle without stopping and without fear.

Healing still continues, it is a process of ups and downs, of good and bad seasons, but the important thing is to continue.

## WHO DID I BECOME

I am a person who is no longer silent, who smiles and looks forward. Affectionate, empathetic, although it is difficult for her to socialize, when she gains confidence she is someone to trust.

I am a friend, daughter and aunt who accompanies in a loving way, also an activist and defender of human rights, a psychology student who spends all her time in the training process.

I found what I want to continue doing for life.

## WHY SHOULD GOVERNMENTS LISTEN TO THE DEMANDS OF SURVIVORS

The voices of survivors were silenced for a long time by their attackers, by the authorities, by the community and the entire system.

It is time for these voices to break all the barriers and systems so that they have a more realistic, close and human perception of the shortcomings, state problems and inefficient protocols, to be able to jointly build mechanisms, laws and programs that really give them a humane, fair and efficient response. In this way, we can leave behind the historical debt with survivors and be able to bet on a future without state violence and with restorative justice.

These demands must be heard in order to create efficient national, regional and international mechanisms against child sexual violence.

In order to create material that has information from surviving experts, who, from their experiences with shortcomings in the systems to access justice, can produce those mechanisms and protocols that were missing in those experiences.

Promoting laws, conventions and international treaties, which have not yet been ratified and which survivors consider a priority, is to give them a vote for structural changes and thus add input to the States with true information by adding survivors to these mechanisms, including these voices. to decision-making in the region.



movimiento de  
**valientes**  
Latinoamérica y el Caribe

