

Often throughout my life, it has felt as if I am an object rather than a person, like a trophy more than a child, a human, an equal. I have been put down, tossed to the side and exploited for economical and egotistical reasons by counselors, lawyers, a judge, and my father. When I was 9 years old I was sitting in an all too familiar counselor's office where I proceeded to meet the new family counselor. As he sat in his chair, legs crossed, I asked Chris Lane, "Are you in this for the money or you actually care?". Without hesitation he quickly replied, "Well for the money". The hidden answer that had been danced around as if it was a toxic potion. However, I would not discover the longevity of heights he would go to for money until a year or two later.

After being stripped from my home, my mother, my dog and my life, my siblings and I were huddled on our father's couch where we sat through multiple police officers preach on the recurring topic of what we had been attempting to convey was of our own creation, of how our thoughts, feelings, and experiences were not valid. Where we sat through hearing our father laugh with his lawyer about how our mom had cried in court when hearing the sentencing. Where we sat through our own emotions and sorrows. One night while we sat there battling our "invalid" and "alienated" emotions, our father threw a party. A party while his kids sat in his living room suffering, a party while he rejoiced his victory and we struggled with finding will to live. Little did we know this party was more than a victorious embrace, it was a goodbye. On that night, after everyone had left, escort agents entered the house and told us we'd be separated. It would be myself and my two brothers with some agents' then my sister would be alone with other agents. We were not told where we were going, what we were going to be doing, or what the purpose was. All we knew was that this would be the second time we would be losing a family member in less than a month. We were put in a van and taken to hotels where we spent the night with these unknown transport agents. The next day we boarded airplanes and were flown to an unknown destination. To our relief, we were united with our sister after our flights to San Francisco, California. We started the family restoration program, "Family Bridges" there. While there, we were put in a conference room, shown clips of mothers planting corrupt ideas into children's minds, forced to speak only in agreement with them, and once again were treated as second hand citizens. The workshops were all day from around 9A.M. to 4P.M. The last day of imprisonment we were told we had two choices: either sign a document stating we would obey our father and operate as a family that we had never been due to his selfish and abusive ways, or be split up and put into foster care.

My family's sufferings have been great, but they didn't have to be and neither do anyone else's. We can unite and stop this. We can stop the corruption, we can stop the cruelty, we can stop the abuse, we can stop pretending we do not see. We can give our successors a voice now, we can listen, we can support, we can heal. I do not ask or seek vengeance for what has happened to me. I ask for us today to put an end to suffering. Let us put an end to it here. Let us bring Fernando home and let us stop the trauma and harm so not one more child must endure the agonizing pain so many have had to experience at such a young age. Let us bring them home.