

I am Victor Muller Ferreira, I was born on 4 April 1989 in Brazil, Rio de Janeiro, in Niteroi. Until November 1993 me and my mother used to live at [REDACTED]. Nationality – Brazilian, national citizen of Brazil.

Father – [REDACTED] Ferreira, he was born on [REDACTED]. Nationality – [REDACTED], national citizen of [REDACTED].

These days my father lives in Brazil. When he was 15 years old he discovered that his biological mother had died giving birth. Her name was [REDACTED]. Nationality – [REDACTED].

His father's spouse did not want to adopt him, but did agree to his father acknowledging paternity and finding a tutor for him. [REDACTED], a close friend of his mother's, agreed to become his tutor. In December 1974 he and his tutor moved to [REDACTED]. In December 1982 he returned to [REDACTED]. He made a bit of money as an English teacher. In 1988 his tutor moved to [REDACTED] and their ties were severed. My father arrived in Rio in May 1988, where he met my mother. Towards the end of 1991 he left for [REDACTED] to obtain citizenship there.

Mother – [REDACTED] Muller was born on [REDACTED] in Brazil, [REDACTED]. Occupation – musician. She died on [REDACTED] from pneumonia. She was cremated and her ashes were interred at the cemetery of [REDACTED].

Grandfather on paternal side was [REDACTED] Ferreira, he was born on [REDACTED]. These days he is retired, living in [REDACTED] in [REDACTED].

Grandfather on maternal side, [REDACTED] Muller, passed away in [REDACTED] after a heart attack.

Grandmother [REDACTED] Muller died in [REDACTED] from cancer.

When I was born, my father was living in [REDACTED]. Despite the fact that his love for my mother was over, he followed in his father's (my grandfather's) footsteps those many years earlier and officially acknowledged parentage of his son. This is why my father returned to Brazil in early April 1989 in order to formalise everything, before returning to [REDACTED]. My mother fought a lot with her parents about this unplanned pregnancy, leading to a break in her relationship with her parents. Consequently my mother was on her own in raising me. She made money by performing in various restaurants and bars in Niteroi and Rio. The money was not enough. [REDACTED] – my mother's aunt – helped us a lot. She lived on her own in [REDACTED].

I remember my aunt as a tiny woman with grey hair, kind eyes, and soft hands. She spoke Portuguese badly and taught me several Spanish words. From my youth I have vivid memories of the President Costa e Silva bridge. I loved to watch the cars crossing the bridge from Niteroi to Rio. But I disliked the stench of fish that hung in the port near our house. I think that is why I hate fish, contrary to most other Brazilian people who enjoy all that the sea has to offer.

When my mother fell ill, my aunt came to Brazil. In [REDACTED] I moved to [REDACTED], with my aunt, and until 2001 I lived on [REDACTED]. The house was a three-storey boarding house, most occupants being middle-class [REDACTED], students at various faculties, retirees, and people with no steady jobs. There were a few large rooms with high ceilings, double doors, wooden floors. A few shared bathrooms, two kitchens with gas stove, a washing and drying room for clothes, and an outdoor terrace. Monthly rent was 100 -130 dollars. My aunt worked as a seamstress from home. She would sew dresses and shirts which she then sold at the market. The room was always littered with sewing patterns and rolls of variously coloured fabrics. But I loved the

sewing machine the most, even though aunt would not let me touch it, ever; when I did she'd say that it was the only thing in her life that was still functioning properly.

Despite our financial woes, we lived together in harmony. I loved my aunt. The neighbours came and went, but I do remember [REDACTED] very well. He was the oldest boy I knew at the time. One day, when I was home alone (it was market day, so my aunt was away) [REDACTED] knocked on the door. He said he was the Grey Shadow (*a fairy tale character*) and that he had come to devour me. This scared me so much that I spent the entire day in a small box out on the balcony, praying, until my aunt came home.

I attended the kindergarten [REDACTED] which was also a primary school. This school was on [REDACTED]. The kindergarten has existed since 1993. There were 150 – 200 children there. The building had two storeys, it was old (it used to be a seminary). During my childhood I was often ill, so that is why I spent little time at kindergarten. For me, primary school began when I was seven years old.

Because of the financial problems, caused by the crisis that afflicted the whole country in 2001, we moved to a cheaper family hotel on [REDACTED]. This was a two-storey boarding house with attic, and the home of poor people. Compared to the previous lodgings, this one was really terrible. The ceilings leaked and there were water stains. The floorboards creaked so that any time someone went to the bathroom or kitchen, everyone knew. On the first floor there was a family of three who were saving money for a down payment on the mortgage. We liked to visit them to drink mate. Monthly rent was around 80 - 100 dollars.

That same year when I was twelve years old I began to go to [REDACTED] school, which is on [REDACTED]. This school had approximately 600 – 700 pupils. The school motto was "let us go advance together". When I began school, the class consisted of 30 pupils. The school director at the time was Mrs [REDACTED]. She was liked and respected by all the pupils. She was an older lady, and quite soon she was replaced by Mrs [REDACTED], who taught [REDACTED]. Both the pupils and the other teachers hated her, they found her a bit stupid. There were voices that with her arrival, certain school traditions were abandoned, many respected teachers left then. I loved the music lessons because I did not have to prepare anything and we were allowed to talk and play during the lesson. The name of the music teacher was [REDACTED] but everyone called her [REDACTED].

In February 2004 my aunt was admitted to hospital because of heart problems, and I had to quit school. I had to work to make money to buy medication and pay the rent. In 2005 I began school at [REDACTED] at this address: [REDACTED]. What I remember of my time in secondary school is that during my studies I had to work in the commercial district [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] street, handing out leaflets and selling things. I liked working near the shop selling socks and underwear, because I always managed to steal some socks.

Much later I had a job as a pupil at a garage, near the [REDACTED] quarter. The shop was a small with an area in the middle which barely held three cars. Along the walls wheels were piled up. There was a constant smell of lubricant and vulcanised rubber. On the door of the supply cabinet hung a poster of a young Veronica Castro, later to be replaced by one of Pamela Anderson. The shop's owner was immensely fat (rumour had it that he came from the town of [REDACTED]), and everyone called him mister [REDACTED], or just [REDACTED]. He was notorious for his violent temperament and his reticence when it came to talking about his past, in other words how he acquired the money to open up a chain of shops in different parts of town. Generally speaking he came to the office on the day wages were paid. If he came before that day, that meant something bad was about to happen.

At work I was friends with [REDACTED], who lived in the [REDACTED] quarter and who was a supporter of [REDACTED]. I supported [REDACTED], which was what made our friendship strange and original, and we liked to joke about this. His parents drank, so the boy stayed away from home and school. He liked to say that the streets were the best school. Sometimes he lived with friends, when he would rent a room in [REDACTED], constantly moving from one place to another. [REDACTED] was handsome, but when he was nervous he stuttered, so it was hard for him to chat up girls. We had our tactics: [REDACTED] smiled, attracting the girls, and I began to chat with them. At secondary school I was particularly fond of the geography teacher, Mrs [REDACTED]. She was so beautiful and all the boys in the class had a crush on her. Many came with stories, which all began the same – the teacher told them to stay behind after class – but they all ended differently: one had seen her do a striptease, others had had sex with her. I did not like these stories, I felt that my crush on [REDACTED] was real and honest.

I don't like to think back to these years, because my fellow pupils often used to joke about my looks and my accent. Even though I looked like a German, they called me "gringo". That is why I did not have many friends and why I spent a lot of time with my aunt who loved showing me old albums with family photos. She always said I looked like grandma [REDACTED]. When she talked about my mother, she always said that she was an eternal child – frivolous and excitable. Falling in love and being disappointed by people came easy to her, as in the case of my father. But when I was born, she suddenly changed. She became more responsible and reasonable. Mother collected butterflies, but the collection had to be sold off to pay for medical treatments.

Because of our constant lack of money, I did not travel a lot: once I went on a school trip to the [REDACTED] waterfalls, and the second time was with friends to the seaside resort [REDACTED]. I took part in biblical and historical plays at school. I practiced dance a little too, but because I had no time I began to go only sporadically, and whatever skills I had then I have lost now.

On [REDACTED] aunt died of heart failure. She is buried at [REDACTED] cemetery. Her grave is in section [REDACTED]. Before she died, she gave me a prayer book and a medallion, which I have to this day. After my aunt died – the only person who was close to me – I dropped out of school and moved in with my friend [REDACTED]. In those days he used to live in [REDACTED] in an apartment with four other teens, who like him lived from day to day. What I remember well is the way the apartment was laid out – the kitchen was more a kind of cupboard whose door could only be opened if the door to the bathroom was also open.

Despite my emotional hurt and my financial troubles, I decided to finish school. For my specialist exams I chose social sciences and humanities. There were two other options: foreign languages and cultures, and technical. The humanities were very difficult and because I am ambitious, I wanted to prove to myself and others that I could still pass the most difficult exams even though my social status was so low. During the exam on the history of sociology, which was one of my poorer subjects, I managed to bring a coat. I used it throughout the exam and it left me with the nickname Zorro. In November 2009 I passed my exams and received my bachelor's degree.

I was a fan of the [REDACTED]. During one of their games I met [REDACTED], a [REDACTED] woman who told me that her sister [REDACTED] was studying and working in [REDACTED], and that she also wanted to go and live there. Since then I have been thinking about studying abroad at a good university.

In 2007, during a visit to the town of [REDACTED], I met [REDACTED], a journalism student at the [REDACTED] who worked as a journalist at a local newspaper and who wrote political articles that were favourable about [REDACTED] and their presidential candidate [REDACTED]. As a result of my contact with [REDACTED] I began to think of working as a politics correspondent or journalist, which determined my choice of studies at secondary school.

Because I did not have enough money for higher education, I decided to look for my father. Before my aunt [REDACTED] passed away, she gave me my father's address in [REDACTED], but she said that at the time she had not received any letters from him for five years. After I wrote to the address I found out that my father had moved to Brazil and that he was living near Rio de Janeiro. When I wrote to him there, I received a reply surprisingly quick. My own father had been looking for me for a long time.

In August 2010 I arrived in Rio to meet my father. We agreed to meet each other at [REDACTED]. My father came across as a very friendly and open person, but to my surprise I discovered that I blamed him for the deaths of my mother and my aunt and all the difficulties and humiliations I had to suffer in my life. For that reason the conversation was very tense, despite my father's sincere desire to be a part of my life. Added to this was the fact that my father's Spanish is bad, and that I had forgotten Portuguese. Yet I decided to stay in Brazil to learn the language and restore my citizenship. Mentally it was difficult to live with my father, which is why I moved to Brasilia, thus killing two birds with one stone: firstly the capital is the better place to solve my problems with citizenship – all the important institutions are there – and secondly it was a good excuse not to have to see my father.

In September 2010 I moved to Brasilia. I lived in the [REDACTED] area. The rent was 1000 real a month. The room was in a long-stay hotel, the rooms were identical to the apartments I used to live in with my childhood friend [REDACTED]. Later I found cheaper lodgings for 550 real a month at the address: [REDACTED]. Parallel with the matter of restoring my citizenship I took private language lessons in Portuguese. During my free time I went to see the cultural sights in the city. I loved the kilo-restaurants, which are scarce in [REDACTED], in particular A Tribo, which was at the following address: SCLN 105, B1.B 52-59, North Wing. This restaurant serves the best brown bean stew in town. On several occasions I visited the club Macadamia, which is at the following address: SCES Tr.2, Conj 31, South Wing. This is the only club that plays trance music. I remain in touch with my father through the internet.