

Javier Soto's real life journey of life in foster care during the 70's and 80's. Javier's uncensored story involves taboo topics of child abuse and sexual assault while he schemes to survive at all cost. Will he endure and find purpose, or be forever institutionalized?

Life of a Bastard

by Damien Black

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LIFE
OF
A
BASTARD

BY DAMIEN BLACK



VOL. 1

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Book illustrations: Laura Caiafa

Book design: Laura Caiafa

Edited by Benjamin Slaughter

Contact & the Chronicles of a Bastard

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and I was becoming more mischievous all the time. I picked up Miriam so she could stand on the dresser and help throw the new clothes out the window. By then I was an angry seven-year-old. I was defiant and I loved Marilyn, but I couldn't resist an opportunity to get back at my mother. She was—of course—furious. She beat Marilyn badly, and I had to pick up the clothes outside with the old boyfriend. My sisters didn't hate me, but they followed a bad leader.

Mr. Gonzalez summoned my mother to the hospital—telling her to bring Marilyn, Miriam and me with for our check-up. She left Rosemary at home with Carlos. It was raining outside as we entered the hospital. Mr. Gonzalez examined us in the lobby—dirt and bruises covered our bodies. He rushed us into a room and asked my mother about the marks and dirt. My mother defensively complained about us ruining our new clothes. She told him how badly behaved. She told him that “we were bad children,” and that we were bad because “the system,” and “the White Man,” had gotten us. He asked her if she was beating us and she admitted to it. We watched as their argument intensified. Suddenly, she grabbed her umbrella and started beating Mr. Gonzalez—pretty funny actually. Once again, Mr. “Oblivious” Gonzalez hadn't seen it coming. The hospital police had to handcuff my mother because she was out of control. My sisters started to cry. I stood there

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watching. I wish I was clever enough to have planned that moment, but my mother was simply a lunatic. She was who she was and didn't need my help to push her buttons. It paid off either way. We got the fuck out of there—taken away by Mr. Gonzalez. It was for the best. I didn't love that woman and I'm sure she didn't love me . . . I don't even think I knew what love was back then.

Chapter 4: Fracture

We were taken away. Mr. Gonzalez put us in the car we drove off towards the next place, leaving my mother at the mercy of the cops. No one said a word in the car, but looking back, leaving was the best outcome for us. We had survived living with an insane mother for a couple months. We had no attachment to her. She was just another loveless adult. My sisters and I had each other, but I knew I had to become a better protector. This time we had gotten lucky and it saved our lives. Next time, we might not be so lucky. My mother eventually had another child with another man and ran off with Rosemary and her newborn baby Jasmine to Puerto Rico to escape the law.



Late that night we arrived at our new home. Our new foster family, the Gonzalez, were Hispanic as well. They seemed to be much nicer than the Sanchez, and only had one teenage daughter. The next morning I went to my new school. I attended special education classes where I mostly drew and caused disruptions. I was so under-educated that I the only color I knew was green—because I loved The Hulk. I loved him so much that when I got angry at school, I would rip my clothes off to imitate him. But I was nothing like him. I still wet my pants and spent my days next to drooling kids in wheelchairs.

I was allowed to sleep whenever I wanted, so school was generally easy to survive. I would, however, have my

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mouth washed out with soap if I was caught swearing. And if word of that reached my foster parents, there would be a beating waiting for me at home. At least during these times, Marilyn wasn't paying the price for me.



The radio was playing in the kitchen and the announcer said "Ronald Wilson Regan is the next President of the United States of America." I had no idea what was going on but the Gonzolezes seemed bummed out. I was playing with my sisters at the dinner table and making them laugh. The foster parents asked me to stop, I said "fuck you," and Mr. Gonzalez grabbed a bottle of hot sauce. He made drink it while holding me by the shirt collar. Till this day I can't handle hot or spicy foods.

All things considered though, our foster family wasn't too bad most of the time. Their teenage daughter would babysit us and frighten us with wild tales of the old lady who lived next door and apparently liked to make soup out of little children. My sisters and I believed these stories but occasionally played in the old lady's backyard with the teenage daughter. One time, the old lady came out and started yelling at us. We ran for the fence. My sisters made it over, but I was so terrified of being turned into soup I

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froze and peed myself. Finally, the teenage daughter climbed back over to help me escape.

I did live a somewhat routine life though. I went with the flow and accepted that things were the way they were. It was typical day at school—the retards were drooling, sleeping or acting out. I chose to act out that day by kicking my teacher in her leg. I was sent to the corner but I refused to go, so she ignored me for the rest of the day. Later, as I was getting off the “mini cheese bus,” the teenage daughter was waiting for me at the door. She told me I was in big trouble and would be taken away from my sisters unless I did what she said. She told me she would tell on me unless I pretended to be her slave. I believed her because I was young and terrified of losing my sisters.

I reluctantly agreed to the deal. I would get food and water for her, and clean and massage her feet. I had my own room up in the antic, and one night she woke me up. She asked me to remove my clothes and I obeyed. She took off her clothes and lay down in my bed. She wanted me to lick her pussy. I didn’t understand why, but I was her slave so I did it anyways. It had a funny smell, not foul—actually a little like bleach—and, it looked like a hairy taco—like a 70’s porn star. I licked her hot box for what seemed like hours. I can’t remember if I got an erection, but I must have. She ordered me to get on top of her she began to move her

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hips. I didn't understand what was happening, but I didn't feel abused either. Some nights we all had to sleep in the same room, and she would wait until her parents went into their room so we could repeat the process.

Sometimes Marilyn would be watching. She didn't understand what was happening, and I didn't care because it felt good. The teenage daughter was by all means a child molester. What she did was wrong and our sex acts were confusing to me. Was this love or control? So far my sexual experiences had taught me that sex is power. Adults would use sex to control me and my sisters. I know this isn't true but it's difficult for me to see it any other way.

Why would anyone care about me being molested? Why waste my time telling people? It didn't seem to matter what people did to foster children. You suffer in silence and maybe you live through it. I wouldn't be surprised if she went on to victimize many others.

For a long time I thought what she was doing to me was something to be proud of. Now I can see that my innocence was being chipped away, piece by piece. It had begun with Jose's abuse, and now I was the victim of another predator. This time though, I was more psychologically prepared. After all, I was just a kid who wanted to watch *The Hulk* and be with my sisters. Survive at all costs right?



Miriam was a sweet little kid; Marilyn and I looked out for her, and she was even loved by the Gonzalez. They wanted to adopt her and send Marilyn and me away. Mr. Gonzalez—and whoever else made the decision to separate us—shattered our worlds. It felt unreal and terrible—a true nightmare for me and my sisters. Without knowing anything, our bags were packed into the car, and the gray haired man drove us back to midtown Manhattan. We wondered where Miriam was. Why didn't she come with us?

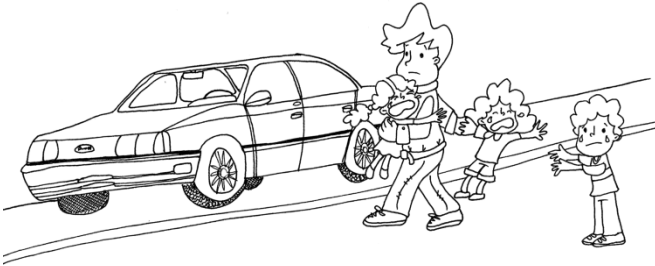
We were taken to the familiar 7th floor—I remember the marble hallway because it was so smooth I could slide around on my bottom. Mr. Gonzalez took us to the toy room. I always went for the *Lincoln Logs*, *Legos*, and *Kermit the Frog*. Marilyn just played along with me. Mr. Gonzalez, wearing his creepy mustache, walked in with our therapist. He started to tell us that Miriam was going to be adopted, but that we were not. *How can this happen? How can someone break up a family?*

My mother's parental rights were revoked. Since Miriam had no father on record it was easy for them to find her a permanent home. Both Marilyn and I had fathers on record, and they refused to give up their rights. They started

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to take Marilyn from the room and we started to cry and yell. I bit and hit Mr. Gonzalez and the therapist, while promising them I would behave. Finally, they let go of me. Marilyn and I hugged and cried. She held me like a mother comforting her child. She told me everything would be alright. I was so afraid they would take her that I didn't let go. I was sure it was my fault for being "bad." They behaved and I was the bad apple. They pulled us apart and then Marilyn was gone. Mr. Gonzalez took me in his arms as I threw up and cried. I felt guilty about everything I had done. I still feel guilty sometimes. We didn't know it then, but those were "the good times." The worst was still to come.

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Chapter 5: A Shiver at Dusk

When I would go into a rage, they would give me drugs and I would fall asleep crying. After one episode, I awoke in the familiar car being driven to the familiar 101st block of Spanish Harlem. Mr. Gonzalez told me that I would be living with my grandmother, Amelia, and Marilyn would be living with her father. At the time, I didn't know what kind of a monster Marilyn's father was. I was happy for her and hoped my own father would get home from the "army" someday soon.



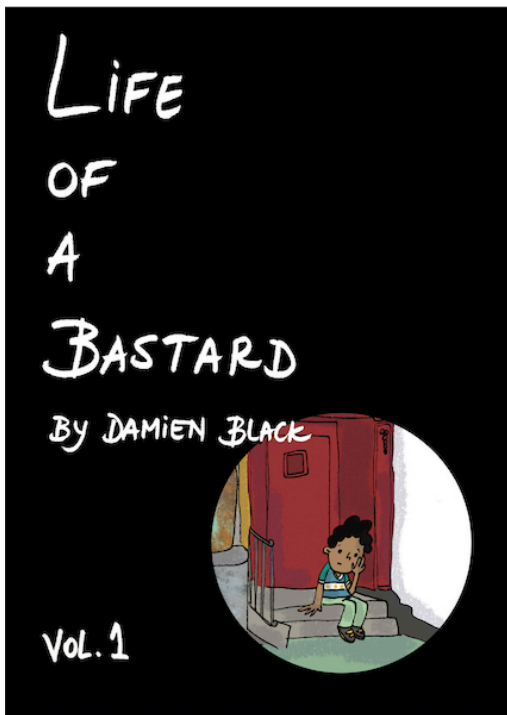
We entered the building. I was happy. I dreamt of a sweet old grandmother who would find my father for me, and show me so much love that I would never behave badly again. This time I would be grandma's little angel. She would take me out to buy toys and new clothes so I could brag in school. I wanted a jacket like The Fonz because he was so cool! Mr. Gonzalez knocked on the door and my

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grandmother opened it. They spoke to each other in Spanish and I could barely understand. She let us in and then he said goodbye forever. I was happy to see him gone (please die!). My grandmother spoke to me in Spanish because she didn't speak English. This was a problem because I could only understand a little Spanish. Sometimes I would understand what she said, but most of the words were just too fast for me.

Five of her children lived with her. Three women and two men, the oldest of which was my uncle, Javier—he was cool like the Fonz. My other uncle, Robert—whom I had to share a room with—was a singer and dancer. The younger aunts had no time for me so I mostly played alone. When they had company, they would send me to my room.

I always waited for uncle Javier to walk in from wherever he was. He would bring records home and let me listen to them. First it was The Beatles and John Lennon playing on my little record player. Then he brought home Queen. I fell in love with rock and roll. When I did something bad in school Javier would talk to me and get me to behave. I wanted to have long curly hair and be a rock and roller like him. He told me that he was friends with my father, and that that's how my mother and he met. Javier never spoke badly about my mother and father though; he just wanted to be a good uncle.



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