



Maria Pereira

Translated from Portuguese

Interviewer: Let's start with your name.

My name is Maria C. Pereira. Maria Cândida Pereira. And I came to America already was over 40 years old. I was almost 50 years old. But my husband had already been to America on a visit. He worked in San Joaquin Valley in the cows. He came on a visit e had a chance to go back, mas always liked this country very much, because e also was back there in Pico, but he went to Ponta Delgada on a boat. He was a sailor and I was on land with my children and after he jumped over here for a visit and went back with that blind desire to come here to America that if we came, it would be good for the kids. My daughter was already 17 when we came to America, and had completed her 7th year in Portugal. And my son was 15, but also was in school and after ended up completing here—he finished high school. And we came, she came here to Cameo asking for employment and, the curtain shop, and they found her a little part-time job because he always had the blind wish to come to SMU. And I went to ask for a job in other factories. I went to the purse factory and after I didn't adjust too well there so I went to Elco, the dress factory. I liked it there very much ... [inaudible] ... I could do something already, but I learned a lot, and after it was the factory of the fashion here. I liked the atmosphere, although it was different from our country, but, we learned other different things. And after I went on to other factories, but always had my employment until the time to retire. And so it was, a constant battle, at home, I did my home chores like I did over there. We came from a poor environment there, but here, we have more abundance and we sought to make our life, always with the traditions from over there—as for the meals, live was for that environment so we could attain certain things in life. And after it was so. My children got married, and followed their own lives. My daughter is working as a social worker; works with psychology with people like so.

Interviewer: Yeah, I know.

She helps folks. And we liked being here. We liked it and our children liked it. But this place is not what we think it is when we are there. We figure that going to America, at that time, the America of the sacks of clothes that they would send over there to make life better, and the letters from America with the dollars, that they would send at Christmas time. We thought that was nice. But now it's changed more. Things are better over there, and that's good. But land like this one to assist, I don't know where it is. I don't know where it is. Although that some folks that immigrated and that have been here for years, when someone from there arrives and starts to make his own life here, they point out the form of working their own lives. She is very slow, can't do nothing. And we suffer. But after, when we find our way to get up to speed, and to work our lives, we feel happy. It's a land that gives sadness for some, because the bad things of life always happen, and for others, many folks are happy and over there they had nothing. So it was. Our house was back there. After came the earthquakes, the shaking of the earth, and the house went down. After my children, we were here fixing the house and it still wasn't fixed. They were starting, when they had money. It was all marked for the folks not to pay interest on the bank money. We would try to figure the time to pay our things so as not to pay interest. To pay before the closing of interest, so as to not put too much pressure on the bank so as to follow life. And so it was. We didn't spread out too thin, mas we took some trips and like it. After these elderly ladies' groups were formed, and I went to the ladies groups. I have a book of verses written, mine and other friends. If I had one, I would give it to you. I would give you one of them.

Interviewer: We are happy to record your story and the stories of others. This is good.



Yes, but I am from Pico.

Interviewer: Which county is it?

County of Madalena.

Interviewer: Madalena?

Yes.

Interviewer: Where the boat docks, right? The ferry?

Yes, yes, yes.

Interviewer: Madalena, yeah. I got there two times.

I even made a poem to Pico:

My prince, my colleague, since the first yours of my life,
You welcomed me in your Arms, in your lap I had my sleep;
You gave me love and kindness, and at times torture;
But you put a longing feeling in my path, but taught me to love with tenderness.

Today I am a broken stone that from you I departed and went in movement,
Rolling, rolling through the contours of life
But yet to never have rested.

Interviews: Fantastic. Thank you for that.

Wasn't that pretty?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Isn't that pretty?

Interviewer: Really fantastic.

I feel a longing,
A volcano burns in my chest,
It burns constantly,
I want to control it gently,
So it does not explode all of a sudden.

A volcano burns in my chest in great activity,
Its lava rolls down the hills of the longing,
Longing for the Sun rise in the Spring mornings,
In the green of the grass of the Fields, in the perfume of the green ivy.

Of the voices I have known,
And the paths I have travelled,
In my bare feet playing,



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A volcano burns in my chest,
A volcano burns in my chest.

Interviewer: Pretty verses.

A longing of the voices that I knew,
And that left me in the solitude,
They are marks in my head,
A volcano burns in my chest.

Interviewer: It's good?

I've preached much.

Interviewer: Great. Fantastic. Thank you very much.