

Fishtales
Sunday, September 30, 2012
Working Waterfront Festival

Interviewer – Ace Elijah and Dave Martins
Interviewee – Fernando Gonzalez

AB First of all can we get your name?

FG Alright. My name is Fernando Gonzalez, Fernando F. Gonzalez. My last boat that I was fishing on was DETERMINATION. And last year I was in the fishing vessel APOLLO. And I do dragging and scalloping, shrimping. I used to, before I came to Massachusetts, I've been here 23 years, before I came to Massachusetts; I was in Bayou La Batre in Alabama. I was running shrimp boats down there. But the shrimping business goin' down so bad there was not money enough to pay me even for the fuel. So what I did I just moved out and I came over here. I came here in 1994. And since I came to Massachusetts I never left. But the fisheries, everything has been doing so good. Right now it's very hard because there are so many people looking for jobs. But I don't think it's, some time I've gotta find me one. This whole year I made one trip in the fishing vessel DETERMINATION, but I thought I was gonna stay on the boat, but the captain only made just enough for one trip. But I can tell you stories like when the ATLANTIS sunk around there, or even when the fishing vessel LADY GRACE when LADY GRACE sunk, we was behind the boat like three miles close to three miles and he was in front of me. The captain of the boat is, his name is Shawn Machie, it was the ISLA BRAVA. And that time we was coming from a trip, just we finished a trip

AB Were you scalloping or...

FG Yeah, we was scalloping. And LADY GRACE is a dragger. Pero the thing, my concern was that I'm watching the wheel around the shoal channel and we was coming back home and I didn't hear no Maydays, anything like somebody calling for help or anything because I think everything happened so quick. And I feel so sad now that I know that it was that boat, because if it was the boat, maybe I stop and get it. Because I think what I did is I went down to the kitchen and I got me a big cup of coffee and when I come back I look on the radar, I know the boat was in front of me, but I was waiting like I think it was buoy 17 or maybe a little back where I was, and we was coming back home and it was around 2:30 or 3 o'clock in the morning I think it was and the thing is, I saw the light in the, I saw the light and I see in the radar in the boat, so I was thinking maybe it's very far from me. I go down there and get me a coffee. And so I went down there quick and I come back up there. I sit down in the wheelhouse and I sip my coffee, pero when I look in front, I see no lights. Maybe I am hallucinating I thought because I'm tired. So what I, what happened is that I saw the boat and like, no lights and I look in the radar, how can that thing disappear so quick. I can see maybe it was something, maybe like a microwave wave or something that was interfering [with the radar] or something like that. So what I did is like, I wanted to go wake the captain and I wanted to wake everybody up to tell them what happened. But before I do anything, I would sit down in

there and I measured in the computer three miles so I said when I pass by there I gonna go outside and check. So when we got to the place that I marked, I see no boats, I see nothing floating in the water. I mean I look around and I don't see no baskets, anything, any sign or anything. I don't see nothing. So I figured it out maybe, because I'm tired, maybe it's my hallucinations. Because when you get real tired sometimes when you're working you're not all there. So what I did is like I just sit down and wait. Pero, I went outside and I look, I slowed down a little bit and I look and look. I didn't see anything, no oil, nothing floating on the water. So what I did I just keep on coming and when we got close to Quicks's (Quicks Hole) to turn to New Bedford, my captain, I wake the captain up. He told me wake everybody up. But in the meantime I didn't remember to say anything because I was like, I didn't want to say nothing because they probably would think I'm going crazy. Because I don't hear no Mayday, I don't hear anything. So what I did, when we went to the fish house, we got around the fish house around 4 or something in the morning, almost daylight, but everybody saying, "Hey Lady Grace supposed to be here at 5" They are supposed to be unload[ing]" And it's like Lady Grace, Lady Grace, everybody's looking for Lady Grace. Nobody knows where Lady Grace was. Well I start thinking in my head, maybe it's that boat that was around Shoal Channel that, I'm not sure if he was alighted, maybe, because there's a lot of, I mean it's the airport that goes from Nantucket to New Bedford, I mean I was thinking maybe it was a plane or something, but I'm not sure what it was. So what I did, I didn't say anything, but later on I find out when the fish house, they keep on waiting for Lady Grace, but Lady Grace never show up. And I don't know if it was a day later or two days later, after they keep on looking for the boat, and a helicopter find it 20 feet under water between West Chop and Ground Shoal Channel around that area, I'm not sure exactly what it was because I don't remember. Because this was like 2007 I think it was. So what I did, I didn't say anything. But I was pretty upset because I told my wife when we finished unloading and everything I told here, "You know what there is a boat missing and it was a boat in front of me." And she said "Why you don't say anything?" I say, "I never did because if I say something and I wake everybody up they gonna say you crazy, what's wrong with you?" You know? So what I did, I just don't say anything, pero I feel so sad because later on I find out it was the boat that was in front of us. And that was the trip, the last trip I made on that boat, because two days later, I mean, when we unloaded the next day I went to the hospital because I was having so much pain in my stomach because we threw one of the rocks when we was in the channel and I end up having a big hernia and I didn't know. I covered myself with a, I put a paper towels and I wrapped it around and when I went to the hospital, they asked me, "What happened?" I don't want to say that happened on the boat because I don't want to cause problems to nobody on the boat and then later maybe I don't get no jobs. So what I did, I just when in the hospital and they did an emergency surgery the next day. I have twenty-two stitches inside and then they put a match out there with seventy something stitches. On the outside they put sixty three stitches. All together. So the problem was that I have to stay home for awhile. I stayed for home for maybe like four months, five months until it heals. But I tell you, things been happening to the boats, I never knew what happened. I have friends that work on the boat that sunk in the Nantucket Ship Light [Nantucket Lightship] that was the Northern Edge. I don't know what happened, but I feel sorry 'cause it was two friends of mine. They went out fishing in the boat and one of the guys he invited his cousin to go out with them and he went out

for the first trip, pero that was the only one. He never made another one because they stay out there. And they all died. The only one that saved his life was Pedro Furtado. That's the only guy

DM He's the only one that was able to get over to the raft and get in

FG I don't know anything how he did it, but... That's it. Because if it was me, I'd do anything to save anybody before myself. I'd try to save everybody. I don't care if he's gonna hurt me or no. But I can save somebody, I'd be very happy you know? And then I was working on DETERMINATION with Charlie Rodrigues, Bergie's boat and Charlie's boat. And we working on the Channel, bad weather is coming and Charlie went to bed. He says, "Francisco, you know what? Just make some tows, put scallops in [?], because it was a lot of scallops in the Channel, small stuff like 30 count. He told me make a couple of tows, load up the boat see how it looks and if you think it's enough, just go around, go in the Channel and go around the island and the [inaudible] because there's a nor'easter coming." So what I did, I just make one more tow because I see that it's getting too heavy and I'm walking to the wheelhouse, grabbing myself to check on the front end and it's too high already. So I make one more tow and I told the guys this is it guys, no more. But ATLANTA was working in the same place that I was. When I was going north, he was going south. When I was going south, he was going north. And that's the last, the very, very last time I saw the boat, because when we went to the channel and we was in Nantucket, around there, working in night time, actually I told my boys, my watch, around 6 something in the afternoon, I give the watch to the captain and he brought the boat back to where he's supposed to be. He wakes me up at [?] and he says, "Francisco, go make some coffee, drink some coffee ok? I gotta talk to you." I say "ok" I feel like I wanna cry when he told me. He says, "You know what? The ATLANTA was fishing over there where we was and they supposed to be here and nobody showed up. They waited for the boat. Did you hear any maydays or anything on the boat, on the radios?" I say, "To tell you the truth, I was sitting in here and I got the 16 channel on, I got the scanner going on, so if somebody said something I'd be able to hear it. But I didn't hear anything." So what I think, maybe something happened very quick that nobody knew how to save their lives or something. And things happen, when you're fishing, things happen like, in seconds. It's not like when you have an accident in a car, you open your door, you get out or, if you're ok. Pero in there, it's not like you can do things like that? Things happen on a boat in seconds. It's not...a few seconds I can be talking to somebody on the boat right now, maybe next second, maybe they don't see me no more. And it's sad and it's very sad because it's like, I don't understand. Things like that happen for a reason, but I don't think we're ever gonna see boats like that back. That was the ATLANTA. The NORTHERN EDGE I had friends on that one. On the ATLANTA I have some friends. The other boat that sunk, was, which one was this boat, there are so many boats that sunk since 2001 to where we are now. It's been, that was the clammer, the big clammer that sunk around, coming in, they just I don't know what happened, the say they filled up with water and that's probably what happened.

DM You were coming in on the ISLA BRAVA when the LADY GRACE sank, were you guys iced up? Was the boat getting full of ice when you guys were coming in? Do you remember?

FG Actually we don't have a lot of ice on the boat because, because what happened before when we came in, there was a nor'easter coming, I mean a nor'wester, something like that and it was very cold. And we don't iced up or anything because we went to the dock in Nantucket I think it is was. I'm not sure if it was like that. We went to Nantucket and we waited for a day I think. And then we went back out, but LADY GRACE, I don't have any idea if they went out, they went to Nantucket or no. We had ice, but we didn't have a lot of ice. We have just like maybe just like, I'd say maybe like a little glass cover like. But the one that was iced up, that was LADY GRACE. I think they was iced up. I don't know which side, pero, it was northeaster, I mean nor'wester. I think on the starboard side, I think it was iced up bad on the one side, the starboard side, I mean the port side, yeah it was bad.

DM Who is this?

FG This is a friend of mine right here I know this guy for forty something years. He's a shrimper from {?} Texas.

DM You want to tell us a little about your fishing? You can win some boots!

FG This is the person, this is one of the persons that I know for so many years, one of the last shrimpers that I know because all the generation when we started, we started it's like maybe 15, 16 years old, we start fishing, and this guy in here is the generation that I was on, and it's not many, many of them left. I say from the generation maybe six or seven people that I know still alive. But the rest...

DM That's why it's important to make these recordings. You know. 'Cause like you said there's not many left from that generation, you know?

FG Yeah this generation from here and me, we started, I started fishing in 1979. And when I start fishing in 1979, a year or two years later he started shrimping. But it's not too many people form that generation.

DM So where are you from, originally?

FG Originally from Guatemala City.

DM Guatemala City.

FG Yeah Guatemala City. I came

DM And you first came in 1979 you started fishing where

FG Port Isabel, Texas. My first job was in the boat, the name of the boat was BEA. I think in English you pronounce it BIYA, B-E-A. That was my first boat that I ever worked. The name of the captain was, I actually, I don't remember his name to good, pero we used to call him Cidisia. This guy he was the nicest person I ever met in my life, because I little, nobody wants to hire me on a boat. And he says "Well I'm gonna take you out fishing, but be careful. Don't fall overboard. You don't get to seasick?" I don't know because I never been on a boat. So he take me out fishing and when we went out fishing, me, stupid, I love it, I say "Oh my god!" The ocean was so, everything was so big for me. Wow. I feel like I was inside the, like I mean it was so much water that I'd ever seen in my life. It was amazing to me. Pero the thing I didn't know, I went to sit on the front of the boat to see the waves and it's when I started getting seasick.

AB Oh yeah, yeah.

FG Pero I got seasick only for like, maybe like a day or two until we got to the place. We went from Port Isabel, Texas we went straight to Louisiana to deep water. We went over there in Louisiana to fishing for brown shrimp and hoppers and white shrimp. And we went over there and me, they don't show me anything. When I [?] this I'm looking how they was doing. We would put the nets up, we'd set out, make a tow for three hours, haul back and you gotta do this, I see them start picking the shrimp. But I didn't know. The shrimp looked like the sea lice, they were sea lice, the little sea lice they have hands that go like this. And when they poke you, they make you bleed. I didn't know because I thought it was the shrimp too. So what I was doin' I was picking those, I was picking the shrimp and was picking those. But like a few minutes later that captain came outside he says, "How you doing junior?" I say, "I don't know you tell me." So he look in my basket he says, "Wow, you got a lot of shrimp, but this is not shrimp." He grabbed one, he say, "Do you know what this is?" I say, "no" he says, "This is sea lice. Nobody eats this. You don't pick this." "Oh I'm sorry" I said, "Nobody told me." So he cleaned my baskets and everything. And after that I knew which one was shrimps so I started learning how they, colors of the shrimp. It was brownies, hoppers, white shrimp, seven whiskers, these little orange shrimp and they get different kinds of shrimps like Louisiana had different, Texas got different. And Key West got different. All the shrimp is not the same shrimp. All different. Brown shrimp, white shrimp, Key West has got pink shrimp and a little bit down to Tampa they have rock shrimp. And on the other side of the coast in Cape Canaveral they have rock shrimp. Rock shrimp is nice to catch, pero that's a lot of money. You get two-three hundred baskets a night in those days, now I don't know, 'cause I don't know how much they catching. But in those days it was so nice you were catching so much shrimp that even when you tow, they came out clean. There was that much. And it was, and rock shrimp I think tastes better than any other shrimp. I don't know why, but it's good. But I tell you, in this city in here, when I came to Massachusetts, I never have no problems. One time I fell overboard. I was fishing on a boat from [?] Pass and the boat, there was another boat, and the boat that I was on, we have too many extra guys, so the captain asked me if I wanna go with this boat named MARGARET. It was fiberglass, big boat. And he asked me if you wanna go fishing with the MARGARET and he's gonna save my money for the shrimp that we already have in the hold, and he's gonna send it to me to the MARGARET, to the captain's house. So I say "Ok, I go" so I went fishing with

the MARGARET and we was fishing and we fished two days and on the third day in the morning, the mate is making the food for breakfast because we work night times. In daytime they anchor up all day. I remember he told me "Go check the bag for holes and go clean the bag" for the fishes and stuff you know. And check it for holes and stuff. So I was doin' that, pero we're running. Because he wants to go close to, I think he wanted to go close to Galveston, Texas around there because he hear on the radio that people was catching shrimp. So he's running over there. Pero me in the back of the deck, nobody's watching me. I'm cleaning. But the bottom of the fiberglass boat it was a little down to my knee and the boat was going up and down, up and down and me I was checking the net and I fell over board. And when I fell overboard I wanted to cry man, and I didn't know what to do. So what I did is I just see the boat keep on getting smaller and smaller and smaller. I tell you I started crying. I don't know what to do now. Because I see the boat getting smaller and smaller and smaller. And then I see him turning around, pero they don't come back to where I am, they looking over there see what else and I'm here and I have a white t-shirt. I took my white t-shirt and I'm trying to see but they don't see me so I don't know how much time passed by yet, maybe somewheres, I fall around 6:30, 7 o'clock in the morning and the sun already on my face and I am started to get tired. And I started keeping afloat pero its like, it was so hard for me to stay keeping afloat and I just keep on struggling. And thank God, this boat who pass by, one cargo ship, I remember exactly the name it says Chiquita Banana. It was big. I don't know which way they was goin' pero somebody in the boat came out from up there and they went to take a leak outside and they guy saw me. And he went inside and they went back before, i don't know how long it took for them to slow down. They turned around and they come back, pero by the time they went in and come back, it took them like, to me it seems like a long time. I say maybe an hour. And I'm sitting there, pero, what I'm doin' is just now, is just, I am just trying to stay afloat. I am not trying to swim or anything. The only thing I'm trying to do now is just stay afloat so I can, don't drown. I'm so glad there was not sharks or anything like that around. Because maybe if it had, I'd be right now not here. So what I did, I waited and when they turned around, they come back and they was looking at me. So they throw this ladder back down. Pero when I was climbing on the ladder I keep on falling, I can't grab nothing. Everything I put my hands in I try and I can't. So they got some kind of boat, they took out of the door, they have a door and they took this boat and they were coming to pick me up. When they picked me up my head, my face is black because the sun. And I can't see nothing because of the reflection of the sun on the water. I can see nothing and it's like the guys told me, "What happened" I say "Well I fall out of this boat" "We heard on the radio that somebody fall and they was looking, pero looking way over there, but nobody's looking in here." And I say, because when that happened I was cleaning a net and they keep on going and I see the boat got smaller and smaller until I can't see it. And then I see when he turn around and he come back a little bit and a little bit and he's going in circles, pero they don't know where I was. So they didn't find me. What they did, they called the Coast Guard, the Coast Guard come and pick me up and they took me to Galveston Hospital. And when I went to Galveston Hospital I stayed there for two days with, they treat me for dehydration and first degree, no, no, not first degree, some kind of second degree sunburn on my face, because the only thing that burned was my face, nothing else. My face because the water, because the only thing I was trying to stay afloat. And three days later they let me come

out so they let me out, so what I did, I just hitchhiked back to [?] I don't want to know what happened to the boat. I don't want to hear nothing. All I want is to go back home.

DM So how did you come to New England then?

FG When I came to New England, I was running a shrimp boat named Jehova Giro, and last trip I made I was in Key West, Florida. And there was no shrimp to catch there. It wasn't even enough shrimp to make money to pay for the fuel. So what I did I call on the side band, the owner, when I call on the side band, I say, "Listen, there's no shrimp in here, everybody's gone. It's the only boat right now in Key West. I don't see anybody floating around me for miles and miles. So I don't know what to do because I am only getting a hundred pounds a hundred and fifty pounds of shrimp a night." So he told me, "Whatever you wanna do. If you wanna go check in Tampa or whatever you wanna do or come back home." So what I did, I went around Tampa and checked a little bit. I was rock shrimp so I told him "There is rock shrimp in here." But all the shrimp was like 50 count. He told me "You mark the place that you've found?" I said, "Yeah I marked the place." Three years later the shrimp that I found in there, people was catching the shrimp, they got bigger. They was 25 count then. They was making money better. When I did that I just came back straight to Massachusetts, I mean to Bayou La Batre, Alabama. We unload, I left the boat and then I told the owner, "I don't wanna fish, I don't wanna shrimp no more." Because it was a freezer boat. Sixty days I was out fishing for three thousand dollars. It was not much money. And I left and I went, I got in my car, and I called my sister in California, I told her "Listen, I'm gonna go visit you for a week or two and then from there I don't know what I'm gonna do. So I went to San Pedro and I went to San Pedro and it was a lot of seining and it was tuna boats, all kinds of fishing vessels. So I went fishing on one boat, what it was, Sarah...It was a big boat, Sarah something. We used to put a net around like that and close it down in the middle and catch schools of tuna or salmon. And I work on the boat for two trips and I didn't wanna go no more because it was not enough money. And then what I did, I just put, went back home with my sister and I told her, I gotta go back to where I came, because I can't make no money here. So what I did, I came across I-65, I-40, I-65, I came all across the United States, all the way straight to Massachusetts. I got to Massachusetts and the first boat that I went on fishing was the MAJESTIC, Mike Smith. That was the first captain. I'm happy and I appreciate that he gave me the job for one trip so I can go learn. I mean I was already a fisherman, but something else that I never did. So all my life what I try to do is, well right now I don't do it no more, because I'm getting too old for that. But before when I was younger, I used to go--I would say, "That's a shrimp boat, I'm gonna learn that. That's this kind of boat, I'm gonna do that. That's longlining, I wanna do that." So I did. I scalloped, oystering, calico scalloping, long liner, lobstering and dragging and scalloping. So I was thinking in my head, maybe one day, something doesn't work, I know how to do something else. And it's like, it's why I end up in here. When I end up in here, I met my wife. We've been together 15 years. We've been married for 12. I got a 13 year old boy and 14 year old girl. And I don't regret it. I became happy for them because something, you are here for a reason. And I that was the reason to be here because when I met my wife, she's a kind of person that, she's sick, she got some kind of disease called Lupus and it attacks women. I don't know why that kind attacks women. I did find out that there's

still a type that goes through mens too. So I bought her a little doggie and she took him to the woods. We used to live on exit seven and she took the dog and when she came back home she don't, because I think maybe she never had a dog, it was hard for the dog, having ticks. And she got a bite from a tick and she ended up having Lyme disease. So now that never goes away. They give you a treatment for it, but it always stays in your system no matter what. So now she got that, Lupus and Lyme disease on top of that. And it's so sad because sometimes I feel like I didn't want to go fishing because I wanna see if something can happen to her sometime, because when she's sleeping she doesn't sleep. She always sweating so her body is so hot or she is twitching or moving. It's like, I never see, I never see in my life stuff like that happen to a person that have those diseases. And I can tell you that's very hard for a person to have that. Because I'm scared that she's, something will happen to her and my kids never gonna see her grow older. But if it happened, it's gonna happen for a reason, but in the meantime right now, it's like, I'm happy that she's still ok and my kids are doin' alright. And maybe we're struggling this year and we make one trip on DETERMINATION but it doesn't matter, you know. Food you're never gonna die because if you're hungry, there's plenty of places to give you food and help. You know like Shaw Fund and Barbara, I mean Debbie Shrader, she's a nice woman. She helped me a couple of times before when I was in trouble because I had surgery on my stomach. She's a very nice lady. She had surgery on her brain a couple of weeks ago because, I'm not sure what's wrong with her, but I hope she's ok now. But she's one of the nicest ladies around and they have a, I'm not sure how she got the money but it was a fund that somebody left the money for, to help the fishermen. But I think she's run out of money. One of these days when I get a job, I'm gonna open a thing on my computer and I'm gonna ask all the fishermen's around that got help from her, if maybe everybody gonna put something back to so other guys get something.

AB Yeah that's a good idea.

FG Because me, right now when I don't have any help, I wanna do it because that's what I told my wife, as soon as I have a job and everything, I'm gonna make, I'm gonna buy a computer and a printer and I'm gonna make it big and I'm gonna put it in the newspapers and I'm gonna say that's help from my friends they are then, my fishermens friends. But in the meantime, maybe people will see it. Maybe they start putting something back. Maybe one dollar or two dollars, anything helps. I hope they do it. But this is nice. I never have a chance to talk about this stuff like that and it's cool because like, I like people to hear about what's it's like you know.

AB It's great, great stuff.

FG When I ran, I was seven years old when I ran away from home because it was like, my father he was, not my father, he was my step-father. Pero this guy was a mean person and this guy, he beat me up for anything, only because if he, I go to the restroom and I take longer, I come out of there and he's beating me up. I was seven year old, a little kid, with a tendency to pee on bed, and I pee on my bed and what this guy, this did every morning is like, see oh he peed, he'd start beating me with anything he can find. A broom, or stick or a shoe, anything, anything. And I wish nothing happened to him, because I got

a brother that is my half-brother from him and my half-brother I told him before, "Your father was a mean person, you know?" And he doesn't believe it but I don't care if he doesn't believe it but I just want him to know that his father wasn't a nice person because he was some kind of custom, like people have a bar and they complain, people complain because they have too much noise and volume on the juke box so the people like him, he goes in the bar and he close the bar. And the first bar that he closed, they were selling alcohol with water so he closed the place and then when he went back to open it, there was three people waiting for him, when they opened it, they told him, "You wanna drink a beer with us?" And what he did, he says "Yes" Pero the lady that was the bar tender she said that one guy put a gun on the table and another one and another one and the next thing you know it's four guns on the table and everybody's drinking and they're talking about something that happened years back because I think they was his friends. And they say that one guy grab a gun and shoot him. So he grab his gun and he start shooting everyone. And he died with seven bullets in his chest and one in his arm. He used to have a nice watch that I loved that watch, I wish I had that watch. It was a Omega, his watch ended up with one bullet went through his arm. He got one, two, three, four, like six bullets he's got. And the lady says, the lady, before he died, the lady says that he was going down on the floor like this and the people was very, one of the friends was very hurt, she say, the guy keep on going like that, and there was no bullets, but he keep on shooting with no bullets until he died. The lady said, when he hit the floor, he was dead. She said that she don't think he was alive when he hit the floor. But in 1970, it was nothing like now. And you can find anybody. You can find the police or maybe it would take weeks or months or many a couple of years, but they will find somebody. Down there, they don't care about anything like that. You just die and they just bury 'em and they never do for the people that was, there was three people, pero I'm not sure what really happened. I wish I knew. But maybe those people are dead too. Because if you kill somebody, you die the same way. If you kill with a knife, you're gonna be killed with a knife. And he was, I mean he was a nice person. And the way that he makes little money, he shared with those, everything. Like if there was a plate of food for everybody because we were six kids, he didn't eat. He split everything. He says guys, you eat, I don't eat now. You guys eat. In that way he was good. But in the way that he was mean was the way that he treated us. It was very bad. I remember the day they came to the house. When we opened the door, there was two guys in suits. "You are Laticia Gonzalez?" "Yeah that's me." "You tell him." "No you tell him." "Ok." "You know your husband," "What somebody killed him?" She said. And they said, "Yes, he's dead." So it was so sad because to me, he never was a nice person, but maybe to another, to other people that knows him, maybe he was good people. In his funeral, it was like 20 buses full of police officers and I don't know how many cars. There was like, they took the whole one street. It was like, I'd say, three or four miles long. It was people in the whole way coming in cars and buses to the place to bury the guy.

DM So you ran away after he died or before he died?

FG No I ran away once when he was alive. But he found me. He brought me back home. But the second time that I ran away is when he was dead because I ran away because my mother was so poor and she was my mother and father in the same time because my

father left her when I was nine months and when I ran away, I just ran away because I wanted to look for a job so I can have money. My first job was in a bakery cleaning all the pans they used to cook the bread. My job was cleaning all those pans, grease them again for the next day. And go inside the oven, it was made out of brick. I'd go inside the oven and take all the ashes and everything that's in there, sweep it real nice and take everything out and grab water and spray water on the whole floor and then grab the wood again and put one like this and like you know, until it gets bigger and put paper in the middle and at a certain time, like 3:30 in the morning, I supposed to have the oven on so they all can be very warm again. So if I [?] they already have, the guys that make the bread, they're making the bread and they're putting things and so by the time they finish, the oven is all ready to start cooking. That was my job. And my pay was, every week I got a big bag of bread. That was my pay, and 25 cents. 25 cents and a big bag of bread. But I was very happy because every time I bring the bag of bread to my house, oh my god, my brother and my sister, said oh yeah, yeah. so happy. I brought that every week to the house. And every night, every night the guy says, you can take bread home every night. And he come to my family and he says, "You are seven so like three pieces of bread every day for everybody. So everyday I take bread for my house and at the end of the week he gives me my 25 cents and a big bag of bread. I was happy. That was my first job. And then I start doing another jobs like working washing cars on the streets because people like to have their car clean. So I'd wash cars. And when I was ten years old, I'm working in the national stadium selling sodas. They have these containers that you put on the back and you have the hose and you have the cups. I remember there was Orange Crush, Pepsi Cola, Grape, Salvidas, it's a [?] in Spanish Salavidas, the green bottles, there was Coca Cola and Pepsi Cola. And they sell beer too, but they don't have me, they don't give me no beer, because I only sell soda. So I have to work in the whole stadium. And the thing carries 40 sodas inside. It was very heavy because I was only ten. But I didn't care. All I want is the money so I can take [it] home. And I walked around the stadium with the thing and I sell sodas. They give me forty cups. When I come back to the place, what they do is they count the cups that I have left like if maybe I have three cups, they say, "Why you only have three cups left?" Maybe because I give some people too much. Maybe because they drink it and "Give me some more, Give me some more!" So I put a little more. So it's how I was making money because I put a little more and they give me a tip. When I came back to the place to get a new tank full of soda, I grab the new tank and they count, one, two, three, you got three left, so they got a, "He sold 37" They got how much money I gotta give them. "You sold 37, you gotta give me this much." So I give them much money, but the rest that is in my pocket, is my money. So you know what I'm sayin' whatever I sold, I just paid them what they want, and the rest that is in my pocket is my money. So I remember it was Sunday mornings football and it was Wednesday nights. I worked two times a week in the stadium and plus I work, I go to the gym, the national gym where the wrestlers for wrestling and there was every Friday morning, from 12 o' clock to eight o'clock, wresting. I used to make in wrestling, that day, I probably made ten dollars one day, six, seven hours, I made ten dollars. But in those days, ten dollars was a lot of money. Ten dollars was because one pound of sugar was like ten cents, one gallon of milk, five cents. Everything was so cheap, but I wish that we was back in those days. I'd be the happiest man on the planet.

AB That was amazing!