

# **A Relative Stranger**

A Work In Progress

alex mello

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*To my 'Sister', Lillian Marie Mello-Brodowski-Russell, who was my primary caregiver for the first five years of my life. I could not have lived without her mothering and loving care.*

# Contents

c> *()Life is a daring adventure or nothing at all.* -Helen Keller

c> #Preface#

1 I first thought of writing a book standing in line with thirty other Airmen, waiting\  
2 to board a fifteen hour Air Force flight from West Texas to Alaska. I had been for\  
3 tune enough to have been chosen by one of the funniest men I've ever known to be his\  
4 roommate. Jerry R. from Detroit was dropping one-liners faster than the laughter c\  
5 ould die down. I took a wire bound pad and pencil from my breast pocket and tried t\  
6 o write some of it down. But, alas, the line moved every few minutes, and we were e\  
7 ach dragging two full duffle bags, and had a carbine slung over a shoulder.  
8 I thought of writing a book again a few years later. I was working at one of the wo\  
9 rld's busiest airports for a major international airline. I was sure I had one of t\  
10 he most interesting jobs in the world.  
11 Less than a decade later I had had a business fail. I had to sell the car to save t\  
12 he house and was driving a taxi in the Tristate area. I got a call to meet a privat\  
13 e jet at Teterboro Airport. The man who got into my car was Johnny Cash. What a gr\  
14 eat guy - so easy to talk to. By the time we got to the Lincoln Tunnel, about fifte\  
15 en minutes, he was singing me a song - an audience of one.  
16 However, when I finally began writing it was for therapeutic reasons. I was having \  
17 a mid-life crisis and the first therapist I went to gave me a book to read. One of \  
18 the chapters offered a very comprehensible explanation of Freudian Therapy and the d\  
19 efinition of 'neurosis'. I went on to read some other works of Freud and some of Ju\  
20 ng, and decided to see what I could do with it on my own, since analysis and memory \  
21 for design, are among my strongest aptitudes.  
22 I tried to remember and write about how I experienced myself as a child at the time,\  
23 before trying to see that child through the eyes of the experienced adult I had bec\  
24 ome [those comments you'll find in brackets]. I found it to be an interesting and e\  
25 nlightening exercise.  
26 Most of what I wrote was too personal to publish - not just for me but for so many o\  
27 thers I wrote about. But I'm over eighty now, most of those other people are gone o\  
28 r, perhaps, too experienced to care and there are family members who were adopted an\  
29 d have had the tenacity and courage to find their biological relatives. The least I\  
30 can do, is offer them my experience of those family members they will never otherwi\  
31 se know, and especially, my experience of their mother.  
32 My books are still works in progress and growing in size, but my years are not. And\  
33 so, I've decided to publish a chapter at a time. This begins my first installment.