

# Who Am I?

by Jonah Mondragon

World History Period 7

September 29, 2021

## Part A: All About Me

I was born on November 2, 2005 at Taos Holy Cross Hospital. I had managed to wrap my neck in the umbilical cord such that I had to be removed from my mother's stomach by c-section. Part of my inception involved a custody battle between my mother and father. This custody battle forced my father to sell a 1968 Chevrolet Camaro Super Sport in order to pay for his lawyer, I would be driving it around today had he not sold it. Long story short, my father won custody over me and I have lived out the first fifteen years of my life in a large house next to the [Taos Country Club](#) with him. My dad's name is Ernie Mondragon and my mom's name is Lucy Robertson.

I bear crawled before I crawled normally and, according to my father, ran before I walked. In the courtroom where my parents allowed their lawyers to fight for the right of raising me, it was the first time I'd been able to see my father in months; I heard his voice and ran down the courtroom walkway to him as soon as I was out of my mother's hold, I was three years old. The reason for this custody battle boils down to the fact that my mother "kidnapped" me in the attempt to extricate me from the "abusive" hands of my father (the exact details of this don't have the need to be related here, but know that all is fine with my situation now). My mother obtained possession of me without the legal authority to do so a handful of times, the exact chronological order of these events is vague at best and the only way to decide if it exactly would be to scrounge through court transcripts and other documents, an endeavor that I don't want to partake in as I have exerted enough mental energy throughout my lifetime being concerned with my early childhood.

The initial arrangement of my custody situation was one that most kids in a situation similar to mine have had, shared custody; my father would have me for a week, then my mother would have me for a week (perhaps it was some other period of time, I can't remember). Of the time spent with my father I have quite literally no recollection, they were spent either with my father's ex wife, a woman whom I've grown to know as my grandma or playing video games; I don't remember going to school, it must have been before I was enrolled

in anything beyond a daycare, again my memories overlap quite a bit chronologically. Come to think of it my mother and father have never married.

A woman named Dawn (I believe “Dawn” is short for “Dawna,” I know, quite the truncation) at one point was my mother’s landlord. Dawn had a treehouse in the backyard on an old tree, I believe it’s a Chinese elm, the treehouse was removed the last time I saw the property, but I didn’t get the best view so I may have just not seen it. One time inside of the treehouse, on my own, there was a wasp, and I guess the wasp sensed my fear of it because it stung me square on the nose, it was the first time I remember being stung; I descended the latter with a blister on the tip of my nose to my mother and Dawn, when I entered the threshold of the door with tears dripping down my face my mother and Dawn got honey and put it on my nose. For some reason I associate this memory with bears; I believe I asked about why bears like honey or something, this association likely came from [Winnie The Pooh](#). The apartment my mom lived in was on the second floor of Dawn’s house, a rather small one, and I remember bringing toys of Batman and Shrek to this apartment to and from my dad’s house, this made the established boundary between life with my father and life with my mother less defined.

Dawn had two children and they had guinea pigs. When no one was watching, as I was allowed to play or pet them, I would throw the guinea pigs into the air as far up as I could and catch them on the way down, they made a squealing noise that I found humorous; but my mom caught me doing this one time and told me I could end up hurting them. Eventually I got my own guinea pig, far later in my life as my mother was no longer living in the country, and still not seeing how I could hurt it I threw it up into the air the same way as the guinea pigs belonging to Dawn’s kids. I don’t remember if at one time I didn’t catch it, it had a heart attack or it simply stopped breathing, but it died because of what I was doing, I placed the poor thing into it’s cage and pretended to sleep; I still hold back tears a little bit as I remember my dad looking into the cage to try and play with it (I don’t remember its gender or its name) and noticing that it wasn’t breathing.

My first shot with a gun was a bullseye (which happened sometime before or around the age of seven), my dad got an empty soup can with a quality badge printed on the front of it, and told me “This is the bullseye, aim here.” It took me about ten seconds to line up the shot and after I fired we went up close to inspect it; my dad had been surprised that I even hit it in the first place as he couldn’t because of the distance we were shooting from. To some respect, this event is proof that I’m a natural shooter, but if I am I haven’t honed that talent quite yet as I’ve seldom shot a gun after that. The reason I mention this isn’t just to toot my own horn, though there is cadence to that objective, but to demonstrate the derivation machinery of a lot of my early childhood was influenced by, I truly believed I was above others, the teachers who taught me, my friends who played with me, my family who guided me. The reason I believed this is because of the special attention I would receive and the notion I sensed to be present in the people around me, from as early as I can remember being able to converse, that I had a sort of special ability, perhaps a particular aptness for understanding my environment. Now I realize that everyone around me has tried to present my “potential,” as they say to me; I believe that same potential exists in everybody, and perhaps I could do something to help them realize it.

One of my memories with my mother is my in the backseat of her car, I was around eight years old at the time and she wouldn’t allow me to sit in the front seat, she had just finished telling me that warm water is better for you than cold water, but that drinking warm water from a plastic bottle isn’t as particles from the bottle end up in the water and therefore into your body, when she withdrew from a freshly acquired [Cid’s Food Market](#) shopping bag a container of peculiar green meat cubes, beef, and she offered it to me. I loved the stuff enough that, in my inquisitive nature, I asked her why it was green, I don’t remember what reason she gave for the color but she mentioned that it came from a cow. This wasn’t the first I’d heard about the farming of animals and I had long since accepted the fact that other things would die so that I would live, but for some reason, perhaps it was the color of the meat, or its flavor, or the name and logo of the brand that sold it that in

this specific instance it hit me in a particular way such that I started to cry; it seemed such a cruel injustice that it would be so flavorful but that such vain could exist for a cow to be killed in order to get sliced up into cubes and placed into a container. I'm not a vegetarian, but in that moment I was considering becoming one.

After a certain point my father had full custody over me (perhaps he had full custody over me ever since the initial court settlement, I don't actually remember) but he allowed time for me to be with my mom, he recognized, and continues to, the role a mother plays in one's life. There was a man named Eliot that me and my mom would frequent, the best way I could describe him would be as real life Mr. Miyagi, he's an elderly man who maintains great physical fitness in his old age through daily physical exercise, using proven techniques, and practicing meditation. My mom would come to him for guidance and bring me with; I'll still visit him every so often for the same purpose. The reason I mention Eliot is that she was the only friend of my mom's that I was directly aware of, as in not simply in passing, and she requested of my father that I and her spend a few days at a friend's house of whom I was unfamiliar, I believe the exact number of days was two. This is not where we ended up going. I don't know exactly what occurred, and I have not the delegation to inquire, but we arrived to some destination, it was dark and all I could see were a few cars parked outside a dimly lit porch, and I stayed in the car longer than would have made sense given an overnight visit at a friend's house; I fell asleep and when I woke up we were driving through an unfamiliar road surrounded by sagebrush. "Where are we going?" I asked, no response. The next thing I remember is daytime, I woke up in the backseat and at some point my mom asked me if I wanted to see an owl, I believe she used the name she had gave it instead of the word "owl"; we got out and she opened the truck, underneath a pile of sheets and blankets there was an injured owl, my mom must have found it injured or injured it herself.

"Why do you have it in the trunk, mom?" I said; keep in mind I don't remember exactly the words used, or even if they're spoken at all; this is purely from my memory.

"Because owls don't like the dark better than the day." She must have used an example

to compare the owl to, as that is her nature.

After a long time of travel, and a few more sleep sessions for me, we ended up on a small dirt road surrounded by sagebrush, a familiar scene, with an accompanying forest to our left; to our right was a magnificent black mountain that looked like a mountain I had seen out of [Ancient Aliens](#), my father is a fan of the show, where there was some sort of snake being with carvings on the walls and it would kill you if you got too close; I don't remember the exact details. We turned left off of the dirt road that led us to the area, my mom had the plan of going for a walk in the woods and so we hopped the fence that separated the sagebrush from the forest, I didn't want to and I expressed it, we hopped over the fence once again and went back into my moms car. At this point we were facing the opposite direction of the one that led us there and there was a little building or something along the border fence with it's area squared off with a gate, the stereotypical farm gate that everyone is familiar with; it was facing us and it was going to be a bit of a project to get out the way we came without driving over the sagebrush. As my mom was beginning to go through the struggle of backing out I told her of the mountain I'd seen in Ancient Aliens, apparently it freaked her out because she just rammed through the gate and drove out that way; the building was accompanied by two of these gates but the second one was open, the one that led the rest of the way to the dirt road. While I was associating the nearby mountain with the one I saw on Ancient Aliens, I genuinely had the plan of telling her; I don't remember if it was to get her to leave the area or because I was scared of it, but it accomplished the prior. Along with getting my mom to leave the area, my elaboration on the mountain also lead her car to have a broken windshield, a hole went straight through the driver's side of the windshield with shattered glass everywhere. She tried to cover it up with a piece of cardboard from the trunk but it was no use, the broken glass littering the inside of the car took a while to clean and we drove around with a loud clapping noise occurring every now and then and negative cabin pressure.

Eventually we got pulled over; my mother answered the cops' questions with a fear in

her voice, he questioned the hole in the windshield and the damage to the front end, I don't remember what her answers were but it's evident that they wasn't convincing as I soon found myself in the passenger seat of a cop car on my way to an orphanage. The cop that pulled us over got wildlife services to obtain the owl. On the way to the orphanage we drove past a frozen over lake, the opposing lanes branched around it; there was a car that had falling into the lake, it was upside down with another car, it must have been a pretty extreme accident. The cop found a way to drive onto the ice, winter must be so severe there that one can feel comfortable driving on a frozen lake (I believe we were in Idaho, but again I don't feel the need to ask my parents for exact details), he stayed on scene helping as much as he could until other cops arrived, he had radioed in that he had a kid with him that had to get to the orphanage. I don't remember saying anything to the cop, but I was smart enough that I must have given him information about my father, we must have talked about the owl and life in general, as I have vague images that relate to those concepts.

The orphanage was depressing, I was already familiar with what life was like at one of them; the caretakers believed that I was to stay there until adulthood and thus I believed the same. Part of the coping process I went through involved visiting everyone's room; one person, an older boy probably around fifteen years old, had a TV that was tuned to a channel playing [Tom and Jerry](#), one of my all-time favorite shows, this helped me to accept my fate. I arrived at the orphanage a few hours before nightfall; around the time eventide came I was told that my dad was coming to get me. He arrived near midnight on my sisters car, a hybrid Toyota Corolla that I don't know the year of, with my brother in law James Mondragon and two others. We drove home in the dark and I got the best sleep I had gotten since I left my home.

After that incident my mom ended up in a mental hospital for a while. I remember calling her and talking about words and language, discussing happenings in school, and asking her for advice; she was, and still is, in a healthy state of mind. My mom has a deep understanding of physics phenomena and spiritual and physical wellbeing. Truly I'm not

fully aware of the situation surrounding me, my intuition gives me a dull concept of my family, but I still find a way to love them, everything has led up to this point and I'm ready to move forward with the biggest punch I can muster.