

Transcript

ORAL HISTORY LAB (OHL)

University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez

Oral History Interview with Yeandres Rivera González

PREFACE

The following oral history is the result of a recorded interview of Yeandres Rivera González conducted by Giovanni Bonilla Martínez on February 26, 2022. This interview is part of course work done by students at the University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez.

Readers are asked to bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of the spoken word, rather than written prose.

00:00:00

Giovanni: Greetings. My name is Giovanni Bonilla. Martinez and I will be your interviewer for this session. We are currently located at a friend's apartment in the town of Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. To start off, I want to begin by asking some general questions. First, do I have your permission to record audio for this interview?

00:00:23

Yeandres: Yes, you can.

00:00:25

Giovanni: Thank you. Now, what is your full name?

00:00:29

Yeandres: My full name is Yeandres Rivera Gonzalez.

00:00:34

Giovanni: Can you spell your first name for me?

00:00:35

Yeandres: Y e a n d r e s.

00:00:43

Giovanni: Where does that name origin from?

00:00:45

Yeandres: So my mother told me that uh when I was uh uh wum uh , I was in the in the belly of my mother. She told me that in that era, the the the trend of names was Giancarlo, Jean Paul, Jean Andrés. But she wanted to give it a twist. So, she give it a mix from the name Jean and also the name Andrés. And she put those two names together and she called me.

00:01:26

Giovanni: Okay, that's very interesting. How old are you?

00:01:30

Yeandres: I'm 21 years old.

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00:01:32

Giovani: When were you born?

00:01:33

Yeandres: March 6th of 2000.

00:01:36

Giovani: Okay. In what town? If you were born in Puerto Rico, were you born and raised.

00:01:42

Yeandres: San Juan, Puerto Rico. I was born there, but I was raised in Toa Alta, Puerto Rico.

00:01:51

Giovani: Okay. When where do you currently live?

00:01:54

Yeandres: Right now, I live at Mayaguez, Puerto Rico because of the university. But I still live in Toa Alta Puerto Rico since I was born because my parents live there. So, I visit them.

00:02:10

Giovani: You already mentioned that due to university, you live in Mayaguez. So, my follow up question is what do you do? As in what do you study? And so on.

00:02:21

Yeandres: I'm a student that studies electrical engineering and currently I- I'm at my fourth year of my bachelor.

00:02:31

Giovani: How are you doing in this time of the pandemic and in general with college and everything?

00:02:37

Yeandres: Right now, I think that I'm doing great besides past semesters because currently I have two jobs. One is work-study in the university and also have a job aside. But also, I'm currently having twelve credits in my um in this semester that includes um uh electrical systems analysis three, um systems and signals. And the other course is uh German and um linear algebra.

00:03:17

Giovani: Okay, thank you for that. Now that we have stated some general information about yourself, I would like to get into our main topic for this interview, which we have discussed before, prior to asking to interview you, which is your car accident. My first question relating to this topic is, can you provide the exact date of the accident?

00:03:41

Yeandres: January six of 2020 at 9 a.m.

00:03:49

Giovani: What were your thoughts during that morning?

00:03:53

Yeandres: Well, I have a mixture of um thoughts, ideas, uh reflections, so many things that pops up in my head at that moment. And I can say that I kind of feel blanked because everything happened so fast since even fo- since yesterday, even since that 7 a.m., 8 a.m., 10 minutes prior to the accident, it was so hectic, my mind at that moment and after the accident

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that I survived, thank God um I can say that I have so many things to say but complicated to show them.

00:04:40

Giovani: Are you okay?

00:04:42

Yeandres: Right now, yes. Uh during the accident um, on- one month later, two months later, even a year later, I- I will say not. But right now, I'm currently great.

00:04:54

Giovani: Okay. Can you describe your car?

00:05:00

Yeandres: I have Ma - um Mazda. I don't remember the name exactly, of the model of the car, but I know there is a Mazda 2006. It's a it's a family car it uh-.

00:05:16

Giovani: That's okay. The name the name of the car is not important. Maybe just the color, the attachment, the use of the car, how old it was.

00:05:24

Yeandres: Yeah, it was from 2006 is. It's a blue car. I call it blue beetle. Um it also has some accessories that my dad gave me ah to the car for camping. I had like two camping sets uh rack in the hood of the car to move stuff. Yeah, I really like that car. I really have a pretty nice- [inaudible]. And also, my dad helped me a lot to um not only set it up, but also uh buy it um financially.

00:06:00

Giovani: Okay, I'm going to ask a question that I should have asked before when I mentioned how did you feel that morning? And it's that, we know that during that day there were earthquas-, earthquakes during the morning. How do you feel during th- the earthquakes, during and after you experienced them?

00:06:26

Yeandres: So, I was sleeping when the earthquakes happened and also, I have my mind scramble the day before. So, receiving that the earthquakes it was so shocking to me because that was the um- least ex- thing I expected from that day in *El dia de los Reyes Magos*, three kings' day, um thinking that it's going to be like a great day or also like trying to like um continue from a bad thing that happened the day before. So having that um [inaudible] the earthquake, it put me frightened and put me frenetic. Uh I rushed out of my apartment because I live in a third floor, so everything shakes very bad. Um and also it was the same day I wanted to see my my family because of the three kings' day. So yeah um, I feel that I rushed out without realizing that even though if it, if even like even- even if, like I clean my mouth or like take a shower quickly or like the simplest thing, I just ran out of my apartment.

00:07:36

Giovani: Yeah, I understand you mentioned that you were also startled, in a way, from the day before. What happened? The day before.

00:07:44

Yeandres: So, the day before um uh January five. It's also the the festival um *Vispera de los Reyes Magos* [three kings day eve] um in Juana Diaz in the south part of Puerto Rico. Um I was there with my family because they were also celebrating at that festival. Um and also, I

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visit them because I haven't seen them in a while because um prior to those dates I was like at my own doing my own stuff, trying to be independent, trying to get my own job that I was going to have an interview, uh a job interview at Chili's at Mayaguez on January seven. So, I was also studying for the exam, for the interview that prepare myself to get a job. So also, I was like excited and have the emotions about that. And also, um [clicks tongue] in- in the in the [clicks tongue] winter vacation in Christmas, I spend a lot of time with my aunt, um part of my f- dad family um and not necessarily my own family, my parents. So, when I visit them, um I stay with them [inaudible] we just drink a little and eat some food. But I want to rush out because I left up some stuff at my apartment that really needed to get them um not necessary, like to to travel to move them to my house is that I really need them because of the job interview, because they are gonna like do stuff on my own. So, I rea- really need to rush to go back to my apartment to get the stuff. And it was like seven. No, it was like 8 p.m. So, I went to like leave early from the festival and my dad wasn't loving the idea and he was in denial. So, he said to me no to go. But I insisisted because I really needed to do it. Because, like I cannot leave that important paper that um the repaso [review]? I couldn't leave it to because I needed to study for the interview. Um so my dad was getting cranky because he he likes to drink a lot. And he also like ge- he's kind of like an alcoholic. So, he was getting drunk at that day, and he raised his tone to me saying that I won't drive back to my apartment, and I will stay with him. And going back to home um for Three Kings Day. And I didn't like that. So, I asked for my uncle that he has a house nearby in the festival. That was my car parked there, so uh my uncle was in favor for my dad's side um of the decision of me leaving. So, after that my dad start yelling me and insulting me some bizarre stuff in front of people while drunk um that I will not leave the I will stay together as a family. Seen like a- he's also like he tried to say that if it's like he was in the right or like he was trying to like save the family because I will stay with him. And also, that was so wrong because it felt me so uncomfortable. I feel insulted um in front of everyone, embarrassed. So, at that moment I just ran and went from the house for my uncle and stay there crying. Um and one and a half hour later, 2 hours later, um they arrived, and my dad was more calm and there was like also my grandma and my mom, my uncle. And they said, oh, you can go whatever. You can go to your apartment, but you need to stay there and not travel at the midnight to your home in Toa Alta. Um and really wanted to do that because I'm ni- more like a night person, so I can like drive at night I'm not so much a morning person, so uh but I listen to them because to to please them because of the shenanigans. And um outrage that my dad cause. So, I leave there at 10 p.m. and arrive around 12 a.m. at 12 of the morning at my apartment and I fell asleep. So, when I woke up at January six, I was thinking, all the situation of the day before that I had a fight with my parent because I think that he fight because um I haven't stayed with him with a while and I was trying to do my things at my own. An- and I think that he doesn't like that because he's like a person that likes to manipulate or control one a lot, asking a lot of favors, a lot of a lot, a lot of favors and not stopping with them and thinking that everything's going to be all right, because I want to do my own things. Like, he thinks that I have ev- everything for him and let's not like that. I'm studying. I'm starting to work. I need to be independent like he is, but he doesn't seem like that. So, when I wake up at the earthquakes. Yeah. Once they get all that bad things that the day before and the earthquake really put me mad. Um uh I was also sleepy because I was um, I guess um I wa- I sleep at 10:12 a.m. and well, when I [sighs] when I started driving to go to my home at Toa Alta, I ran so quick because of the earthquake, because of the situation. And nah, it really put me very upset at that day.

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00:13:57

Giovani: Okay. You mentioned that your father helped you get some things for your car. And you also mentioned that he mentioned he said he spoke some bizarre comments towards directed at you during the party. Would you emphasize on that? Would you comment on what those bizarre comments were and try to describe what you consider is your relationship with your father? Is it a good relationship? Is it bad that he help you with your car because he wanted to or because he had to? Because you're his kid?

00:14:37

Yeandres: Well, he helped me to get my car. And I think because he had to because I'm his kid and unnecessary. Because I wanted to. Because I raised my own money to buy my own car. I have like around 2000 and a half um US dollars. But he wanted to put the same amount that I have to buy a good-looking car. And I didn't want that because I was pleased to have a normal or used cheap car. But he wanted to give that extra mile because he thinks that I'm his um, let's say daddy's um perfect son, whatever. Because I study electrical engineering. Um My dro- my brother is a dropout. Um my sister studies microbiology um its- she's studying for um to be a nurse. So, my dad has a dream to be an electrical engineer. He's like an electrician but is not an engineer. So, he seems to me like a prized possession. So, if I can ask him something that I really need or um uh um that I really need, he will help me. But he will also like take advantage of me for doing so.

00:16:06

Giovani: Oh, like, want something in return?

00:16:08

Yeandres: Exactly. Company or.

00:16:13

Giovani: A favor.

00:16:16

Yeandres: Mua- It's more likely labor work

00:16:18

Giovani: okay.

00:16:19

Yeandres: Because he also like he has a job in called Pfizer. Um he's like uh electrician of the machine that operates the uh refills of the prescribed medicines. But also, he has two side jobs that are um garage door repairman and installation and AC, that is air conditioning, installation, and repairman. So, he I have a dream to like have his own company. But um his brother couldn't. They didn't want to help them to have his own, AC and garage door company. So, he always use my me and my brother to [inaudible] to do those side jobs. But he uh he's a very workaholic man. So, he he always went to have the perfect job with a perfect timing, with a perfect stuff. If you do one mistake, he will yell at you. He will insult you and say that it's your he his, your wrong, he- you're wrong. But if he makes a mistake, al- all is good, all is clear. So, the work continues. And and sometimes even though that he's wrong in the smallest like the wrong screw for the garage store or the cables are put wrong, or I couldn't give him the tape because I was doing something else. He always tried to blame someone and not blame himself. And since I remember from my memory, he didn't do that a lot. But time passed on and he started to like blame more to others than himself. Seem like he's always right. So, my relationship with my dad that caused those nasty comments, like he

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tries to manipulate me and control me looking that I'm wrong and he's right and I need to do what he says.

00:18:16

Giovani: And those comments originated because you didn't want to do what he told you to do.

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Yeandres: Yeah, because I wanted to leave early to do my own stuff, to get my prepare my job interview. And he wanted to leave everyone um together to back to home for three kings' day. But I didn't wanna. I wanted to go on my own pace. I wanted to do my own stuff. And he got pissed and he sold me all of that.

00:18:45

Giovani: But were the comments only related to what you wanted to do, or were they more personal in a sense? Were they directed at a specific detail about yourself?

00:18:58

Yeandres: If I can say personal, I wouldn't say that because I was also like trying to avoid my father this vacation. I was spending more time with my aunt. So, he really get pissed for not contact him for not um I'm talking with him for not being present so much with him this vacation. So, I think that those comments he throw to me that were you're staying here right now. You're going to do what I say. I don't care if you had an interview. We're leaving right now. No, sorry. We're staying right now. We leave together in a very nasty way. I think it was because he was missing me. Because he wanted to um to use me or I don't know, he- he wanted me to be there, but in a wrong way.

00:19:59

Giovani: Does he usually yell at you when he gets drunk?

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Yeandres: Um not even drunk? He always yells like drunk and not drunk. But when he gets drunk, he always throws those subtle comments that always um throws you off because they're comments that are being just hurtful, like being, oh, uh you don't understand what I say, or you always being so stupid or nobody understands what I said. You need to do it this way because this is my house and like you should do it this way or. Also, he's a very cranky man. Like if he this- doesn't eat anything, he always, like, start fighting for everything and blames you for everything. Like, an- I was studying on my um, my own. And he blames that there's no food in the house. Maybe you have your own money. You can buy your food for yourself in a fast food or try to learn to cook, try to do stuff to yourself. He always wants to do people to do stuff for him, and that's time consuming because his- he doesn't say thank you. He doesn't say uh please. It always says, do it now er- or I will get angry or cranky or I'll insult you.

00:21:17

Giovani: Did these arguments with your father start once he left for college, or were they present before?

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Yeandres: Oh, since I was born like.

00:21:26

Giovani: [Chuckles]

Transcript

00:21:26

Yeandres: There were always because when I was a kid, it was always um to do stuff that my dad likes, especially um um riding mountain bikes, BMX. Um it was a competition that before was kind of on the ground, that it was um bikes that you can ride in the four-by-four tracks while terrain he was his passion is are very passionate man about bicycles cycling and me and my brother and my sister didn't like that so he forced my brother to do it. And it was a bad experience because everyone was kind of sad, mad every time we go out on Sunday running, um riding bicycles because he's always forced it and not always ask for or um ask for it in a nice or kind way. Um years pass by. Um he thinks that I'm straight and he thinks that I'm his perfect son because I'm more kindly intrigued to technology and electricity. And he study um. He's an electrician. So, he seemed that way that I should like go to the- to the colegio [college] UPRM to study electrical engineering to fulfill his dream. And honestly, I think that it's still my dream, not his dream. Because I was fan of the electricity, I took engineering because I was like light shows, renewable energy and not to please him. And I think that he seems that way that he's going to be proud. That's I'm studying electrical engineering because when my brother study um microbiology and also psychology, he didn't mention that he's studying like you also mentioned, like, oh, he's doing his own thing. But when he talks about me, oh, my son Yeandres is studying electrical engineering in- in El Colegio. Uh he's in his second year. He was like, gave that extra talk to me instead of my brother or my sister are still doing their hard work. So, I feel that pressure on. So, he was so proud telling him that I was going to electrical engineering and at 12th grade that I know that I was going um to colegio. And and I knew that um things happens in the university. One explores his own sexualities, own identity. Um Its own mental issues and also outside issues, social issues. I knew that um I had me I needed to came out to my- to my parents, especially to my dad, because my dad is very homophobic. Uh well, I will not say homophobic. I will say very um mas- um. Conservative. He's very conservative. Um I don't know the word in English, but I will say *machista* [male chauvinist]. So, when I told him the news, um he get out rated, outrages so badly that he throws um stuff around the house. He has his own car with the garage door and the AC. He literally grab it and shake it and yell why- that my son is gay to all the neighbors. And then he um obligated me to tell my sister that I was gay. But she knew before him because I was was had. I was have a connection with my sister, so she was like, cool with it. So, he really go- I think I really got mad because everybody knew except him because I never had the confidence or the genuine connection to trust him, to tell him, because I knew he was gonna get upset and was gonna get mad because he put me like in a pillar and saying that he thinks that it's like a downfall. And he acted like if I was like a dumb fool. So, after he shook the car, he throws stuff around the um the garage room. Um he got drunk. So drunk he drank a bottle of wine of my mother, and he passed out at the living room of my house and start [inaudible] there. And I was felt so disgusted that he insulted me, yell at me, tell him like I came up to him and he tell it to all the neighbors, putting me in that tough position, looking like I was being abused. And it was very difficult to me to see him then getting drunk for no reason and then being passed out like there. So, me and my mom carried him, taken to the shower with certain clothes off because he was still puking. And we lay him there with our shower running, puking. And so, because he he, he did that and we're not going to well he's, my dad. So, I still love him. And I tried to save him that moment, but I leave him with those shame on because it was so disgusting the way he treated me and also get into my mother because he yelled to my mother to stay back like looking at if I was like a danger or a conversation that she doesn't to belong. She doesn't need to belong there. It was a horrible experience. Well, after that day, my father didn't talk to me for two weeks. He almost even

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didn't come to a house like he he works like five p-, 5 a.m. of um um since- through Monday to Saturday. But he always arrived at from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. But since that moment, those two weeks, he always arrived at 7 p.m., 8 p.m., almost 9 p.m. and he arrived to sleep to avoid me because yeah, I lived there. So yeah, it was a pretty difficult experience because he didn't, I don't know that he tried to avoid me because he was mad at me. I think oh uh um he was mad at me, but I don't think it was it was ifr- if he was ashamed of it or mad at me, didn't want to like throw a punch or do something. Um but after those two weeks, he said to me, I don't like um those stuff and I don't believe it, but I respect it. And still he tried to cope with it or to live with it, but I think that is still like he doesn't like accept me at all. So, uh that was like from 12th grade. Until this day things are better but not um perfect. I think that they're the same and also got affected even worse because of the car accident. Because he put me in a pillar for studying electrical engineering. And then after that car accident, um [clicks tongue] it was like a setback for him because he didn't um he didn't worry about my life. He worry about more of the money spent in the car, that the car was a total waste because the way that um I lost my car, the the car accident is that I was ex- um in a I was exceeding the velocity of the of the vehicle in *en el tunel de Guajataca* [in the tunnel of Guajataca] but.

00:30:03

Giovani: If I may, a little side note. If you feel like you're stuck and you need to say something in Spanish, you can. I'm the interviewer or you're the narrator. This is your story. You can say things however you want.

00:30:16

Yeandres: Thank you. So um when I was saying that the car accident occurred in *el tunel de Guajataca* [the Guajataca tunnel] at Isabella at 9 a.m., and it happened because I was exceeding the um the velocity of the car and I wasn't like paying attention of that because I was in my head thinking about the insult of my dad, the earthquake, trying to arrive at home as quickly as possible because of the um *dia de los reyes magos* [three kings day]. So, it also rained that there. So, in the hill of the street the car got stuck or the the wheel of the car-

00:31:03

Giovani: Got stuck?

00:31:03

Yeandres: It got stuck, and I couldn't, like, move at anything. And I was, like, slipping from right to left.

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Giovani: How did you feel in that moment?

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Yeandres: I was scared, but it was so quick that I couldn't even say that I was scared. I was shocked. Mostly I was shocked. But it'll happen like in a second since the wheel got stuck, and and second later I was like upside down from the car accident. And if and if and it happened because of giving those spins of the slippery um street of my car. Uh I give a 360 that I end up um *chocando con un poste de telefonica* [crashing with a telephone utility pole] and the car gave a 180 turn. And I end up upside down and the the the crystal of the windshield the car the one of the front of the car blasted in, shattered through my face, and I end up having crystal pulverized crystals all over my head and my my head, my face, even my throat, my eyes. So, I was like in shock at that moment because I didn't know if if I- I know that I could move, but I didn't know if I should move because of a head injury, because

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the accident was in the [clicks tongue] left side of the car that I was driving there. So, it was like at my door. So, I was like upside down. And after I will say 10 to 30 seconds, I rea- I realized that I was like upside down. And I started screaming, Help, help, somebody help. And um I also couldn't get down because I was like hanging out the seatbelt. And it was um, thank God, that two um bus two school buses were going to San Juan for a festival of *dia de los reyes magos* [three kings day], and they were having a lot of children. And in that bus, they had two um nurses that helped me to get off the car and also clean my eyes. So, because of her, I will say that they saved my vision, my eyes, and I'm also pretty grateful for that. Um then the police came. They check me if I was in drugs or always in something, and I did say no, I was all right. I cool. I could answer with great but I still I was in shock because of the car accident and thinking about how my dad was going to see me. So, they rushed me out to the hospital. Do me the MRI scan to see if I hav- have any internal bleeding or any problem [clicks tongue] and all came out um great. But still I was held in the hospital [clicks tongue]. So, my aunt, that is well, my si- I will say my second aunt because she's really the aunt of my father, the sister, my grandma, not necessarily my aunt, but also her aunt. So [clicks tongue] she rushed she rushed out to the hospital to see me and cry, help me out to see if I was okay. And all I felt such at peace having her there because and it was weird because she's not [clicks tongue] I haven't had so much time with my um [clicks tongue] my aunt compared to my parents and having those be the times this vacation with my aunt I- I felt so great and she helped me to retain that fear that my father gone- came to the hospital and when he came, he came with a hungover from the day before of the *vispera de los reyes magos* [three kings day eve] that he yelled at me taking some kind of meds to take out his uh hungover. I don't know, it was aspirin or what, but he looked like he was so messed up. And he was he rushed there to the hospital and again, he started yelling instead of saying that if I was okay, um.

00:35:31

Giovani: Where are you? Okay, did you suffer any major injuries?

00:35:35

Yeandres: Well, the only major injuries that I have, like problem with my vision, like um my eyes irritates a lot. So, and also my glasses I have to like um since then I changed the prescription like three times since 2020 um and still became. And now I use like four types or try- three types of medicines for my eyes. But besides that, I'm okay, um.

00:36:07

Giovani: No dislocated shoulder, knee? Nothing like that?

00:36:09

Yeandres: The only physical damage is for my eyeballs. But. But after that. No- Nothing else. Only my mental health. And. Yeah, so.

00:36:23

Giovani: And how was the experience with your father after he arrived at the hospital-

00:36:30

Yeandres: Hurtful.

00:36:30

Giovani: Compared with your aunt?

00:36:30

Yeandres: Oh, compared with my aunt. It was uh totally different because my aunt was caring, helpful, loving. Uh she tried to be calm that everything's um okay. Like, fuck the car.

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We don't need that. It's only material um but my dad was very materialistic, caring about the car and unnecessary for me, insulting me, saying that. Why I did the- why did I incur the accident knowing that I can act like yes, I could control the speed um velocity of the car, but I couldn't control that maneuver when it got stuck and and also with a slippery wet. So it was shocking for me, like giving me a lot of excuses, insulting for not being great and trying to, like, avoid that moment. It was very triggering for me.

00:37:31

Giovani: You said that you could have controlled the speed limit at which you were driving but-

00:37:37

Yeandres: I could control, but I didn't control it because I was thinking all over my head-

00:37:41

Giovani: No, it's okay. I understand. But as I was gonna say, you could have controlled that. But you weren't in a right place. You were thinking about the earthquake. You were thinking about the day before with your father and the argument.

00:37:55

Yeandres: And the job interview of the- [inaudible].

00:37:57

Giovani: Yeah, all of those things where you were thinking about them, maybe you weren't thinking straight, you were just-

00:38:07

Yeandres: Yeah, I was-

00:38:07

Giovani: Thinking about what you were going to do.

00:38:07

Yeandres: I felt that I was I wasn't driving. I was trying to arrive as fast as possible.

00:38:14

Giovani: You felt numb?

00:38:15

Yeandres: I wouldn't say numb because I was uh.

00:38:23

Giovani: Did you feel like you were blank?

00:38:25

Yeandres: I was seein- I was seeing myself in a future. I will say like that, because if I will say I felt numb, it's like going straight ahead to the walls, to going straight ahead to uh electrical pulse. It wasn't like that.

00:38:38

Giovani: That's not what I meant. By numb. By numb. My men like you; you weren't focused on the road. You were just focused on your mind. You were lost in yourself.

00:38:46

Yeandres: Yes, yes, I was focus on my mind last thing the the day before, trying to see myself in the future, thinking of the job interview, thinking how can overpass

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00:38:56

Background Noise: Loud rubber squealing from car tires.

00:38:58

Yeandres: that bad thing with my parents, with my dad. So yeah, I wasn't thinking of driving. I was trying to think what to do next.

00:39:09

Giovani: Yeah. So, in a sense, you were kind of overwhelmed.

00:39:12

Yeandres: Yes, I remember very overwhelmed and not paying attention to my surroundings.

00:39:16

Giovani: So, would you say that the discussion with your father the day before and the influence of the earthquake during the morning had a big impact?

00:39:25

Yeandres: Yes, I had a big impact. And the sad thing is that my dad is in denial of that, and I don't want.

00:39:34

Giovani: You talked about it with him. You told him how you felt in that moment?

00:39:36

Yeandres: So many times, and it doesn't work, and he still blames it on me. And I know that I could control the the gas pedal, but he doesn't understand that I was struggling with that embarrassment, um felling like I was worth-

00:40:01

Giovani: You felt humiliated the day before?

00:40:03

Yeandres: I felt worthless that day before the way he treated me, I felt manipulated. So, yeah, I- I- I will say that because of that, most [inaudible] and even though though today is 2022, that was two years ago. And I- I also still think about that. Still think about that moment. Still haunts me. And even for the smallest details or f- many fights with my father, that came that memory comes back to me, triggers me, like.

00:40:39

Giovani: It always comes back to you?

00:40:41

Yeandres: Yeah. And and it's like, you know, that you. Cause this moment I cannot, like, live without it because it haunts me. And I say that I just please um ask you for a bare minimum like to treat me well or- or- or be different to me or being kind to me. And that's a great person he is. He doesn't do it. And he still put his finger in the in the wound.

00:41:18

Giovani: So, would you say that-

00:41:21

Yeandres: Because he doesn't see that it was a wound.

00:41:24

Giovani: So, would you say that if there would have been no discussion prior to the accident with your father, there would have been no accident?

Transcript

00:41:34

Yeandres: I will say-

00:41:34

Giovani: Would have that been a possibility?

00:41:36

Yeandres: I will even say that if I would hav- if I haven't had that discussion the day before, I'll say that out today. It will be a totally different Yeandres.

00:41:49

Giovani: In what sense?

00:41:51

Yeandres: As in not having PTSD from that car accident, not having more fear- issues to my parent, to my dad, um I will be m- maybe visiting more to my parents instead of not visiting them. Uh I would even say even more not loving to them, more like self-love or like self-confidence. Because after that I felt that my confidence went down.

00:42:20

Giovani: You say them. Are you including your mother in this topic?

00:42:24

Yeandres: Yeah, because like they're like [inaudible] theirs together every time. So, every time that I see my mother, my dad is there. Every time I see my dad, my mom is there. That's like, no, um alone time when my mother and if there is it's that when my dad works, and my mom is at home. So that's the only time that I can bond with her. And I always love my mom and my mom's always was supportive of me but-

00:42:51

Giovani: So, she doesn't feel the same way as your dad?

00:42:52

Yeandres: No, no, no. She's totally different from my dad. She's very loving. She's very caring. She's very helpful, thoughtful. And my dad is totally opposite. And my mom always have a catchphrase, a- a message. She always says to survive the day they um [inaudible] that my parents that is that um I will say it in Spanish because the ph- um the phrase is in Spanish "*El loco es loco hablando solo*" [The crazy is crazy talking by themselves] um she always-

00:43:26

Giovani: I have never heard that in my life. But would you care to emphasize on?

00:43:32

Yeandres: Sorry I- I- I said it wrong.

00:43:34

Giovani: Oh.

00:43:34

Yeandres: "*El loco se queda, el loco se queda peleando solo*-" [The crazy stays, the crazy stays fighting by themselves-] something like that.

00:43:41

Giovani: "Chuckles"

00:43:41

Yeandres: Um it's that my mom seems like my dad is crazy because of the mini outrage that

Transcript

blames everyone for any reason, even though he- sometimes he has the blame or the guilt and also still blames to others. So, my mom tends to uh not give him too much attention because that fuels him.

00:44:06

Giovani: She doesn't give him the benefit of the doubt? She just-

00:44:08

Yeandres: Exactly.

00:44:09

Giovani: She thinks for her own. She's always with him, but she's always with her own thoughts.

00:44:14

Yeandres: Exactly. Except for major decisions such as um buying a car or having to go to Mayaguez.

00:44:23

Giovani: Your father is always in charge for those decisions?

00:44:27

Yeandres: Financial issues? Yes, moral issues. I think that she's always there to like um-

00:44:34

Giovani: Take charge?

00:44:34

Yeandres: Take charge. But sometimes my dad outrage so much that his excuse is I am the man of the house, I have the money of the house. I can do whatever I want to do. So that's like a uh shocking factor between me, my mom, and my family. It's like everyone against my dad.

00:45:00

Giovani: Would you say your siblings feel that way as well?

00:45:03

Yeandres: I will say the same, or even worse. So, my sister wanted to go to Texas um to study um nurse to be a nurse there. And also, I have an aunt that lives in Texas. And my aunt did everything possible to do so and my dad didn't let her go, even though my aunt and sister got some scholarships for her, transportation, hospitality with my aunt. So, everything was gonna be set. But my sister, she's a very introvert person. She doesn't talk a lot. So, it's always like um being at her sel- um at her own self in her room, her alone.

00:45:50

Background Noise: Ocean wave like sound.

00:45:51

Yeandres: She doesn't even talk to my father in four days.

00:45:56

Yeandres: Ocean wave like sound repeats.

00:45:56

Yeandres: So, for that reason that my sister doesn't talk with my father, my dad said no because she doesn't talk to my father. My sister doesn't like my father for that reason only my dad denied fight, cry, insulted my sister to not go to Texas to have her own dream. But I know

Transcript

that it will be so different if my sister said I was going to study mechanical engineering, or whatever engineering in any place of the world because it's something that he likes.

00:46:32

Giovani: So, he only lets you guys do something as long as he likes it?

00:46:37

Yeandres: Exactly.

00:46:39

Giovani: And how do you feel about that?

00:46:44

Yeandres: [clicks tongue] So most things hateful. But for me, it's more shocking because I really do like electrical engineering. I think that is my passion. And I found it horrible because he tried to influence me. Like if he's like the product of having that decision. And I know that he influenced me, but I tried to do it for myself not to please him um. And also, he mentions to me that you don't need to study that because I- uh I obligated you. But other times he like praised me a lot and looks like he's obligating me. So, he's telling you one thing, he's telling you another thing, and then he weighs on you. So, it's. It's crazy.

00:47:39

Giovani: What do you say is the thing you treasure the most from your experience after your accident, as in in a way. What did you learn that day that you have put in practice every day of your life, ever since your accident?

00:47:56

Yeandres: [inaudible]

00:47:58

Background Noise: Motorcycle tire sound.

00:47:58

Yeandres: That I love myself, that there is more to life, that the car doesn't define me. And after that, I still do things on my own without the car. Uh also, going to therapy helps a lot and I recommend it because it gives you another perspective of even the small, big problems that one has and also. It will help you to not dissociate with life and also uh staying in a manipulated state with your parents with a bad ambient. So, saying that if you're in love yourself, find help or like try to do like always trying to do to do the next thing that you like and feel comfortable. Always help me to not think about that moment and not staying stuck at that car accident if like I was there.

00:49:08

Giovani: Have you ever thought about that? What everyone around you would have been like today if you would have passed away the day of your accident?

00:49:20

Yeandres: Well, yeah, the moment of the accident, because it was like recently. But after one month, I will say not so because I know that is-

00:49:31

Giovani: No, what I meant is have you thought about what other people's lives like the people around you, especially your father, what his life would have been like if you passed away, if you died

Transcript

00:49:44

Yeandres: Nope.

00:49:45

Giovani: In your car accident? You haven't thought about that?

00:49:47

Yeandres: No, I don't. Don't and I don't wish to think about that. And also, I don't encourage to do that. I encourage to think if I'm still alive, what I can do now and what I can do next, that I want not to do that.

00:50:05

Giovani: That is very good.

00:50:05

Yeandres: And for now, I'm thinking to fix my relationship with my father or to cut it, even though that is intoxicating.

00:50:13

Giovani: It's a toxic relationship.

00:50:15

Yeandres: Yup.

00:50:19

Giovani: How do you feel?

00:50:21

Yeandres: Right now?

00:50:23

Giovani: Yeah.

00:50:24

Yeandres: Honestly, great. Feel great to like let all- let all things out. Um [clicks tongue] mostly I know that I do it with a friend, but I also speak this um with my psychologist. Um but fels-, it always feels nice to speak out and not always to, like, get those things inside of my head because one can get confused very quickly and think so many things if one stays shut.

00:50:56

Giovani: Do you currently own a car after your accident? Have you thought about getting another car?

00:51:01

Yeandres: Yes, I'm starting to. I'm starting to raise some money to get a car. So probably at this summer I will get my own car. And also, after the car accident, my dad had and an- he broken an ankle so he couldn't walk for four weeks. And after that accident of his, he'll be getting me to drive him around to the medical uh, to the doctor's offi- office to do anything. And he yell at me every time that I drove him that like I don't even drive great or that's why that you have your own car accident. And it's like, man, you teach me like this.

00:51:46

Giovani: [Chuckles]

Transcript

00:51:47

Yeandres: If you want to, like, I can drive better. Like, I don't know, give me like tips that I can help me not being insulting and being pushy and hitting the nerve of someone. So-

00:51:59

Giovani: You don't want him to be a jackass?

00:52:02

Yeandres: Yeah, that's the thing. I love driving. And I was loved that I alw- loved to go camping and driving everywhere. It's always insulting being a jackass stupid asshole.

00:52:15

Giovani: You mentioned that the accident caused you to have some type of PTSD.

00:52:22

Yeandres: Yeah.

00:52:23

Giovani: Is that a reason why you-

00:52:25

Yeandres: I dont say tha-

00:52:26

Giovani: Havent gotten a car, or has it made it difficult for you to drive?

00:52:29

Yeandres: I don't say that. I want to say that it's difficult for me driving because I drive with my mother, with my sister and my brother and even my father.

00:52:37

Giovani: Have you driven alone?

00:52:38

Yeandres: Yes, I've driven alone. And I very fine. And always like playing music and bitching at my own. It gave me PTSD every time that I think of my father being that toxic man in my life that always affect me mentally in my own decision of trying to be independent. And that's why. So, yeah, maybe that decision of having a car, whatever affects me, not necessarily because I have fear of driving is that I have fear of being dependent because I feel that he's going to control me and retain me for the rest of my life.

00:53:16

Giovani: How do you feel that you can fix that? If it's a question that you can answer, if you've given it some thought before.

00:53:24

Yeandres: How do I feel that I can fix.

00:53:26

Giovani: Fix your trying to become depen- independent without having to acknowledge your father.

00:53:35

Yeandres: Confusing very confusing, because trying to fix that is a move for independence, for deal stuff on my own. Try to get my own help, not depend on him. And having happened that sh- um traumatic um situation and even from childhood, you always helped me in a way to not because still my father. So, he- he raised me. So, I will say-

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00:54:05

Giovani: Yeah, and I can think that cutting off a family member, especially a parent, must be very difficult.

00:54:10

Yeandres: Yeah.

00:54:10

Giovani: Specially to think about doing so.

00:54:12

Yeandres: Yeah, that's the thing. Like I don't I'm trying to cut off, but deep down I know I don't want to cut off because it's still my family. And even they do right or wrong, I'm still going to love him. [clicks tongue] But yeah, it's confusing, but I think that's going forward for the greater good.

00:54:35

Giovani: Would you want to erase the fact that you had a car accident from your life? As in, if you could, let's say the Matrix, take a pill, either have your car accident and be where you are right now with the people that are around you or the other one is erasing the car accident and having a totally different life, something totally un- unrelated to what you currently have.

00:55:02

Yeandres: I would say that the car accidents is an excuse to think about those traumatic experiences. But I will say that if I take any pills, it wasn't for erase, a the car accident, I will say, to erase every hateful comment that my dad says from the beginning I was know him and heard of him having those nasty comments through me and my family.

00:55:25

Giovani: So, in a sense, you would take the metaphor that I'm trying to bring into this. You would take a pill to erase your father's um-

00:55:39

Yeandres: Ignorance mentality.

00:55:41

Giovani: Yeah, something like that. You would take the pill to erase him from every situation that's made you uncomfortable in your life. To erase his perspectives.

00:55:52

Yeandres: [inaudible]

00:55:54

Yeandres: Yeah. We'll say erasing his perspective.

00:55:58

Giovani: So, you would say that you'd be a lot happier without your father's influence on your life.

00:56:07

Yeandres: [clicks tongue] At the moment? Yes.

00:56:10

Giovani: Is that a hard. Yes? As in a definite yes.

00:56:14

Yeandres: [clicks tongue] Well, it still shocked me because he's still my father. And I still

Transcript

love him, though. But I also wish that if I tried to talk with him and reasoning with him even now or even in the future, still saying, oh, ignorant bastard. So yeah, if I had that option, I would prefer that.

00:56:37

Giovani: I see. We're running a little short on time, but I want to ask you one last question. Um can you describe yourself? I want you to describe yourself how you see yourself, what type of person you are and things like that.

00:56:53

Yeandres: I will say I'm very outgoing person that likes to meet new people and share um share my experience. If I can help, I would like to help at any way shape or another. And also, I don't see like trying to receive something back because I know that if I do it right from the heart and it's because I really love the person to help anyone. So, and yeah, so I also like see myself doing the studying electrical engineering. And I working in any renewable energy company because I would like to contribute my knowledge, my love, and my help to the world, to the society. And that's the way I can see it.

00:57:48

Giovani: That is very thoughtful. You mentioned, as I was asking questions, that your father is very pushy. And when he does or asks for things, he expects something. In exchange.

00:57:58

Yeandres: I expect nothing.

00:57:59

Giovani: Or the other way around. When you ask him for something, he expects something in exchange, and you said something sort of different. You don't need something in exchange.

00:58:08

Yeandres: No, I don't need it.

00:58:10

Giovani: Therefore, you're not your father's son. You're not your father. How do you feel about that? Even though you've lived with him your whole life, you're you're not an image of your father-

00:58:21

Yeandres: I think that's good because it gives me-

00:58:23

Giovani: It's amazing, given the description of your father.

00:58:26

Yeandres: Yeah, it teach me like if you don't like it- uh it's- it's like the don't do what you don't like to do to yourself as in you don't want to get bullied. Bullied, so don't bully another person. So, I think that that's a very valuable lesson to apply at anything. So, there's so many flaws that my parents have, my dad has, and I really know them to not do so in the future.

00:59:04

Giovani: I see. Well, that would have been my last question for today. Is there anything else you'd like to share?

00:59:15

Yeandres: Um keep going on, even though if there's a rainy day, uh dark days ahead of you,

Transcript

there's always a next day to do more and try to think about that the next day. There's always more to do. Don't leas- don't lose your hope.

00:59:35

Giovani: Thank you so much for your time, Yeandres. Will you give permission for the story to be shared?

00:59:41

Yeandres: Yes.

00:59:43

Giovani: Additionally, will I be able to ask you follow up questions to clear any doubts, if any arise?

00:59:49

Yeandres: Yeah, I got no problem with that.

00:59:52

Giovani: Thank you. Again, thank you so much for allowing me to interview you and sharing your story.

01:00:00

Yeandres: Thank you.