

My American Roots

Introduction

Growing up in a foreign land as a child of American communist expatriates was an experience that shaped me in profound ways. I witnessed firsthand the challenges and rewards of navigating different cultures, and the impact of political ideologies on personal lives.

My parents, Abe and Belle, were active members of the American Communist Party during the early Cold War era. In 1950, amidst the McCarthy era fervor, they were forced to flee the United States with my sister and me. We embarked on a perilous journey to Mexico and eventually to Prague, Czechoslovakia, which was in the early stages of its communist revolution.

As an eight-year-old child, I was suddenly uprooted from my familiar world of friends, food, language, customs, and virtually all of my personal belongings and thrust into a completely foreign culture. I had to adapt quickly to a new language, new customs, and a new way of life. The transition was not always easy, but I was determined to make the best of my situation.

Living in communist Czechoslovakia during the Cold War was a unique experience. I witnessed the fervor of the communist revolution and the impact it had on the people of Prague. I also saw the challenges and hardships that my parents faced as they tried to adjust to a new country and a new political system. Despite the challenges, my family remained committed to their beliefs and worked tirelessly to promote peace and social justice.

My experiences as a child of communist expatriates gave me a unique perspective on the world. I learned the importance of tolerance, understanding, and

compassion. I also gained a deep appreciation for the values of freedom and democracy.

In this book, I share my experiences growing up as a child of American communist expatriates in Czechoslovakia during the Cold War. I hope that my story will provide readers with a glimpse into a world that is both familiar and foreign. I also hope that it will inspire readers to embrace diversity and to work towards a more just and equitable world.

Book Description

My American Roots is a thought-provoking memoir that explores the experiences of growing up as the child of American communist expatriates during the early Cold War era. The author, Pasquale De Marco, offers a unique perspective on the challenges and rewards of navigating different cultures, and the impact of political ideologies on personal lives.

Growing up in Prague, Czechoslovakia, during the communist revolution, Pasquale De Marco had to adapt quickly to a new language, new customs, and a new way of life. The transition was not always easy, but Pasquale De Marco was determined to make the best of their situation.

In this book, Pasquale De Marco shares their experiences of living in communist Czechoslovakia during the Cold War. They provide a glimpse into a world that is both familiar and foreign, and offer

insights into the challenges and hardships that their parents faced as they tried to adjust to a new country and a new political system.

My American Roots is a moving and inspiring story that will resonate with anyone who has ever experienced the challenges of living in a foreign land. It is a reminder of the importance of tolerance, understanding, and compassion, and a testament to the power of the human spirit.

Chapter 1: A New Beginning

Topic 1: The Unforeseen Departure

The decision to leave our home in Queens, New York, was sudden and unexpected. My parents had been active members of the American Communist Party for many years, but they had always believed that they could work for change within the system. However, the McCarthy era witch hunts had created a climate of fear and paranoia, and they felt that they could no longer stay in the United States without putting themselves and their children at risk.

One night, my parents came to my sister and me and told us that we were going to leave the country. They didn't tell us where we were going or why, but they said that it was important for us to leave immediately. We were scared and confused, but we trusted our parents, and we knew that they would do what was

best for us. We packed a few belongings and said goodbye to our friends and neighbors.

We didn't know it at the time, but we were embarking on a journey that would change our lives forever. We left the United States in the middle of the night, driving to Mexico in our old car. We crossed the border illegally and spent several months living in Mexico City. We lived in a small apartment and my parents worked odd jobs to make ends meet.

Life in Mexico was difficult, but we were together as a family, and we were safe. We learned to speak Spanish and we made new friends. We also learned about the Mexican culture and the history of the country.

After several months in Mexico, we received news that we had been granted asylum in Czechoslovakia. We were thrilled to be able to leave Mexico and to start a new life in a new country.

We arrived in Prague in the fall of 1950. We were met by a group of people from the Communist Party, who helped us to find an apartment and to get settled in. We were also introduced to other American expatriates who had fled to Czechoslovakia during the McCarthy era.

We were all in the same boat. We had all been forced to leave our homes and our country, and we were all trying to build new lives in a foreign land. We supported each other and we helped each other to adjust to our new lives.

Czechoslovakia was a very different country from the United States. The people were friendly and welcoming, but the culture was very different. We had to learn a new language, new customs, and a new way of life.

It wasn't always easy, but we gradually adjusted to our new lives. We made new friends, we learned about the Czech culture, and we began to feel at home in our new country.

We lived in Czechoslovakia for several years and during that time we experienced many challenges and adventures. We witnessed the rise and fall of the communist regime, and we saw the country undergo a number of changes.

We also learned a lot about ourselves and about the world. We learned the importance of family, the value of friendship, and the power of perseverance.

We eventually returned to the United States, but we never forgot our time in Czechoslovakia. It was a time of great change and growth, and it helped to shape who we are today.

Chapter 1: A New Beginning

Topic 2: Adjusting to a Foreign Land

Adjusting to a foreign land can be a daunting task, especially for a young child. I was only eight years old when my family was forced to flee the United States and seek refuge in Czechoslovakia. I had to leave behind everything I knew and loved, and I was suddenly thrust into a completely new culture.

At first, I was overwhelmed by my new surroundings. I didn't understand the language, the food was unfamiliar, and the customs were different. I felt like an outsider, and I longed to go home.

But over time, I slowly began to adjust to my new life. I started to learn the language, make new friends, and explore my new surroundings. I discovered that Czechoslovakia was a beautiful country with a rich culture and history.

Of course, there were still challenges. I missed my old friends and family, and I sometimes felt like I didn't belong. But I was determined to make the best of my situation. I worked hard to learn the language and to fit in, and slowly but surely, I began to feel more at home in my new country.

Adjusting to a foreign land was not easy, but it was an experience that ultimately made me a stronger and more resilient person. I learned the importance of being adaptable and open-minded, and I gained a deep appreciation for different cultures. I am grateful for the opportunity I had to live in Czechoslovakia, and I am proud to call it my second home.

Chapter 1: A New Beginning

Topic 3: Challenges and Surprises

Uprooted from my familiar world of friends, food, language, customs, and virtually all my personal belongings and thrust into a completely foreign culture was a daunting experience. I had to adapt quickly to a new language, new customs, and a new way of life.

One of the biggest challenges I faced was learning a new language. I had never studied Czech or even thought about learning it. I was suddenly immersed in a world where I couldn't understand a single word. I struggled to communicate with my classmates and teachers and to navigate my new surroundings.

Despite the challenges, I was determined to learn Czech. My parents bought me a Czech-English dictionary and I carried it with me everywhere. I would often sit down with my parents in the evenings and they would help me translate words and phrases. I

also started taking Czech lessons at school. It was not an easy process, but I gradually started to pick up the language.

Another challenge I faced was adjusting to a new culture. In the United States, I was used to a certain way of life. I had my own room, my own toys, and my own friends. In Prague, I had to share a room with my sister, I didn't have many toys, and I didn't know anyone. It took me a while to adjust to my new surroundings and make new friends.

There were also some surprises in store for me. I was surprised by how friendly and welcoming the people of Prague were. I was also surprised by how beautiful the city was. Prague is a city full of history and culture. I loved exploring the city's many museums, churches and historical landmarks.

I also discovered a love of music in Prague. I had never been a big fan of music before, but I was drawn to the beautiful melodies and rhythms of Czech folk music. I

started taking violin lessons and soon I was playing in a small orchestra.

Despite the challenges, I am grateful for the experience of growing up in a foreign land. It taught me the importance of tolerance, understanding, and compassion. I also gained a deep appreciation for the values of freedom and democracy.

This extract presents the opening three sections of the first chapter.

Discover the complete 10 chapters and 50 sections by purchasing the book, now available in various formats.

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