

Interviewer: Thank you very much for your participation in this project. The objective of this survey is to produce a coherent and detailed narrative of your story. So I recommend you feel free to say whatever you want to say, without worrying about speaking in depth. That's what we want. Tell me about the place you were born and how was this place and the people who lived there.

Interviewee: Place of birth, I was born in Bonocô, a place called Cosme de Farias. I was born with my aunt, and after that she came to Cabula, I live with my mother, born and raised by my mother. But I- my grandmother was the one who helped to raise me later on. After that my aunt and my grandmother were the ones who raised me. I was raised within two families, mother, aunt and grandmother. Then I started working with hair styling, I worked selling *pastel*, after that I worked selling shrimp, and from that I worked with sales, and ended up with hair styling. I'm a hairdresser.

Interviewer: How was your childhood? What are your most beautiful memories?

Interviewee: For me it was happy and sad, there were both sides. A happy side and a sad side, but it was bearable, I was able to survive. Nobody dies. You have to go through some things in life. If you don't, you're not living. You have to go through some things because otherwise we don't learn how to live.

Interviewer: Do you remember any particular game, pastime, or fun things you used to engage with?

Interviewee: Playing ball, flying kites, dancing samba which I still like. I like to sing a lot. I like working very much, and it was always in my **[unintelligible 00:01:53]** and my life. To play a lot, to laugh, to laugh a lot, make fun of other people, that's all to me.

Interviewer: Tell me about your parents and grandparents. Where were they from?

Interviewee: They are all from Bahia, from Salvador. **[unintelligible 00:02:09]** my mother and my grandmother. And my father, I'm not very close to him. My father is quite distant from us. He spent little time with us. Then I was raised by my mother and my grandmother. They were more part of my life.

Interviewer: What were the professions for your parents and grandparents?

Interviewee: My mother is a physician, my father is a car mechanic. Nowadays she care for the elderly, she care for sick people, until this day. And my father is a car mechanic. He works fixing cars until this day. And I'm a hairdresser.

Interviewer: What do you remember from your parents and grandparents? What do you remember that they used to do, to eat, to drink or to speak?

Interviewee: We all enjoyed life. We played, drank, went to the park, we all played, easily. It was a very happy time.



Interviewer: How was the Pelourinho when you were a child?

Interviewee: Pelourinho had a lot of prostitution in the past, a lot of trickery, a lot of bad things. Now it's a 10,000% better. It's much better compared to what it was before, there was a lot of killing, a lot of prostitution, a lot of bad things. A colleague of mine asked me to come here and braid hair, and I faced the challenged. Red-eyed, but I faced it, and I'm here until today, I'm 35 years old now. I've been here for 16 years, or 17, something like that. I know I've been here for a long time. I can't count, mas I do spent a lot of years here. I did let go of a lot of jobs, but I'm here working up to this day. I faced everything, but it was very bad here in the past. It's much better today.

Interviewer: How what the work in your profession when you were a child? Was it different?

Interviewee: Very different. Very, very. Previously I worked with what? I would sell shrimp, scones, *pastel*, juices. I would sell popsicles. My job was to carry supplies, clean houses, and I dropped everything to start working for myself. Today I see it was worth it to work for myself, because working for other people is not worth it. I work as a hair braider until this day, and for myself. Since many years ago. Today is not worth to work for somebody else.

Interviewer: And before, was it different to work in your profession?

Interviewee: It was very different, because you work for yourself, you know what to do. And working for other people, you're bossed around. It's a lot of pulling, it's very-everything is ordered, it's that thing- you need to wake up at the company's time, and here we work when we want to work, we wake up when we want wake up. You know?

Interviewer: How did you learn to do what you do?

Interviewee: It was destiny. A gift. God gave me the gift. Today I know how to do a lot of things for which I didn't need to study. There was a course offered by SEBRAE. English, French, how to deal with customers, and I didn't need to do it. When I was doing it, I would go out to drink, because I already know how to deal with customers. Because I think that ignorance, lack of manners, we leave it behind the door. And my mother educated me since I was very little, since I was a little child. So today I know how to be polite. I know how to leave it behind, and problems we leave behind, hand it to God and you can overcome anything. And today I know what education is.

Nowadays if they call me again for the course, I won't attend, because I already know everything I need. I can speak English, half of it. I can speak a little of Spanish, half of it. I don't need to attend any course. Because the gift God gave me, he gave me enough of it. I can say, "Hello, my friend, come here please. Come on." To call the customers attention, so I don't need to be shaken too much. It's the gift that God



gave me. Because I think many people need to do what I don't need to do, but I have what I have.

Interviewer: And do you have some story about how you learned to work with people's hair?

Interviewee: Not a story, because I always braided hair, learning with my friends. How do you do this, how do you do that? How do you do a dreadlock? How do you do the mega? How do you do the implants? Then one of them taught me something, another one taught me something else, and I'd keep teaching it. So in the fun of it, of one teaching another, we all learned. Something I haven't learned yet is how to do the canvas. To do the mega and the canvas. I don't really care too much about doing canvases. But if God give me the ability someday, I'm confident I'll go far with it.

Because God gave me the gift to braid everything. But I didn't need to attend any courses, I learned by watching. It's a gift like I had with speaking English, or Spanish. A bit of everything, of each one, and I can say anything. Half of everything I already know, without the need of any courses.

Interviewer: Do you like eating?

Interviewee: I like drinking more. I don't really like eating. It's not my spirit, I'm more of a drinking person. To drink beer, sodas, smoothies. But I'm not a fan of chewing. It's not my thing. I'm from Bahia, but eating is not my thing. I guess it makes me too lazy. I'm not so lazy to work, but I am to eat. I have the willpower to work, but not really to eat.

Interviewer: Do you like cooking?

Interviewee: More or less.

Interviewer: Do you like music?

Interviewee: I love music. My music is everything. I love the music that God gave me. Because music is a gift that God gave to all of us. Specially me. I prefer music than somebody's love. Music is God's love. The greatest, most beautiful thing there is on the face of the Earth is music. I even want to move to another house, because the owner of my current house persecutes me because I listen to music very loudly. The high volume is really important to me. I love music..

Interviewer: What kind of music do you prefer?

Interviewee: Pagode, slow dancing, international music and serenades. I love it. The rest I don't care.

Interviewer: Do you sing?

Interviewee: Only when I feel like it. Even today, I was singing the whole day. When I am [unintelligible 00:08:25] I sing until [unintelligible 00:08:26] singing removes all my stress.

Interviewer: Can you sing something for me?

Interviewee: Oh, my, to sing I need to put the- I have some here in English, because I sing in English. For me to sing we need to play something in English. Or from mp4 player I'm listening. I sing when I'm listening to something.

Interviewer: But do you know any songs?

Interviewee: Not like that. Alone just with my voice I can't. But I put something to play I can sing along interpreting what I'm able to sing. But to sing from memory like that, no. I can sing lots of songs in English. But impromptu like that I can't. Only if I have something playing on my mp4 player so I can listen to it, then I sing along.

Interviewer: What's your favorite proverb or phrase?

Interviewee: What's my what?

Interviewer: Proverb, popular expression.

Interviewee: My problem?

Interviewer: No, proverb. An expression that is meaningful to you.

Interviewee: I didn't understand.

Interviewer: Like an advice.

Interviewee: And advice for me? None. No advice for me or anybody's choice. Not even from God. You know why? Because I'm very positive, I have what I have. I don't need anybody to put me in my place, because I know what it is. Evidently, I know how to keep myself in my place. If I see that something's wrong for me here, I jump somewhere else. If I see that it's not working, I move on. Nobody needs to warn me. I have what I have within me and I know how to leave. I don't like bad people, I don't like bad individuals, I don't like to receive bad or negative influences. The bad things I see I send them away. So I enjoy to walk standing tall and moving forward. I enjoy living on the higher ground. Only the devil and people with poor spirits live underground. Dragging on hell. You know?

Interviewer: Which religion do you practice?

Interviewee: I'm Catholic. At the same time I mix it all up, Catholic, witchcraft. I mix both, Catholicism and witchcraft.

Interviewer: What's more important for you in your religion?

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Interviewee: Neither. Neither. I think the important thing for me is God, nothing else. Because Catholics today- I see the priests out there being pedophiles. The priests themselves being pedophiles and doing things they're not supposed to do, the highest ones that God gave us, and homosexuals. So, myself, I only trust God, and the rest are peanuts. I don't believe in any of them, just God. You know?

Interviewer: Is there any connection between your work and your religion?

Interviewee: If there is any connection between my work and my religion? Which religion? Which of the two? I have faith in things I can do. I have faith in what I'm able to do, and I don't get attached to anything. If the devil helps me, it's all good. If God helps me, it's all good. Everything is- it's all great. What I know is that each of us have to stay in their places, on their own path. If it works, it works. If it doesn't work, each one follows their own path. We shouldn't get attached too much to things that aren't worth it. Because you get tired of it, it makes you sick, it gets sticky.

So I think God gave free will for each of us to live the way we want to live, that we can do it. There's no need for too much blah-blah-blah. I'm a Catholic, **[unintelligible 00:12:15]** Catholic. I practice witchcraft, I'm going to live **[unintelligible 00:12:18]** witch. I am- even religion isn't worth it because we can get tired of everything. If you live and eat everyday on the same place, there, there, there, there, you get tired of it. You get tired of being there at someone's feet. Anything can get you sick of it. You can get tired of anything.

It's like eating beans every day, you get sick of it. It's the same as eating the same salad every day, you get sick of it. Anything can get you tired of it. It's the same as saying everyday that you love a particular religion. Anyone of them, you can get tired of it. It's like praying everyday, praying, praying, praying. It's not for me. I get tired of it. I say that based on my own experience, because I'm intelligent, you get tired of it. It becomes tedious.

Interviewer: Can you describe your favorite part on your religious service?

Interviewee: My religious service? What do you mean? On the church, things like that?

Interviewer: Yes.

Interviewee: When I feel like praying. When I feel like praying I pray, I pray. When I don't feel like it, I don't give a fuck. When I don't have **[unintelligible 00:13:18]** actually curse everybody. I curse God, I curse the devil, I curse my mother, I curse my father, I curse my husband, I curse everyone. Because I have that in me. And I don't ask any of them for their forgiveness. Because I have that within me.

I think there's no use in saying you're a righteous person, that you are all that, knowing that you can curse, that you feel the need to do that. There's no use in saying, "No, you can't, you can't do that because God is that father of yours, he's

that mother of yours.” If you want to do something, you do it, because God said, “I give you free will to do whatever you want.” My mother says, “Why do you do it?” I do it, I call you names, I call my father names, I curse God, I curse the devil.

I curse everything I think is done wrong, I do. Because I want. Can I? I have- I am authentic. I always tell you in your face. It’s wrong, it’s right. So, I’m like that. People say that-- There’s no use in saying, like, “Don’t restrict people from telling the truth.” You say the truth because you feel like saying it, to let some steam out. It’s good. You know? You can’t be restricted by law. If you want to let it go-- God said, “I give you free will to do whatever you want, out of your own spontaneous will.” That’s it, right?

Interviewer: What’s the name of your profession or your job?

Interviewee: I’m a hairdresser. My job is to work on people’s hair. I do dreadlocks, braids, megahair. I make implants, Rastafarian style, several types of braids, tiaras. That’s what I do.

Interviewer: What do you think about your profession or your job?

Interviewee: I think it’s great for me, a grift from God, it’s good. A gift that God gave me, and I thank him, no matter how hard things can be around here. Today I make profit, tomorrow I don’t, it’s all good to me. Each R\$1 I’ll make today will be good. I thank Him, first of all because my health is good, I have my willpower to- my tongue is strong to curse anyone, strong enough to say to anyone to go fuck themselves, and it is strong enough to workout what is mine, and work anytime I want.

If God doesn’t give me what I need today, He’ll give it to me tomorrow. So, for me it’s good enough. I drink my beer today. If I don’t do it today, I’ll do it tomorrow. If I need to borrow some credit, I’ll do it. If not, I don’t. So that’s my life. I thank Him a lot, especially for my health. So, He knows I’m a mad person, I can’t be fixed. So I think nobody should put their nose in other people’s life, leave them be. I’m like that, I think nobody should be nosy about other people’s way of being. Each of us have our personalities, our manners, and our nature. My nature is this. I’ll tell anyone to turn inside out. That’s the good part, you know?

Interviewer: How did you begin to work in this profession?

Interviewee: I started on my aunt’s hair. I started making a tiara on her hair. I already knew how to do that. Then I met a colleague of mine who is the girlfriend of- my mother’s husband, he was his brother. She said, “Let’s move to Pelourinho and you’ll help me to make braids there.” I said, “Let’s go.” “You’re going to be my assistant.” So I came to Pelourinho. When I arrived here at the Pelourinho, I was her assistant, but I also knew how to do tiaras, little loose braids, although I didn’t know how to do tererê, nor dreads, nor megahair or implants. Those I had to watch other people do.

So then, since she didn't teach me, I kept watching and learning. When I learned the basics of most things, I started to take a step back, because I would work on someone's whole head for which they'd pay R\$25, but I would only get R\$5 out of it. So I kept watching, learning, and one day I told her, "Look, I'm sorry. Thank you for this opportunity, but now I'm going to work for myself." And I started to work alone for myself, doing all the things I've learned. I started learning through- mirroring my colleagues. I practiced, I practiced, and nowadays I know everything. I don't need anybody else. But I was very thankful to her. It was her that brought me here. Now she's not here anymore, but nowadays I am. You know?

Interviewer: How long have you been working in this region, the Pelourinho?

Interviewee: Oh, my, I'm going to lie. I think I've been here for about 15 years, more or less, you know? I've been here for many years.

Interviewer: And what do you like about working here?

Interviewee: What do I like? Only braiding hair. Just doing my braids. I like to enjoy myself, I like to have my beer. When I'm done working on people's hair, I have a beer, I like to dance. That's it.

Interviewer: And what are the things you don't like about working here?

Interviewee: Oh, this tendency men have to ask us to prostitute ourselves, they invite us to snort drugs, to smoke, I don't like that. I'm very positive about the things I want. I can't stand drugs. Even the cigarettes I smoke, I quit whenever I want. I was smoking a whole pack every day nonstop. Then the day before yesterday, I did quit. Now I don't feel the need to smoke. Because I want to, I have the willpower within me. I have possibilities on things I want. I quit- I did quit because I was stressed, there was a lot of stress here, with my family, so, I decided to quit. It was a full pack everyday, nonstop, Hollywood brand. When I'm not smoking cigarettes, sometimes I smoke a cigar, and don't stop drinking until the stress goes away.

When the stress is gone, I decide, and it's done. I quit. Now I don't feel the need for a smoke, because when you're willing you can do it. It all depends on each of us, it depends on your body, it depends on your nature, it depends on your possibilities, it depends on your willpower for you quit anything you want, because drugs are not the thing for me. What I like about here is to work, to enjoy myself, to dance, to play, to curse, to disturb things. That's my thing. But drugs, prostitution, robbery, that's not for me. My thing is just that. I'm quite angry, very angry. I'll punch anyone in the face if they ask me to do those bad things. I don't like it. Don't cross my path. Don't do it.

Interviewer: How do imagine the tourists see you?

Interviewee: In many different ways. Some of them think we're prostitutes. Others think we are- we're selling our bodies. Others think we're only working here because we need the work. Many of them think we just enjoy working. Many are smart, some



are not, they think we're only working as a disguise for a parallel life. Many foreigners think that.

Then some humiliate us, they think that because we're black women that work on the street they can come and ask, "Where's that?" I'm sorry. "Where's this. Where's that?" I'm not-- When I'm actually radiating, really angry, I just say "Good day. Good Afternoon. I'm not a guide from Bahiatursa to be giving out information here." If they want a "good day" or a "good afternoon" or a "good night" I have it, but I'm not here to be helping people with information.

But many of them think that we're just another one. They think they can come here and, "Where's this? Where's that?" They think we're just another street worker. No, this thing here is a culture. This is a work of art. We're working on it because the gringos like it, the tourists like it, quote, unquote, right? Not everyone like it, right? Others think we here working as prostitutes, street hookers, or selling drugs. Many of them think that. But no, they need to know that here we-- Some of them know some things, some of them know other things, but nobody can read anyone's mind. You need to know each person, it's not a matter of prejudging that that person.

You're not inside each person's mind, each one of use need to know the other people to be able to judge them, you can't judge them without knowing them-- "Man, come here, the woman is crazy, she's this, she's that, she's pumped full of drugs." All lies. She's irritated because she's under stress. She's drinking because she has a ton of problems, as I was for a long time, but they think they're just high as a kite. She's not drinking because she sells her body, throws herself out at life. No, it's not like that at all. But many foreigners here think-- Foreigners and local Bahia residents as well, they think a lot of wrong things about us.

Interviewer: And how is your relation with the people from Bahia?

Interviewee: It's very difficult, you know? Bahians are very-- The Bahian is a kind of person with a short sight about themselves, racist against themselves, they don't value our own color. Just shortsighted. That's why I tell you that the Bahian, either from here or living elsewhere, they suffer and don't know why. They vegetate and don't know why they're vegetating, because they're unable to recognize the other side of people, they think that people are just- they think that people are going through stuff because they want to, because they like it. No, we all have our own problems. I have mine, everyone have theirs. You can't just judge them.

So, the Bahians today, they suffer, they starve, they live in misery, with needs, because they like it and because they want to, because they can't see how other people think. "Why is he like that? Why is this happening to him?" So they end up suffering because they ask for it. It's like the tourist, or the mayor, or the city councilor, it's just like anyone else, they suffer because they have to suffer. They're going through stuff because they don't know what's happening. They are paying because they have to pay.

Because for you to judge a person, first you need to watch, analyze, think, to be able to see what's happening. So, the Bahians judge other people too much. "Oh, because she's this, because she's that, and et cetera." Lies. That's just pain from jealousy, it's envy, they can't stand seeing you wearing a new pair of shoes, a new megahair, a beautiful hair, they can't stand seeing you wearing some pretty clothes, or carrying a pretty bag.

Then, they keep judging you, and want to take your husband away from you, make some drama here and there to create friction, a fight, or some confusion. And the Bahian has no consideration for other people. Then an outside tourist arrive here, and they ignore him too. So you have the two things mixed, adding one suffering to the other. And they stop living, they just vegetate, all of them.

Interviewer: Your relations with men are different from your relations with women?

Interviewee: No, for me it's just men, I only like men. I don't like women. I don't even like having friendships with women, just men. I don't like having friendships with women, I hate it.

Interviewer: Are you married?

Interviewee: I am, on a stable marriage even.

Interviewer: How did you meet your husband?

Interviewee: He was the one who found me here. He saw me, all crazy, playing, because I keep moving from here to there to get my stuff. Then he liked me, he saw my struggle, saw that I'm a hard worker, and he empathized with me. He came from Curitiba, divorced, he's from Curitiba. And he liked me. Then he came, asked me to go out to eat a shrimp bobó, then invited me to his home, to check his apartment, and he asked me to stay with him. I was dating an Australian. But he begged me to stay with him. And I stayed with him. And we're together until now. Next Father's Day will be our first anniversary. Actually, no, our second anniversary is coming on next Father's Day. We live together. We live together in Tororó. He's from Curitiba. And I am from Salvador. It was him who found me.

Interviewer: Does he work?

Interviewee: He's a maître. He works on a restaurant.

Interviewer: And who makes more money in your family?

Interviewee: Who makes more money? Me. I make more. Per day, I make more than my family. Except for my brother, because he works with cars. He works with cars, you know? Well, not work with cars, he fixes cars. But it doesn't pay very much. The people who collaborate more with the budget are me and my mother. He helps

when he wants. But me and my mother help more. But now that I'm married, things are more balanced, and I help my mother.

Interviewer: With whom do you live?

Interviewee: I live with my husband.

Interviewer: And do you have children?

Interviewee: No. I don't have children. I have raised some nephews.

Interviewer: And did you teach what you do to your nephews or nieces?

Interviewee: I didn't want to do that. This one niece I raised ended up in a life of crime. Drugs. And she's out there amidst men, and it's been a problem. So I left her in Sussuarana. The other one is all right. And my nephew is very young yet, so I still don't know what he'll do. The world as it is today, we never know what will happen today or tomorrow. We raise a child but we don't create nature or destiny, right? And things are like that.

Interviewer: Have you lived in another state?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: Do you participate in some group or organization?

Interviewee: No, I don't like that.

Interviewer: What kind of relation do you have with the women that work in this area?

Interviewee: None whatsoever, I don't like them. The people with whom I fight the most are the women. Because they are very envious of me. Because I fought here with the mayors, the governors, the city councilors to- so we could get them out of the yard, and then I argued to be able to stay here in the front. Because I don't like being with them, if I stay with them, we'll be fighting until **[unintelligible 00:26:50]**.

All because of envy. If I braid two or three heads, they already get jealous. So it doesn't work for me. I don't like envy towards me, I have no ambitions. I like everybody who works hard, I like when everybody can profit. So for me the amount of greed I see doesn't work. So I decided to talk to the boss asked to be separated from them. Today I work here with my assistants. Just that. And all of them are way down there away from me.

Interviewer: Would you like to say anything else about something we haven't talked about yet?

Interviewee: No. I talk too much.

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Interviewer: Last questions. When were you born?

Interviewee: 1975. March, 28.

Interviewer: And what's the highest school grade you reached?

Interviewee: Oh, my, that I reached in my life? You know what? I don't even know. I've reached many things in my life, but I was crazy enough to throw it all away. What I want to reach now in my life is a beauty salon, my own house, and that's it. And my retirement, because I am disabled. That's all I want. Nothing else. That's everything for me.

Interviewer: Where do you live?

Interviewee: At Dique Tororó.

Interviewer: Is that the name of your neighborhood?

Interviewee: Dique Tororó, in Brotas, the Brotas region, number 22. Brotas region.

Interviewer: Thank you for your participation. You can talk to me if you have more questions or if you want to add something else to your contribution. Thank you.