

Letter from a mother

Date received: 22/07/2015

Subject: could you read it?

My dear daughter,

As I have already discovered, time by itself doesn't heal. This is why I try to reach you with this poem. With the intention that you will get rid of the ghosts that persecute you –perhaps crueller than the truth itself, with all its delay to arrive.

If some fantasy took away your sleep, questioning about your own identity, this is your reality. You have no other origin. If you were looking for a different family –a loving and coherent mother and father- it would not be strange that you had doubted about us. Like many other young people of your generation, you had to deal with this question. But I can assure you that it is not your case.

I had to endure the consequences of prejudices, demands and absurd principles of my parents. They prioritized 'what the others would think of them'. They did not want to have to explain to the family that their daughter had married three months pregnant. At the time of receiving the phone call announcing that you were born, the whole family was gathering celebrating the birthday of my grandfather Argimiro. It was the 28th of June of 1981, and decided not to share the news, keeping secret until the 28th of September. Date on which a term pregnancy was more likely, counting from the 16th of January 16 of that same year when we got married. After the 28th of September, the date on which your birth was registered, they shared the news that I had had a beautiful baby. It was only then that my mother travel to see me. And obviously, I wasn't happy to receive her. I shouted at her: that it was a fake, that they were hypocrites, and that I did not need them. I threw all my anger at them. But of course, I did not have the courage to talk to them before the wedding, nor to reject outright that alibi of manipulating the times to take care of appearances.

Rebelliousness was not strong enough in me to help me overcome that logic that I hated so much. I never manage to get strong, neither as when time went pass. Most recently, I tried to take up the issue when they came to take care of me for my surgery. I thought they would help me to think about how to tell you the truth. I felt you gave me signs of wanting to know. But, my mom immediately felt upset and said 'no, how would she need to know that', she got up from the table and diverted the conversation, and we never touched it again.

As a child, I always had to hide everything. I knew beforehand that they would not agree. That's how it was all my life. Since I was a young girl, I kept for myself anything that would not be accepted by them. A low note, or to answer back to my mother – because I could not talk about anything with her- it would cost me a punishment. So I poured down my feelings writing in a diary and in a poetry book.

They felt very disappointed by me. At the time, it seemed the right thing to do what it was done, without even talking about the future, about whether the truth would ever be

revealed. It's typical of the arrogance of those who think they are owners of the truth. I'm not trying to victimize myself. I am the result of that awful and well-intentioned education, which I did not want to repeat with my children, yet I could not get away with the consequences.

I am afraid of your reaction. If from my letter you do anything that harms you or that will lead you to put everyone else on the dock, I want you to know that the only responsible one is me. What moves me to write this letter is my desire to give you peace. It is not worse than what I write here.

I regret not having spoken to you on the occasions when we were together, but my emotional block with this issue paralyzes me, leaves me absolutely silent and I have no courage to hurt you more than what I may have done to you. Always my choice was writing. It gives me more strength to face the challenge, but usually led me to lose. Of course, I am open to listen to what you need, to ask me anything that is not clear for you. I know that this is not digested in one reading. Your sister gave me the courage to take the initiative to address an issue that I could not talk to anyone else. I will be here to hearing what you need to say.

I love you so much. Mom

(extract recite in the screen dance)

SILENCE PACT
(28/06/1981 – 28/09/1981)

.....

How to emerge unscathed from so much hypocrisy?
How to choose when without knowing what would come?
Family mandate against truth and life?

Only the first gestures remained for me
the sounds, the perfume and the warmth of hidden life from June to September
from the first crying in parentheses, to the accepted time of birth.

Nothing justifies fulfilling the agreement
When the truth is lost
look for the way to be born again.

Family codes expire
trampling the Angel who greeted the Virgin
Hail Mary full of grace, without sin conceived

What sin were we born from if we can know?

M.C.F.