

# Who tells your story?

My name is Jonathan Gonzalez Urbina. I was born in Durango Mexico on June 5, 1989. I have six siblings, three brothers and three sisters. I was the middle brother and I always looked up to my one big sister and my big brother because they were the oldest. My daily life in Mexico was pretty normal. I was working and going to school, but because we didn't have the resources I had to start working at a young age. I had to drop out of school at the age of 8, and I had to start working on a field where I had to grow and pick corn.

Back when I was in Mexico it was always really hot in the summertime and really cold in the winter, and it sometimes used to rain. The thing that was my favorite in Mexico was the food. My favorite dish is something my mom used to make, chicharron en salsa verde.

I lived in one of the little towns in Durango and everyone knew everyone. My family owned their own restaurant but it was shut down because of the crime rate in Durango. Back when I was in Mexico I used to play sports. My favorite sport was soccer. I was alright, but I used to play for a rec center on my ranch, but we never played for medals, it was just for fun. The thing that I miss most about Mexico is the freshness of the air, hearing the cows.

When I was 14 years old my mom died. At the time I was at school and for some reason, I just had a feeling that I needed to go home, so I just left school on my motorcycle. When I was driving back home, a truck ran me over. I don't remember anything from the crash, but I didn't make it

home. I felt like God had been telling me to go home and save my mom, but I couldn't. The crash was so bad that I couldn't walk for a year, and my knee was all destroyed. They put metal in me to help me walk. I woke up at the hospital, and all my uncles and my brothers and sisters were there, and I knew something had happened other than the crash. My uncle told me my mom had died. When I first heard the news I didn't believe it. I was in shock and didn't know what was going on. My family didn't allow me to go to the funeral, and to this day I still don't know why. They didn't give me a reason. After that, I was depressed for a long time. After this all happened I went out to go looking for my dad. When I found him, he said he didn't want to see me, so I decided not to keep looking for him and I left for the United States.



I left Mexico in 2005 to go to the United States. I was 14 and about to be 15. It wasn't my decision, it was a decision by my brother. My uncle's place where I lived was very bad, and it was getting dangerous. My journey to America was crazy and I was not thinking straight. It was hard. I knew if I stayed in Mexico I would end up dead because of the things I was doing and the people I was hanging around with. When I got here I didn't have anything, not even clothes. I came here with a ripped pair of shoes and ripped pants and my shirt. I came here with nothing. I went to live with one of my uncles that brought me here, and he took me to his house and I lived there for a little bit. My opinion when I first got to Denver was that it was amazing and that it was a nice place. There were big buildings everywhere and the streets were clean. I fell in love with Denver when I first saw it. It never snowed in Mexico, but when I came to Colorado and saw snow I thought that it was the most beautiful thing I had ever seen, but when I went to go play in it I didn't like it because it was too cold.

When I met my wife, I felt all that depression from losing my mom go away. I met her at a wedding. It was one of my cousin's weddings, and one of her cousin's weddings. I walked in and I saw her, and it took me maybe 20 minutes to get the courage and go ask if she wanted to dance with me, and she said yes. So we started dancing, and after that I asked her if she wanted to be my girlfriend, and she said yes. Then after that, she introduced me to her mom, but as a friend. My wife said I was a friend, so her mom was okay with it. She didn't know that we were dating.

For our first date I took her to go get tacos, and that was our date, just simple. When I was 18 I

found out that she was pregnant, and I was so happy because I was starting a family and I was going to become a dad. I wasn't ready to be a dad, not going to lie. It was hard because I didn't know what to expect or how to act because I was still a kid, but I don't regret it at all. I got the call around 3 that she was giving birth, so then I rushed over. On my way to the hospital, I was nervous and I was excited at the same time. I just wanted to see you guys already. I was scared because I didn't want anything to happen to you guys. When I was holding my first child, I can't describe the feeling. The only thing I could say is that it was amazing. My wife chose the name to be Jonathan Andreas Gonzalez Martinez.

I got married to my wife on September 7th, 2019.



She's made me a better person. I feel like God sent her to me to make me a better person. I'm really, really happy because if she wasn't there, I would be dead. I was doing bad things and making bad decisions. I saw how it was impacting my life, so I changed it up. I had also just had my first son, so I started acting like a man. I started being there for my kids. I made a promise to my kids that I would change, and I have kept that promise. I am glad that I have changed so much to be there for my family, to be a better dad, and to be a better husband.



I am happy with how far I have come, from coming here with no money and nowhere to work to now having a CDL. I am very proud of where I have come from. I'm proud of my family and my job. I thank my uncle and my brother. They've always been there for me and they showed me how to be a man. I'm also thankful for my wife because she told me that I could do better, and I have. I'm also thankful for the people that turned their backs on me. They motivated me to be a better man, a better dad, and a better friend.

story told by: Jonathan Martinez