



## **Nina's Book (A Diary for an Unborn Child: Andalucia, Morocco and Rio de Janeiro, 1987)**

*Lawrence Bohme*

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More than a decade after leaving Rio de Janeiro in 1970, Lawrence receives an inheritance that enables him to buy a farmhouse in his beloved Montefrio, a mountain village near Granada, Andalucia, with a bit left over for a nostalgic journey. He sets out to visit his old friends in Brazil: Aurora and Roberto, the fisherman and his wife whose shack he shared in the Cantagalo favela, Yukio, the lonely Japanese immigrant who taught him the leather trade, and Jonathon, the boyhood friend from New York with whom he first visited Brazil in 1965 and who has since returned. Soon, at a cabaret – gafieira - for samba-dancers near the port, Lawrence meets a young school teacher, Cassilda, and within months they discover that a baby is on the way.

Lawrence finds work as a translator in Rio, and also plies his trade of postcard maker, depicting the scenery and street scenes of the great city, and these pen-and-ink drawings are reproduced throughout the diary.

A word about the author...

Lawrence was born in 1942 in London, to an English mother and a German refugee father, emigrating to Vancouver, Canada, after the war. At age 14, Lawrence travelled to Mexico with his mother, who wanted to become a painter. It was in Mexico City that Lawrence learned to speak the first of his current five languages. The small family later lived in Jamaica, British West Indies, and in New York's Greenwich Village.

In 1960 Lawrence went on to study at the University of Madrid, where he acquired the second name of "Lorenzo", and later also at the Sorbonne in Paris. In 1965, finding himself in San Francisco, he sailed to Rio on a freighter to fulfill his dream of living in a favela, staying in Brazil five years. Always with the writing of a book about his travels in mind, he spent two years in Haiti and three years in Colombia, living also on the islands of San Andres, Grand Cayman, Saint Martin and Saint Barths, where he worked as a leather craftsman and pen-and-ink postcard artist.

He returned to Europe in 1981, becoming a translator for UNESCO in Paris and eventually finding his way back to southern Spain. There, he settled in the olive-farming town of Montefrio and wrote several "artistic and historical guide books" about his village Montefrio and also Granada, the city of the Alhambra Palace. He has been at work for the past ten years on his memoir, "Lorenzo, The Story of a Very Long Youth", and has thus far completed seven volumes "each one the length of a normal-sized novel", which are published separately on Amazon for Kindle. He is now working on the last three volumes of the series, which reaches its cataclysmic end in Paris, in the year 1983.

A journalist recently asked Lorenzo why he calls his book the story of a "very long" youth. The author explained that his youth went on much longer than is considered normal, given that it wasn't until the age of forty-one that an "emotional earthquake" forced him to finally start "growing up". He added, with a trace of irony, that the title also expresses his gratitude to "a God I can't help believing in for granting me so many years to make an ass of myself".

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