

Ethnic Designation: Mexican

Cultural Category: Passing a message throughout family generations

Never Quit the Fight

During my whole years of living I always looked up to my grandparents. The stories they told, the messages they gave when doing wrong. They knew wrong from right, because they had been through so much more. There was something always special and different about my Tata, Damaso. My mother's father, the places he's been and seen; the struggles I've heard left me amazed as a child. To this day, he is now seventy-six years old, still has a temper of a boxer. My grandfather was born and raised in Mexico. He came to the United States when he was twenty-six. As a family we still do not know what his real last name is because he forgot it, but before I can mention him coming to the U.S I must bring up his childhood. Damaso had a difficult life as a child being the oldest and having many older boys bully his younger brothers, he fought a good fight and never quit till he found a solution to get off the streets and make it a success.

At age fifteen his younger brother beaten when coming back to school, my grandfather knew what he had to do. Although at that age he knew it wasn't right, and of course was terrified, but for the sake of helping his little brother he had to put up a fight. One day his younger brother got beaten so badly he came home with a black eye and a bloody nose, my Tata was furious. The next day he went after the boy and beat him till he cried for mercy. The only words he said as he looked at his brother, pointing to the kid on the floor, "next time a guy wants to beat you, have them come to me"! After those words came out of my grandfather's mouth he

became a fighter, in fact he fell in love with fighting. Trying different moves and different styles to get the guys distracted while throwing the first blow was his thing. Today he admits he became a monster after that fight. Years passing and everyone knew about my grandfather, many people began to fear him. He would just go to a bar wait outside and start a fight for the thrill of himself, till he met his greatest match.

My grandfather was now sixteen years old fighting an older man, they were both on the ground; then he finally made a way to get on top and knocked the twenty-six year old man out. After that fight, he felt like he could measure up to anyone that came his way. The next day the twenty-six year old man sent his oldest son after him. My Tata of course didn't care. The son spotted him at a store and told him to go outside, and he did so. Within twenty minutes of the fight he knocked my Tata out. In sudden shock my Tata woke up two minutes later. A broken nose with gushing blood to the point where his shirt was all red and the blackest eye a man has ever had. My Tata went home astonished at what had occurred. He wanted to know who this guy was, the guy that knocked out the great Damaso? Sure enough, the word got around, and found out that the son was an amateur fighter. Stunned and livid he grew. He wanted revenge on a man that played dirty, so he thought to believe. After a year passing at age eighteen the memory of the fight was never forgotten. The fact that he had experience in the ring had intrigued him. He then knew boxing could be for him.

Boxing then became my Tata's life, he lived for boxing. This sport I believe saved my Tata's life. He would have been in jail if not for boxing. At age eighteen till twenty-one he was an amateur fighter, with forty-eight wins and one lost. Because of the love he had for boxing he gave it his all; he would run every morning and night at the beach. Then when he would find space in between or after work he would find other boxers in his weight class. There was no

quitting for him in boxing. Dedication was what he believed in to become a successful person, and by saying so, at age twenty-two he was a professional fighter in Mexico. His score as a professional was twelve wins and two lose.

His last fight was the greatest of all times, as we like to say in the family. The revenge was back in action, but secretly during that time period of his last tournament for a golden metal. My Tata had trained for five months for the boxing tournament. Every day and every night, there was no quitting, fighting and winning was on his mind; determination. That morning at six o'clock he woke up, ready. He went to the stadium where the fights were occurring. He checked in and weighed in. He strictly did not eat till the fight was over; it was the routine boxers liked to do when weighing in and for the fight. No one should fight on a full stomach, it's the worse, many cramps will come about; they believe. Shadow boxing and jump rope is the schedule my Tata liked to do before a fight. As the clocked hit nine-thirty, he was soon up. His fight was on at eight, as he was shadow boxing preparing for the fight. His younger brother who was the helper, that secures water for him during the fight rushed to him in complete amazement. As Daniel, his brother told him who he was going to fight. Albert Garcia is all he said that made my Tata blood boil. Albert Garcia, the man that knocked him out cold in front of the grocery store.

Eight o'clock hit and the fight was on. Ready as he has ever been in his entire life. As they both entered the ring, the guy was in complete shock. He knew once they touched gloves and that bell rang, Albert was all his. And sure enough, he was indeed. Within four rounds Albert was the one knocked out. The greatest victory was that day for my Tata. The proudest day he has ever had. He won that tournament with a golden metal at the end. The fight every man out on revenge would die for.

From this story, my Tata became the biggest hero in my life. At age fifteen, he began training me. For seven years I was an amateur fighter. It is the only sport I can follow through with and have a passion for, but since I am in college and working I do not have time to train. To this day he is now training my cousin Rudy, who is twelve years old. The fighter in my Tata will never die out. The fact that he never quit has given his grandchildren the courage to continue his legacy as a fighter, and so it passes on through generations the eager fight within the Mexican sport of boxing.



Based on a true story; my hero, Damaso.