

BY F.A.I.T.H.:

FULLY

ACCEPTING AND

INFINITELY

TRUSTING

HIS WORD

(Based on Hebrews 11:1)

By Debra Roberson

This book is dedicated to my family: Roberson, Johnson, Toussaint, Jackson, Medlow, and Piece families. Without your support this would not be possible.

I give special thanks to my parents, Peter and Audrey Roberson, Jr.; and to my siblings, Terry Roberson, deceased; Mable Roberson; Kenneth Roberson; and Gregory Roberson. Thank you for always being in my corner. I love you all to eternity.

To my cousins on my mom's side, "Sock it to me Santa cause I know you got the power."

Thank you to all my cousins. We are all better together as a family.

Thank you to all my friends I met along the way, you mean the world to me.

And most importantly, thank you to my spouse, Mary Dumars, who continues to love me and support me through it all.

Je t'aime toujours!

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ISBN: 9798798592081

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Chapter 1: The Beginning

Do you remember your first memory of growing up? Some people don't remember much about growing up, but I am one of the fortunate ones that does. I was two and a half years old and I was in my parent's room in Houston, TX. I remember that I was on a pallet on the floor in front of the tv. There was a buzz of activity in the house. Some people were mad and some were crying. The day was April 4, 1968- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was killed. I did not fully understand the impact that would have on all our lives in that room on that day, but I just knew something important had happened.

My next memory was when I was five years old. I would play outside by myself in the front yard. I had this quirky thing where I hated to get dirt on me. If I did, I would go in and ask for a bath. I remember once my dad gave me a watch with a black band, and I screamed until they took it off. I didn't like anything black or dirty on me. Well, this particular day, I was playing with rocks (sufficiently clean ones, I suppose), and a thought popped into my head. Where did I and mankind come from? I had a vision where the world was full of people, and they disappeared two by two. Finally, there was this lone wizened man with white hair and a staff walking the earth. I was so disturbed by the image and upset that I didn't know who he was.

Growing up in Houston was fun during the 1970s and '80s. I had an older brother, Terry Wayne Roberson, who is now deceased, and an older sister, Mable Jean Roberson. I was the baby girl until my brother Kenneth Roberson came along when I was eight, followed by the fifth sibling, Gregory Roberson when I was ten.

Going fishing is one of my happiest childhood memories. I got a fishing rod before I got a bicycle. We'd go fishing at Lake Livingston, often leaving out at night and staying until late evening the next day. My dad would make baits out of bran flakes, and boy, did they stink! Sometimes we helped him, but I was content to just watch him. I liked fishing, but I wasn't very good at it. My dad was the best. He'd cast that line out, reel it in just a little, and before you know it, he had a fish on that line. I

never figured out his secret. My mom was good too, and between the two of them we had a huge cooler full of fish. My sister and I were tasked with cleaning and gutting the fish. That we could do well because we ALWAYS had that job. Somehow, Terry escaped helping. I'm not sure how he did it, but he was a crafty one.

One day my aunt came by and took me with her. I wasn't sure where we were going, but I loved outings. We ended up at a funeral. I had no clue about funerals and why this man was in a box. That night when I got home, I was so disturbed. I didn't understand it and I was scared. I tried to put those thoughts out of my mind, but they would periodically come back up, especially when we went to visit family in Natchitoches.

When my dad's sister, Aunt Elnora, was alive, he would go there to visit her. I was intrigued by their conversations and stayed in the room to listen. They talked about being saved and judgement day. They talked about the sacrifice of Jesus and how we were to live our lives. I didn't understand it all, but I remember one particular car ride back home. I was looking out the window at the dark sky and moon when I envisioned my parents and two siblings being swept up in the air. Everyone in the car was gone, and I was left behind. I think I started crying then, and my parents asked me what was the matter. But I couldn't verbalize what or how I felt.

My mom's brother and his kids and my dad's sister and her kids all lived across the street from us. Before my Aunt Ida Mae, who is now deceased, moved to Houston, she stayed in Rosharon, Texas, with her husband. We would go for visits, and this one time, my cousin JW and I were playing outside with the goat they had in the yard. I had never played with a goat before, and we were having a blast. We then played in the front yard until we were called into the house for dinner. We were served goat! I lost my appetite right then and there, and I was sad because I considered that goat as my friend.