

I was looking for Love

Powers on the earth

Bianca Grootfaam



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I was looking for love: Powers on the earth

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True Story

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Dedication

*I dedicate this book to The Almighty God because
He gave me the grace to write it.
Thank you Father for blessing me with a man as Dayan.
Thank you that we can preach Your Word,
praise and worship You together.*

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INTRODUCTION

It was a cold and quiet evening. I was laying on my bed in a cell of the Nsawam female prison in Ghana thinking of some of the things I had wanted in my life. I have wanted to write my story for a long time, but it was my Bible school teacher, Dan Buxton, who inspired me to actually do so. When he had told me to do so, I thought why not? I had been arrested for the third time and it was about time to wake up and find out where the roots of my problems lay.

That night I decided to ask for a pen and a piece of paper to write some points down. These points would become the start of the text for a book, this book. I wrote while I was in prison. For me being able to do so, I had to request permission of the Officer In Charge (OIC) who is the director at the facility. Inmates were not allowed to have paper and pencils or pens but I needed those in order to write my story. I received the permission under the condition that I

would submit my notes for a review by the OIC. I had no problem with the limitation as long as I could write my story.

I started to write and while doing so, I wanted the whole world to know that I was writing. Once finished, I handed the material over to the OIC as we had agreed beforehand. After some days she came to me and she had tears in her eyes. She handed over my paperwork and told me that the story was very powerful, that it had made an impact on her and she was sure that it would impact others too. I thanked her for the compliment and stored the papers in the only place that was possible in the cell, under my pillow.

To my surprise a cellmate took my papers and read the story. After she was finished she gave me the following written reaction:

Please Bianca, do not be ashamed of yourself. Say the truth and let the devil be ashamed. We are going to learn from your mistake and those who are coming behind, will learn something good from you. I know that if you do so, all the glory and honor will be for God because the Bible says that all "sins are sins" there is no big or small; starting from lying. Please do not be annoyed at me. It is just a piece of advice from a sister to a sister. Let your entire story be genuinely true, please forgive me, but I am saying it so that, you will correct your mistakes. Bianca, say it all and be free forever. If I had not been close to you, I wouldn't know how sweet you are.

I had not requested feedback from a cellmate and initially I was annoyed that she took my stuff without permission. On the other hand, afterwards I was kind of happy with the feedback as it confirmed the words spoken by the OIC.

In your hands you have the final product after some editing and fine tuning of the text. Hopefully after you have finished reading my story, you will not make the same mistakes I did in the past. Even if you are doing them now, I hope you stop. I was ignorant back then and didn't know the Lord. Now, I want the whole world to know that no matter the situation, if you give your life to Jesus Christ, your situation will change.

Read my story and you will understand how come I am so certain about that. The story flows from my childhood to the choices I made as a teenager and as a young adult. You will get information about the consequences of my choices and the way I had operated in a chapter of my life which is now closed, closed forever.

In the last chapter I will provide information about the evil forces on this world that influenced my choices, my life and my way of living. Most important part of the last chapter is how to keep away and rebuke those evil forces from your life and from the life of your loved ones.

My prayer for you is that the Almighty God will bless and protect you all the days of your life. That you become (more) aware of the fact that you have the choice to choose for Jesus and the love and protection that only He can offer. That the Holy Spirit may guide you and the angels of God protect you while you are reading this book. That you will not focus on judging me, my attitude and choices made, but that you will become aware that behind every choice there are invisible forces, spiritual forces, and that protection from the evil forces comes only from the Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Once I was looking for love. Now, in Jesus, I have it all.

Blessings from the bottom of my heart,

Bianca.

CHAPTER ONE

MY CHILDHOOD

My name is Bianca Grootfaam and I wrote the basic text for this book, in my late thirties. I was born and raised on the west side of Amsterdam, the capital of The Netherlands. My parents are originally from Suriname, which lies in South America. Your background might be different from mine but surely you will be able to relate to or understand the circumstances described in this book and their consequences. It all started in my childhood.

My early years

When I think about my youth, I can say that I was intensely and desperately looking for love. My father was, as he would call himself, a business man. He was never at home which made me very sad. At that time he was a drug dealer and most of the time he was absent during the day and the evening. I saw him most of the time at dawn, when I went to the bathroom to do my needs and made use of the opportunity to take a look at him while he was sleeping. I used to steal money out of his pocket while he was sleeping.

As he had a lot of cash, he did not notice that some money was missing or at least, he never complained about it to my sister or me. Around the time that my mother used to wake my sister Mariska and me up for us to take our bath as preparation to go to school, dad would be either sleeping, factually snoring, or he would have left already. There was no opportunity for a “*good morning pa*” or a hug for my sister and me in the morning hours.

Mariska is the only sister I have and she is eleven months older than me. My mother would walk Mariska and me to the kindergarten, and later on to the primary school, as it was a walk of only 5 minutes. Our mother was the one in charge of preparing our meals lunchboxes for school but sadly enough, she did all of this with little love. We would open our lunchboxes at school and we would notice that the bread had a green color on the inside because of the filling. The filling was green cheese, each and every day green cheese. This cheese gets its color and name from the herbs and spices that it is made of. It is an expensive cheese, but as a child you want a sandwich with children-favored delicacies such as chocolate spread or luncheon meat. Above all, you want a sandwich that is prepared with love.

During those years there was little to no happiness in my mother's life. My father was a handsome man and the ladies liked him a lot. On his turn, he gave them attention with all the consequences thereof. All of this gave my mother feelings of bitterness, jealousy and all you can imagine in those kinds of situations. As their marriage did not change for the better, my mother got to the point of serious depression. This situation led to the use of medication and maybe more substances during those days. She was so depressed during the early years of my life and the years that would follow

that she could not give love to us. She became so attached to the use of her medications that one time she slept the whole day to the extent that she forgot to pick us up from school. My mother was so down in her feelings that she did not want to celebrate Christmas, birthdays, Mother's day or anything that would bring happiness to the family.



Bianca at age 6

She did not pay much attention to us. She did not even teach me how to cook or clean the house, and the lack of the aforementioned abilities had a very bad influence on my marriage. I will elaborate on my marriage and all that was related to it in chapters 3 and 4.

Up to this day (the time when I wrote the basic text) the wounds of the past in my mother's heart are not healed completely. When reflecting on my childhood, it was as if all seemed hopeless and because of that, my sister Mariska was never happy with herself.

**Our parents gave us
money but no love.**

My grandmother and her contribution

My sister and I were raised by ourselves with a little help from our maternal grandmother, Grandma Cornelia. She was the sweetest grandma one could ever have. She used to come to the house every day, as she was so concerned about us, but sometimes my mother would not open the door for her. My sister and I would then cry because we wanted to see grandma. I remember very well that one time, on my birthday, grandma came by with a birthday cake, but my mother said that nobody should open the door. Grandma had no other option than to take the cake back home. That was very sad. Shortly said, our parents gave us money but no love.

I never saw my mother or my father, either praying or going to church. Consequently, I was not familiar with the beliefs and customs of a believer. The primary school I attended, which was located in the western part of the city, was associated with a Roman Catholic Church. Once in a while I would go to the church service, but I had no understanding of what was happening during the services. My grandmother was the one who taught my sister and me how to pray, to say '*The Lord's Prayer*' and to have mercy.

When eating at grandma's house, before eating we would say: "*Lord, bless this food. Amen*" and make the cross sign in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

When we were a bit older, like 12 years old, I think grandmother was attending to the services of the Evangelic Brother Fellowship (official name: Evangelisch Broeder Gemeente). We would dress nice and go to the service to see if we could find a handsome boyfriend. Due to the aforementioned we (my sister and I) never listened to the preaching. Nonetheless, we enjoyed being there.

Although grandmother was attending the church, she believed in and practiced the fetish. She used to bathe us with flowers and drinks, especially on New Year's Day. When we were sick would her family, as we were told in order to help us, organize "cultural parties" where the people would dance and call upon spirits. This is what I experienced and learned about the life of a believer. Later on I learned, initially by looking for ways to change, what a true believer in Jesus is like.

My education and talent

Throughout the years, the situation at home did not become better. My mother and my father used to fight very often and very violently. I can still remember one time, early in the morning, when my father had beaten my mother and she had hit him as well. I went on hiding under the bed because I did not want to see how they would harm each other. It was so horrible and frightening. I did not want to lose my mother nor my father because of a fight. I used to wet my bed and also sack on my thumb, both more as an expression of my fear than as incompetence.

At the age of 13 years, I began skipping school, and roam in the streets of East Amsterdam, simply because I could not concentrate at school. When I was in the classroom, I would think about what would be going on in the house. At that time I attended a school in the east part of Amsterdam. I really lived in fear and trauma. I was so scared and felt bad emotionally, yet I never told anybody about this. I needed to live, have a life with stability, union, love, but my parents could not provide it for me. Because of the aforementioned, I preferred to accompany some of my classmates to their homes and neighborhood instead of going home.

We attended school in East Amsterdam but most of my classmates lived in Amsterdam-Southeast, the so called Bijlmer area. I went on roaming the streets in East Amsterdam more frequently, having fun with my friends, going out to clubs and having many boyfriends. My mother used to beat me every day; if it was not for wetting my bed, then it was for arriving home late.

When I think about the way I was, I can only say that God really loved me and still loves me. I used to walk late at night in the streets, having several boyfriends who could have given me diseases. Despite of the attention given to me on the streets, I had an unsatisfied feeling. I felt sad most of the time. When I was sad, I used to listen to my father's long plays containing songs of Carla Thomas including '*No pain no gain*' or '*If you should lose me you lose a good thing*'. I also listened to Surinamese songs and there was one song that I loved very much. It was a song of Eddy Hasang titled '*Mi jere fu ding tra wang dat you na wang waka mang*' which means I heard that you are a man of the street. Listening to music made me feel at ease. I loved music from the age of five. At the primary school I found out that I could sing and from that time on I was interested in singing. During those early years, my mother and my father had not supported me in anything because they were too busy with themselves. Years later, every time this discussion would come up, they would argue that the lack of attention towards me was because of the fact that I used to roam in the streets after school.

One time, that was in Amsterdam-Southeast, to be exact in the neighborhood called Kraaiennest, I was sitting outside while no one of my age was around. It was around 8 o'clock in the evening; it was already getting dark. I was about 13 years old. A lady was walking by and when our eyes crossed each other, she stopped. She kept looking at me and spoke to me by saying: "*Hey little girl, I want you to go home. Where are your parents?*" I stuck my thumb in my mouth and just looked at her. My attitude did not scare her off and she asked me to accompany her. I did not know her but still I responded to her request by standing up and walking in the

direction she was heading in. She took me to her place and once there she asked me for my mother's telephone number. I was scared for my mother's reaction so I gave her my grandmother's phone number instead. It was already 10 o'clock when the lady called grandma that night. They had a nice talk based on the words I heard her speaking, her expression and voice tone. I think that afterwards, grandma called my mother and told her that I was with her in order to cover for me.

That night I stayed at the lady's house. Her name was Diana Blijd and she was very nice to me. She asked me several questions upon which I responded. She even asked why I didn't want to go home. Once I had answered this question, she stretched her arms towards me, hugged me and told me that it was okay. She gave me a clean set of sleepwear for me to put on and a cup of tea. The atmosphere was nice and warm; way different from what I was used to. Once I was ready, she guided me to the bedroom where I could stay for the night; a bedroom for me alone. As I lay down on the bed, I covered myself with the bed cover and fell asleep soon. I woke up the next morning, took a shower, had breakfast and headed to school. That afternoon I went home because I had to change my clothes. After this day I stayed in contact with Mrs. Blijd.

Because I was regularly in her neighborhood, I paid her some visits. Sometimes I even (mis)used her hospitality and stayed over for the night. On those occasions, when she asked me if my parents knew where I was, I told her to just call my grandmother to inform her. I really enjoyed the conversation moments the two of us had. It was during one of these conversations that I learned that she was an organizer of youth events. To be more precise, she used to gather talented youth and train them in arts like playing musical instru-

ments, singing and modelling. Furthermore she arranged shows where young people were able to show their talents. Her work was mainly aimed at keeping the youth out of the streets. She worked a lot at the center called Bontekraai in the neighborhood Kraaiennest of the Amsterdam-Southeast area.

I found the work of Mrs. Blijd very appealing and interesting because I was very interested in the art of singing. At the primary school I participated once in a song festival organized by the teachers and I won the first price. I told Mrs. Blijd all of this and she invited me to participate at the activities at the Bontekraai instead of staying out on the streets. I took her offer and soon after I was almost every day at the center. I took modeling lessons, participated in shows where we had to show clothing at events and I also participated in the choir. The choir was very active with giving presentations.

I remember that one time on Christmas when we gave a performance at the jail in Amsterdam. Mrs. Blijd was very professional. One time she got a contract for a performance for the choir in a new television program in Italy. All the members of the choir had to request permission of their parents to participate in the show, especially because some travelling was involved. I went to my parents and requested for them to sign the required paperwork. Sadly enough, I had to wave the choir members out and see the bus drive away because I had no permission to participate; my mom refused to let me participate. Despite this disappointment, I look back at this period as a period in which Mrs. Blijd tried to give me some of the basic aspects that I needed in my life which I had lacked of.

The training I received from Diana had given me more confidence for my performance on stages. Some acquaintances of mine who knew that I could sing well, invited me to be part of their band. We were more or less of the same age, the age of 14. We were a band consisting of four girls and people used to call one of the girls the name of Chaka Kan because of her hair style. One song we loved to perform was titled '*You don't have to tell me*'.

I can't remember now who the original singer of that song was. Each of us had a solo part when performing the song and in 1988 we traveled around major neighborhoods in Amsterdam to give performances. Then it came to a point where I got an opportunity to add another level to my singing career.

My sister had a friend who could sing like it is no man's business. She asked me one day if I wanted to participate in a song festival. However, this song festival was meant for adults. I had a big posture for my age of fourteen therefore I looked much older. We thought it would not be obvious that I am too young to participate. On the other hand, there was my mother and her opinion. I wanted to participate so badly, but I knew that my mother would never allow me. I was sure about that because of an incident that had taken place before. There was a time that the Caribbean people had a carnival activity and they had asked if Chaka Kan, Sas (the nickname of another group member) and I could come and sing. We went to the event as agreed but I did not inform my mother about it. My mother was at home that evening and around 7 o'clock she asked my sister where I was. Once she knew where I was, she came there and beat the hell out of me in the presence of everybody. I was so ashamed.

Let us go back to the song festival. Like I mentioned earlier I was thinking whether to participate or not, considering what had happened at the carnival activity. Singing had always been my passion so I decided to participate while being fully aware that it could mean that I would get beaten up every day. Despite the odds, my friend and I decided that I would go the next day to register for participation in the song festival. That evening I couldn't sleep.

I do not recall who organized the song festival but I do remember that there were flyers and posters announcing the song festival at almost all the bus stops in the neighborhood Ganzenhoef. The selection rounds were held at the music studio Melody Line and the final was scheduled to take place at another location in Ganzenhoef. The next morning I went bodily to the studio and registered myself for the song festival. I was told that the next time I should bring 50 guilders and a master tape so that the band could play the music I wanted. The days went by and the day on which the first preliminary would be held arrived. There were like 50 participants and one had to sing till the final five were chosen. I thought I would not make it through because of my figure and for the fact that I am a woman.

Despite all, I managed to stay in the contest for two weeks and every day I received a beating from my mother. We had to be in the studio at 6 o'clock in the evening and that was the time for us to go to bed according to my mother's rule. Consequently, during those two weeks, I arrived home late based on the house rules. Every time my mother had beaten me, I said in my heart: "*I will sing, even if I have to die!*" That is the love I had and still have for music. For the final day of the contest, which would take place on the Friday evening, I decided the night before to run away from home. I bought myself a nice denim skirt with a black corset top and some

black pumps and I went to Diana's place. Diana was not at home but she had told me earlier how I could get in and wait for her inside. Once I realized that, it was the week that Diana would not be in town, I decided to stay for the night at her home. I woke up the next morning and I was ready for the final.

I made my arrangements and arrived very early at the place where the contest would be held, way before six o'clock. I went to the dressing room to wait for the time to come that the finalists would be called up for the performances. I noticed that the jury for that day consisted of three matured and well-known persons. I knew that people called one of them Bem and another one was a woman who was a singer of the band called 'Oema Soso'. The jury called the participants one by one for the final performances. I was the third person that was called and I sang '*Many rivers to cross*' and '*A woman in love*'. When I finished singing, I went back to the waiting room.

I was very nervous, so nervous that sweat was running all over my body. I was nervous because I had run away from home and it was getting very late. I think it was around midnight by then, but the only question that was circulating in my mind was: Am I going to win? I was peeping at the people sitting in the audience to see if I knew somebody, but they were mainly adults and none looked familiar to me. Some friends of mine were present but I was not able to spot them in the audience. Once all the 5 finalists had the chance to perform, there was a pause. After a while the judges finished with their counting and ranking of the participants and they proceeded to announcing the prizes. They started with the third place. The name of the finalist was mentioned and the concerning person walked towards the stage to receive the price. Then I heard them calling my name. I was so nervous to come out, that the host took

me by one hand and guided me to the platform while in her other hand she held the cup for the second place. I won. Not the ultimate price, the first place, but a second place which was not bad at all. Once the contest was over, some of my friends who were present and had cheered for me came to me to congratulate me. I was so glad but at the same time I was afraid that my parents would beat me up when I arrived home. I told my friends that I had ran away from home and one of them offered for me to stay at her home because she knew that her mother would not mind for a couple of days.

The next day, Saturday, I woke up at the house of my friend's family. She had just asked her mother for me to stay over because it was weekend. I could borrow clothing and we had a wonderful day. In the evening we went to a dance competition in the neighborhood and to my own surprise I won a price at that competition too. This price was even worth a mentioning in the local newspaper. As we had a new accomplishment to celebrate for, I stayed that night too at my friends'. My mother realized on the Sunday that I had not been home for three days and she told my father who started to search for me. My sister contacted some of my friends and they found out where I was. My father and my sister came to pick me up at my friend's house. At the time I got home, my dad told me that he didn't know that I could sing that well. Despite the positive comment I received a round of beating from my father for the fact that I had ran away. This time the beating was more than justified. The reaction of my mother was as usual. After all, it worked out well. I was back at home with my family hoping that it would continue to be fine but it was sadly enough for a short, very short period.



Bianca performing at the primary school song festival