FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Autobiography & Memoir

Madame Ambassador: The Shoemaker's Daughter
Mari-Luci Jaramillo
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From tales of how, as schoolchildren, she and her siblings lined their tattered shoes with cardboard insoles to protect their feet from the cold ground, to an artless recounting of her gratitude for the lectern that hid her shaking knees from an audience of hundreds, the author has written the story of her inspiring life in language as simple and immediate as conversation.

Jaramillo's story, rich with details of the culture she was born to in northern New Mexico, never departs from her compassion for the "underclass" she sprang from, her fiery anger about and understanding of the heartsick suffering of the rejected, or from her unquenchable passion for the rectification of the social inequities still prevalent in many parts of the Americas.

Her father was a Mexican immigrant leatherworker who made shoes for sale but not for his children; her mother was a member of an old New Mexico family, descendants of the Spanish Conquistadors. Mari-Luci cringed with embarrassment when "Papi" wouldn't let her cut her hair or wear makeup, even in high school. "Mami" compensated by threading her peasant blouses and skirts—made of recycled flour sacks—with colorful ribbons and embroidery. The solidarity and love of an extended family gave Jaramillo the emotional substance for a life of public service.

Since Spanish was spoken at home, Mari-Luci and her siblings started school with no English and were almost immediately “racked” along with the other Latino children. Mari-Luci’s brilliance and industry attracted the attention of a teacher who proved to be her mentor, a role she was determined to pursue once she had an opportunity. Determination, a few scholarships, and whatever hard work was necessary earned her a PhD in Education, and an upward climb from teacher to Vice President of the University of New Mexico, and finally a career as Presidential Ambassador to Honduras and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America.

Retired now from political life, she continues her public life as a member of a broad range of civil rights organizations. No feminist, but feminine to the core, she continues to demonstrate to an effete world the warmth and healing power of love. This is a book to warm the heart and fire the mind of every American, regardless of social, political, or ethnic origin.