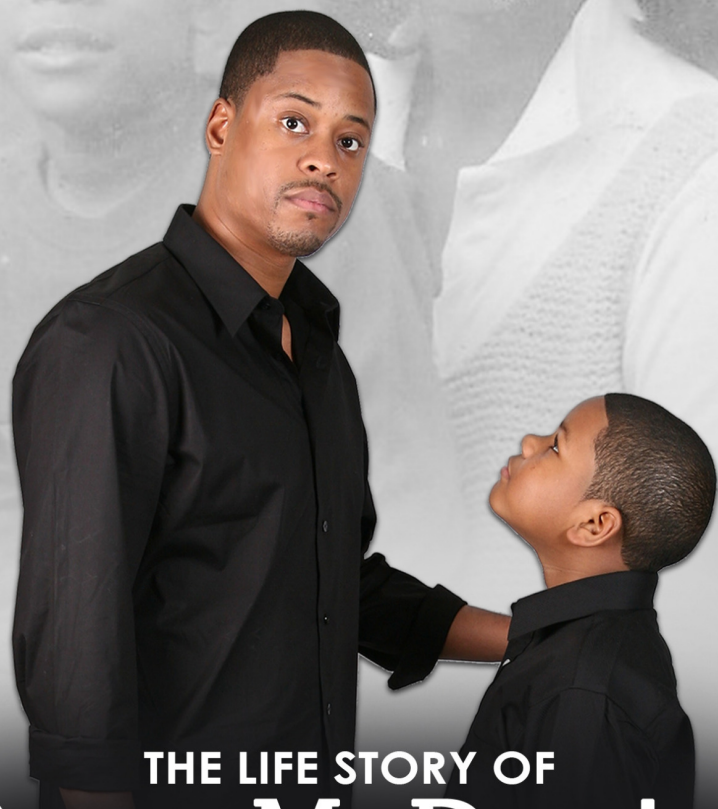


▪ THE FATHERLESS FATHER ▪

HOW A SINGLE MOTHER'S STRENGTH
TURNED A BOY INTO A MAN



THE LIFE STORY OF

Reco McDaniel
McCambry

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*HOW A SINGLE MOTHER'S STRENGTH
TURNED A BOY INTO A MAN*

By Reco McDaniel McCambry

www.TheFatherlessFather.com

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ISBN 978-0-9887342-1-0

This book is available at quantity discounts for bulk purchase.

Printed in the United States of America

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“What happens to us does not determine where we end up in life. It’s how we react to what happens to us. That will determine our future.”

- Reco McDaniel McCambry

Family
God's Greatest Gift



Thank you Shanee', Reco Jr., Raegan
and Rylee for supporting and loving
me through it all.
I love you!

Dedication



July 21, 1962 – July 31, 2011

I would like to dedicate this book to the only father I knew for the first 30 years of my life – my mother, **Deborah Ann Watson.**

If I could define strength, tenacity, independence, determination, hardworking, persistence, and resolve in one word it would be simply – Momma. I owe mostly everything I know and my life today to you! I love you!

Until we meet again...

Momma's foundation to her strength

Footprints in the Sand

One night I dreamed I was walking along the beach
with the Lord.

Many scenes from my life flashed across the sky.

In each scene I noticed footprints in the sand.

Sometimes there were two sets of footprints, other
times there were one set of footprints.

This bothered me because I noticed that during the
low periods of my life,

when I was suffering from anguish, sorrow or
defeat,

I could see only one set of footprints.

So I said to the Lord,

"You promised me Lord, that if I followed you, you
would walk with me always.

But I have noticed that during the most trying
periods of my life there have only been one set of
footprints in the sand.

Why, when I needed you most, you have not been
there for me?"

The Lord replied,

"The times when you have seen only one set of
footprints

is when I carried you."

-Author Unknown

Intro

“A man can be as great as he wants to be. If you believe in yourself and have the courage, the determination, the dedication, the competitive drive, and if you are willing to sacrifice the little things in life and pay the price for the things that are worthwhile, it can be done.”

–Vince Lombardi, Legendary Football Coach

When I first set out to write this book, I wanted to create a simple tale about my life—a way for people to know about my trials and tribulations, how I overcame certain challenges in my life, and how these tests turned me into the man I am today. By doing so, I figured this would allow the reader to gain a better understanding of my upbringing, which, ultimately, would inspire them to live a better life.

However, I soon began to realize that this book needed more substance than that. It needed to allow the reader to *truly* understand that *their* struggles were once *my own* and that it is possible

to overcome their issues. There are many people walking around the world at this very moment who feel like they're alone... that their life obstacles are shared with no one else. This creates a sense of loneliness with countless people around the world. Just think about it. How many people do you know that are struggling to make ends meet? How many single mothers do you know who are working three jobs, barely keeping enough food on the table for her family, and genuinely trying to ensure that her children are cared for, even though it seems like an impossible task as she drags herself out of bed at 5 a.m. every morning? I'm sure you know a child who is angry at the world because he or she feels as though no one understands what they're feeling on the inside and how their resentment is caused by feelings of neglect or not obtaining enough love from their parents. We all know these stories. I wanted to make it my mission to help address them through my story.

I travel around the country meeting thousands of people each year, many of whom ask me "How can I live a better life?" or "How were you able to operate at the level you're at right now when the beginning of your life didn't seem so promising?" I

often have to take a step back and really think about how my story can help alter the way one sees their circumstances, which, in the end, can help change the way they see themselves and the world around them. The conclusion I've come to is this: We all have different stories that start off differently and will end differently. However, there are similarities and shared experiences that we can piece together with one another, mainly to show we are going through the same tests, and we can learn through one another, especially if it can help the end result be positive.

In the end, I hope this book inspires young mothers, young fathers, single parents, teenage boys, runaways, fatherless fathers, and a multitude of other groups to understand that just because your story started out rough, it doesn't mean it will end that way. I have faith that it will allow you to see that the world holds many positive experiences and possibilities for you, but you won't ever be able to see them unless you've got the right mindset, the will to work hard, and the passion to follow your dreams.

The following pages will give you frank and upfront recollections of my past, my present, and my future. My past allowed me to appreciate my present life. My present life allows me to have hope for myself, my family, and for future generations. I am optimistic this hope will inspire the same in you.

Chapter 1 – Feelings of the Fatherless

“You might be locked in a world not of your own making, her eyes said, but you still have a claim on how it is shaped. You still have responsibilities.”

–Barack Obama, Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance

Picture this: A 6’1” black man sprinting like he’s in the 100-meter dash in the Olympics through Orlando International Airport after a long, tiresome day but still needing to catch a 1:15 p.m. flight back to Atlanta, Georgia. This is me on a muggy July day in Florida. I’m blowing past security, dodging my way around other wayward passengers, trying to make that flight. Yes—suit, tie, and all. My heart’s racing as my mind is replaying the highlights of my life-changing weekend I just experienced at the National Speakers Association National Convention. Suddenly, between hearing “Just the Way You Are” by Bruno Mars over the airport’s loudspeaker for what seems to be the tenth time on this trip, I hear an automated

voice say, “The tram is now departing.” I quickly make a promise to myself that it will *not* be leaving without me—I’ve got to get home.

I manage to squeeze through the 12-inch opening in the tram doors as they quickly shut behind me. The other passengers in the tram car briefly look my way, mainly to make sure I made it on in one piece, because they have been in my position before—running through the airport as if it’s a scene from *Home Alone*. I look down at my watch and see that it is 1:00 p.m. I begin to have a minor panic attack because my flight will depart soon. Fifteen minutes and counting. I think, *How did I let time get away from me so badly that I’m rushing through the airport? I can’t do this again—this is crazy.* I begin racing down the escalator at full speed, like a running back going in for the game-winning touchdown, brushing past families, businessmen, and everyone in between, quickly apologizing for all the commotion. But again, they don’t look too irritated because it seems they can empathize with my situation. At this point, there is only one thing on my mind: my son. I cannot miss this flight. I will not break my promise. I will be at his football game tonight, and I will give him our ritual pre-game pep talk.

I look up at the terminal clock, and it says 1:07 p.m. I'm sweating profusely from all the running, and the perspiration begins to drip down my face. The suit I have on doesn't make it any better, but it was a necessity for the conference. I can still hear my mother's voice telling me to "always look my best." This, however, happens to be one of those times that I wish I had on a comfortable t-shirt with some basketball shorts and running shoes.

Finally, I look up and see I'm at Terminal B. I just need to run past 10 gates, and I'm on the next flight to see my boy. I grin with thoughts of witnessing his smile light up when he sees me and keep it as I move through the airport. Through the blur of faces, baby cries, and endless food vendors creeps Gate 85. I slow down with a sigh of relief and thank God that I've made it before they closed the cabin doors. I don't know what I would have done if I ran all this way just to see the door close in my face. "Well, you just made it with 4 minutes to spare! Hurry on now, ya hear," shouts a sweet old southern accent from the check-in counter. As I approach the boarding door, I am met with reassuring brown eyes and a smile by the woman collecting the tickets. It's as though she can feel how

hard I worked to get to the gate. “It’s alright now, you’ve made it,” she quietly tells me. I catch my breath, quickly hand over my ticket, and rush on the plane with my heart pounding and sweat dripping all over, yet grinning ear to ear because I’m ready to see my son.

I take my seat, ready for the plane to take off as soon as possible. Suddenly, the flight attendant appears.

“Would you like a cold bottle of water, sir?” she says.

“How could you tell? Am I sweating that much?” I reply with a smile on my face.

“Yes, sir. We don’t usually pass out drinks before the plane takes off, but I think we can make an exception for you. You seem like you need it,” she says, nods, and kindly walks away.

I smirk and gratefully take the bottle of water. I’m sure people around me are a little jealous at the special treatment I just received, but I ignore it.

Seeing my son's face will make this entire adventure worth it.

As I get comfortable in my snug airplane seat, my adrenaline is still rushing through my veins. I figured that because I'll have downtime for the next hour, I will download all of the excitement of the last few days. During that time, I met some of the most successful speakers, authors, and motivators from around the world.

“In the midst of all the successful individuals, I stopped and realized how blessed I was to have reached such high peaks of success at my early age—I have much more than I could have ever dreamed of as a kid.”

There were men and women representing various ethnic, religious, and culture backgrounds from San Diego, California to London, England and New York, New York to San Juan, Puerto Rico. Everyone was out in full force, allowing themselves to learn from other successful motivators while appreciating the moment

—rubbing elbows with the world’s greats was exciting for everyone in attendance.

In the midst of all the successful individuals, I stopped and realized how blessed I was to have reached such high peaks of success at my early age—I have much more than I could have ever dreamed of as a kid. When I was a child growing up in the 1980s, I stood around wondering where my father was while admiring my mother’s hard work from afar. I

struggled with feelings of inadequacy, hoping that, one day, I would be able to take a life that started in the projects and do something amazing and influential with it.

And here I was.

I became a multi-million dollar producing entrepreneur within the network marketing industry in my mid-20s, having addressed tens of thousands across the country through motivation and training. In addition to this, I’ve received numerous awards and recognition. I’ve built a gratifying lifestyle, one where I don’t have to worry about my lights being turned off or not having enough gas in my car to get me to a destination. I’ve surrounded myself with

mentally strong and hardworking people, and we feed off of each other's good vibes and push each other to work harder, faster, and more efficiently. I've had the opportunity to travel the world: I've marveled at the Christ the Redeemer statue in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in one moment and visited Buckingham Palace and Big Ben in London in the next. I was blessed to meet the woman of my dreams, Shanee', and have her accept me as her husband—one of the greatest gifts any person could have ever given me. Additionally, I have two amazing children who are everything I could have ever dreamed them to be, who make me laugh until my sides hurt, and who also remind me how much of an influence I have in their lives as their father. Last, but certainly not least, I have God, who has brought me through so many trials and tribulations. It's hard not to think of Psalm 34:4, which says, "I sought the LORD, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears."

And yet, despite all these wonderful things, I know my purpose is greater. I know there is more work for me to do.

"God has been so good to me," I quietly mumble to myself with a smile.

As I continue to reflect on my life, I hear a young child behind me begin to speak.

“Mommy, how come I never see my dad?” I hear the little boy ask his mother.

This innocent question completely diminishes all thoughts in my head, and I begin to listen intently for the response. As I wait for the answer, I hear a painfully familiar pause of silence as the mother wraps her arms around her son and explains, “It’s me, you, and God, and we are incredibly blessed, don’t you think?”

I can tell he has dropped his head as he solemnly replies, “Yes mommy, we are blessed.”

At this moment, my heart pains for this young boy, and I am struck with a series of emotions, as if I am that boy again; bitterness, sadness, emptiness, and jealousy quickly begin to sneak into my heart. These old emotions I thought I had put to rest rear their ugly heads, reminding me that I never quite got over my experiences as a child. I think about the fact that I never had a father growing up and how that shaped me to be the man I am today, whether those moments

were good, bad, or ugly. However, I begin to think about the countless conversations I had with my own mother, and I smile. I feel joy in my heart in that moment, realizing how amazing that woman was—simply recalling how through it all, she was my saving grace.

While the mother and son behind me are having a bonding moment, I realize how strong my own mother was and how much I loved and appreciated her for raising me the way she did. I think about how much I love God for providing me with such a close-knit family, even though my biological father, my blood, was not in the home with me. My thoughts drift again to the two behind me, specifically to the little boy, who can only be about 8 years old, and how there are countless other young males out there with no father to look up to or who would be there to encourage, support, and guide them. They also wonder where their fathers are when it's time to play catch, when they score their first touchdown, and when they get their acceptance letters into college. They wonder if they did something wrong to "push" their fathers away, hoping that, one day, he will walk through the front door with arms wide open and say three simple words, "I'm home, son."

I was quickly saddened, realizing the severity of this epidemic in today's society—how it's a social norm to be in a single-parent household with no father—and even sadder to realize that often times, these young boys don't have other family members to lean on, as I had. I begin to think about the fact that I am a father and how seriously I take my duty and responsibility; how I take every hurt growing up and make that a place of joy for my son. However, I also understand that this is often not the case for many young people in today's society—many parents take their hurt and inflict it on their children who are defenseless against their parent's wrath. What's even more unfortunate is how many men these days have children and then leave them fatherless, simply because they did not have a father in their home growing up—the wretched cycle continuing.

As the plane begins its ascent into the open summer sky on its way to Atlanta, I have a moment of revelation. I realize the next level of my purpose and the new chapter in my story: writing a book that will help address the internal conflicts that numerous people are dealing with on a daily basis. In this moment, I realized that it was now part of my mission

to help address the emotions surrounding people who are without a husband, a mentor, a partner, or a father who is willing to step in and help take care of his family. Those thoughts helped to set the foundation of this book. The words on these pages will help encourage, inspire, motivate, and bring awareness to men, women, and children who are currently experiencing or have experienced single parenthood.

I want this book to help those growing up without a father. I want it to touch those developing into manhood without a male influence. I want it to assist men who never knew their father but are not using that as an excuse to be absent from their children's lives. Hopefully, fathers struggling to provide consistent attention to their children will gain some inspiration from my words. This book will provide simple success principles about life that will leave people feeling more confident about themselves, their specific life situation, and their relationships with their family. My mission, with the assistance of this book, is to lay out applicable steps to free people from any stronghold related to this growing epidemic of single-parent households and help them begin living

lives without limits and walk into their true and provisioned destiny.

“I am proof that although your beginning may not start out as you dreamed it to be, that does not mean your future can’t be something wonderful.”

I don’t claim to be a licensed counselor, family therapist, or holder of a PhD who has conducted in-depth research on the causes and effects of single-parent households in a greater society and what this potentially means for the future of the world. I have not conducted hundreds of interviews with young men, asking them their thoughts on growing up with a dad in their lives and what that does for their self-esteem and their self-worth. Additionally, I don’t have any concrete evidence on whether or not young men who are raised by a single mother have a greater likelihood of getting into trouble with the law, which ultimately leads to a life behind bars. *However*, I AM a man who experienced life without a father, overcame all of the adversity associated with being without an *active* male parental figure, reached numerous peaks of success, and became a reliable and

dedicated father to my two children. I am proof that although your beginning may not start out as you dreamed it to be, that does not mean your future can't be something wonderful.

I am a Fatherless Father.

About the Author



Despite humble beginnings, **Reco McDaniel McCambry** has been blessed to accomplish a tremendous amount at a young age. Starting his entrepreneurship journey at 20 years old in 2001; to date, he has started, built, and run 4 multi-million dollar companies. At the time of the last update of this book, Reco serves as the President & CEO of Novae, a national financial services and training company. In addition, recently launching a venture capital, management, and consulting firm called Urban Sharks, focused on the funding and growth of minority owned companies.

As a talented speaker, Reco is frequently tapped by corporations, non-profits, youth programs, faith-based organizations and educational institutions to share the keys of his successful entrepreneurial endeavors. He offers audiences a candid peek into his personal experiences and provides motivation and encouragement to inspire positive life changes and success.

Reco has been featured multiple times as one of the youngest success stories in the annual publication of “Who’s Who in Black Atlanta”, a publication highlighting some of the most accomplished African Americans in and around Atlanta, GA. Reco is also on the Leadership Council for the National Small Business Association (NSBA) out of Washington DC, which advocates on Capitol Hill for small businesses nationwide.

Lastly, Reco has been selected to the Forbes Business Council and to be a Global Platform Contributor to Forbes.com to share his expertise on Business Credit & Funding for entrepreneurs across the world.

Reco graduated from Southern Polytechnic State University with a B.S. degree in Industrial Engineering and obtained his M.B.A. from the Coles College of Business at Kennesaw State University. Upon completing his M.B.A., Reco earned a 4.0 GPA and was inducted into two of the most prestigious business honor societies in the world, Golden Key International Honor Society and Beta Gamma Sigma; where many members are C level executives for Fortune 100 companies. He has received numerous awards and recognition throughout his career, for his memorable speaking, training sessions, phenomenal leadership ability and superior results in business.

For more information on Reco McDaniel McCambry, visit www.RecoMcCambry.com.