

Carlos H. Valdez Sr.

Interviewed by Mia Gabriella Valdez  
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Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

Transcribed by Mia Valdez

**Mia Valdez:** Hello! I'm Mia Valdez, it is September 22, 2020. I am in Corpus Christi, Texas, and I am calling my grandfather, Carlos Homero Valdez over the phone. And he is in Colorado Springs, Colorado, visiting family. He is—we are going to be talking about labor unions and South Texas steel workers. So, hello Grandpa!

**Carlos H. Valdez Sr.:** Hello there Mia, how are you doing?

**MV:** I'm doing great, thank you. Is it okay if I record you?

**CV:** Of course, it's okay.

**MV:** Okay, good. So, to get started, can you tell me a little bit about yourself? About your life, and who you are?

**CV:** Okay. I'm Carlos H. Valdez senior. I am the grandfather of Mia Gabriella Valdez. I have lived in Corpus Christi, Texas, all my life, and worked at Asarco [American Smelting and Refining Company] for twenty years, from 1967 to 1985, but that is eighteen years. But whenever we, uh—whenever the plant closed, they moved us all up to twenty years, it was rounded off. It was very interesting there, for twenty years there, I got involved with the union, and learned a lot of things. A lot of the beliefs I have today were founded in those years in the late sixties and early seventies, so that's about the start of it.

**MV:** Okay. Can you tell me about your childhood and where your father and mother worked, and a little bit about your teenage, early years?

**CV:** Okay. My mother was Carolina Villareal Valdez, my father was Jose G. Valdez Jr., and we lived at 1925 Horne Road since about nineteen, about 1954, 1953. We moved from 434 Hiawatha, where we were renting a house—no, actually, we were buying a house. A gentleman by the name of Mr. Woodruff would come and collect a mortgage payment every month. So then in 1953, we bought a brand-new house in the John Jones subdivision, on 1925 Horne Road, and I lived there until I got married, and moved in with my wife and started a family, and the rest goes from there.

**MV:** Okay.

**CV:** Let—okay, my teenage years. Okay. My teenage years were interesting. I went to Catholic school for ten years of my life, from Kindergarten, I went to Cathedral High School. I went to Cathedral all the way up to the sixth grade, and then we moved. And when we moved, I started going to Christ the King Catholic School, I believe the seventh and the eighth grade. I went to College Academy Catholic High School [in] the ninth grade, and then I moved to Carroll High School in the tenth grade, and I graduated from Carroll High School in 1963. I went to Del Mar College, and studied mechanics, and I got a mechanic's certificate degree—certificate, I'm sorry, and did mechanic work for a little bit. And then, my dad told me they were hiring at Asarco, and I took the offer because it was a bit more than double my pay. So, my mechanic work was history.

**MV:** Oh okay. I know that you were in the National Guard, so can you tell me a little bit about that as well?

**CV:** Yes, I joined the National Guard in 1967, I think. Yes, and I was in the National Guard for six years, and I think I came [back], like, in seventy-two. [I] went to weekly meetings—not weekly meetings, but supposedly monthly meetings. How I joined the National Guard because—uh, was that when I was at Del Mar, I had about four or five months left before I finished my mechanic's certificate, and I got drafted. So, there was no way out of the draft. So, I went to the office there at Del Mar, and one of the persons that worked there, his name was Mr. Ditto, and Mr. Ditto was a captain in the National Guard. He said, “Carlos, you don't have to worry about not finishing your mechanic school.” He said, “You can go ahead and finish it, and if you join the National Guard, it'll be something that you'll enjoy, and you go to meetings once a month, you go to summer camp once a year, and you'll meet your obligation to, uh, for military service that way.” So, I was going to leave when I could to finish my mechanic certificate education, so I went. I did that, I joined the National Guard, and finished my certificate program for mechanics at Del Mar, auto mechanic studies. And then, I went in the National Guard and started going to weekly meetings. But of course, if you know at that time, shortly thereafter, the Vietnam War really took off. Instead of weekly meetings, we were doing meetings every other week, and of course that created a little bit of a hardship on me because the, I—when I went to the meeting[s], the—my job would let me go, but I didn't get paid. They would—so, if I wasn't off on the weekends, which I worked rotating shifts, if I wasn't off on the weekends, well I just missed two days on that paycheck. Well when I started going to meetings twice a month, that really put a strain on the paycheck.

**MV:** Um-hm.

**CV:** In any event, I got through it and finished my obligation to the military I think it was—you know what, I joined the National Guard in 1965, I'm sorry. I joined the National Guard in 1965, and I completed my obligation in 1971. So yeah, those were six years, and it was fun. I like the outdoors. So, we went to summer camp. We went to Fort Hood, Texas, which is extremely hot.

So, we went in the summer, so it was not unusual for the temperature to reach over one-hundred degrees, and training had to be stopped several times because it was just too dangerous to be out there around the heat. But, in spite of all that, I enjoyed the training.

**MV:** Oh okay, well good. Let's see, how about, could you tell me about your hobbies now? And what you like to do now, and what you're involved with?

**CV:** Okay. I—one of my hobbies was hunting, and I hunted for probably about forty-five years. And the last place I hunted was a piece of property that my son owned in Goliad, Texas. And whenever he sold the place, because he was going to start a business, well, that was when I stopped hunting. Because if you wanted to get a good lease, you had to pay about five-thousand dollars a year, and I was not willing to put that out there for hunting.

**MV:** Um-hm.

**CV:** I had hunted all my life, and was able to afford the lease, and we always had year-round leases. And we could go out to the place, at—throughout the year, and fix our blinds, and just keep things nice and tidy. But at that point, it was just impossible. So, I sold my blind, my feeder, and everything. And so that was a very enjoyable period of my life, because I enjoy the outdoors. We had always visited the parks, the state parks, so the outdoors was something that I really liked. But during that time, I also took up the hobby of photography, and I've been taking pictures for many, many years. And so, being that I liked the outdoors, when I retired, in—ten years ago, in 2009, I became a Master Gardener, because I was always interested in having my yard nice. [And I was] interested in different plants. And so, by becoming a Master Gardener, I learned how to maximize my time, and keep up with all the latest trends in gardening, and turf management, and things like that. So that was—and I am a Master Gardener to this day. Then, right after that, being that I like the outdoors, I saw an ad in the paper that if you want to become a Master Naturalist, well, then go to this meeting on such-and-such day. So, I did, I did go to that meeting. And I've been a Master Naturalist now for about ten years. I was elected President twice, and Vice President one time. And the last office I held was, I was the Intern Training Coordinator, which I did training for all the interns that were coming into the Master Naturalists. I did that up until last year, so those—the outdoors, and gardening are very much a very big part to my life. Back in 1981, we went to Rocky Mountain National Park. The whole family went in my green, 1976 pickup, and everybody fit in the front seat. It was no—there was no extended cab at the time, so we went and spent an enjoyable time up in Rocky Mountain National Park. I went back to the one-hundredth anniversary of Rocky Mountain National Park. That has always been one of my favorite parks to go to, even though that we had been to several other national parks, Yosemite included, and Yellowstone, and Bryce Canyon, and Zion National Park. We went to a bunch of parks, and Rocky Mountain National Park has remained one of my favorites. Okay.

**MV:** Okay, well thank you. And he does have a very nice garden, and (laughs) I can vouch for that, and very nice pictures as well. So, now if we're going to get into the subject, if you want to tell me how you got introduced to Asarco, how you got introduced to the plant.

**CV:** Well, as I said, I was working as a mechanic assistant at Lou Williams Chevrolet—

**MV:** (Both talking at once) Um-hm.

**CV:** —at the time. And my dad told me that they were hiring at the plant, that if I would be interested, and I said, “Well, I might be. What kind of work are we going to be doing?” And he said, “Well, you're probably going to be doing pick and shovel work.” I said, “Oh, well that doesn't sound too inviting, but anyway tell me more. How much is the pay?” And he said, “Well, they're going to start you off at three dollars and fifty-two cents an hour.” At that time, I was making a dollar twenty-five an hour, that was the minimum wage at the time. So, man, my eyes about just popped out of my sockets! I said, my God, I'm going to triple my salary. Yeah, it's pick and shovel work, but it can't be that bad for that money. So I told him yes, he took me to the personnel office, and in January, uh, January the twenty-seventh, 1967, I started working at Asarco. And I worked there until 1985. At Asarco, I became aware of several things. I became aware that there was racism in our society, even though that we had fought a Civil War, and several pieces of legislation had been passed to not have that. It still got—people got around the law, and because there was no severe consequences for the action, it continued to perpetuate itself. So, I became involved in the union because I felt that it was a good way for me to learn more about our country. And that's when I realized that we live in a political country. And he who has the political will, will make the rules and regulations for our country.

**MV:** Um-hm.

**CV:** So, I had several jobs in the union. My first job was Good and Welfare Chairman, which, I went out to the widows of the deceased members and presented them with a Bible and offered the union's help in anything that they needed.

**MV:** Um-hm, could you repeat that part? What was the name of the job?

**CV:** Good and Welfare Chairman.

**MV:** Oh okay.

**CV:** Yeah, and I went and visited the widows of our members that had passed and presented them with a Bible from the Steelworker Union, Local 5022, and offered the union's help in anything that they needed. So, I did that for a while, and then my interests continued to increase in politics, and I became the Political Action Chairman for the rest of the time that I worked at

the plant. Political Action Chairman was the person that introduced the people that were running for office and who we supported and why we supported them—

**MV:** (Talking at the same time) Um-hm.

**CV:** —And encouraged the members to register to vote, to go out and vote, and to get involved in the candidate's campaign by passing out literature, bumper stickers, signs, and things like that. Me and the candidates and all that stuff. I really enjoyed it. During that time, I became the election judge in my precinct, and the Precinct Chairman. I did that for forty-two years, [it was] quite an enjoyable time of my life, getting to meet our neighbors, friends and neighbors that lived in the neighborhood, and help them with the election duties that I had. It was very nice, and I enjoyed helping the people, answering their questions. And we had—my wife helped me run the elections and two dear friends, one of them that has since passed away, and Miss Rodriguez now lives in Houston with her daughter. But, those times at the elections was very enjoyable for me. We had very many good times there that I remember—that I remember, and I said I did that for forty-two years.

**MV:** Wow.

**CV:** I attended every, every state convention since, let me see, since George McGovern was the candidate for president. I attended every state convention. This last one, of course, it was virtual.

**MV:** Um-hm.

**CV:** But other than that, we attended the State Democratic Convention, uh, every two years. Those were held all around the state, even here in Corpus Christi, but mainly they were held in San Antonio, El Paso, Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, and places like that. Another thing that I really enjoyed, going and hearing the candidates, meeting them, and seeing the positions that they were taking on issues that were important to us as a union, and as members of the middle class of our society.

**MV:** Um-hm. So, kind of backtracking back to your entrance to the union or to Asarco. So, I was going to ask what type of training did you need—but did your—since we already know that you have your mechanics certificate, was that a good—did that help you?

**CV:** Well, actually, no. That didn't come into play. When you went to work at Asarco, as my father told me, "You're going to work pick and shovel work,"—

**MV:** Um-hm.

**CV:** You went in as a laborer.

**MV:** Okay.

**CV:** And you belonged to the labor pool, and the labor pool had certain duties they had to perform during the day. Now, that same labor pool was also a pool that was used to, let me see, how can I say this—the labor pool was used to supplement, uh, people who were going out on vacation, people that were out sick, or stuff like that. So as those openings occurred, then people from the labor pool, or pooled by seniority, the least seniority that you had, and you were the first one to be called for those openings. And the reason I say it was by seniority is because, if you went to work for, let's say you went to work in the department called "leach," well, that was shift work. And shift work was seven-to-three, three-to-eleven, and eleven-to-seven. So, nobody—well, very few people wanted to work shift work, so the more seniority you had, the more you stayed in the labor pool. But eventually my goal was to become a leadman, and when I reached about nine years at the plant, I was always taking tests, and I knew when my time would come because of my seniority to where I was going to get a leadman job. And for the last ten years, my employment with Asarco, I was a relief leadman. And I enjoyed being a relief leadman because I had to work ten different jobs, because I had to relieve the leadman for those shifts. So, there was four shifts in every department, and there [were] four departments there, and then all those departments there all had different duties. And, I was always very interested in the production of zinc. Asarco was a zinc refinery. We took zinc ore that came in, railroad gondolas, and it was put into the Asarco refining process through a belt. And by the time all that process was done, then there was two products that came out of that. One was zinc, that came out in ingots of two-thousand, two-hundred pounds. And there was cadmium, which was a byproduct of zinc, and cadmium is used to make chrome and other products. So, that was the process, and I was very interested in the process. I've always been interested in machinery, and in processes that go from one stage to the next, to the next, to the next. And, that was where I worked. I worked in the first stage of the zinc process which was the leach, and this is where the ore was separated from the tiny particles of zinc that were in the ore, and the—what we call the residue, which was like red mud separated. And then that solution was made, was purified, was sent to a department called the cellhouse, and at that point that solution was ran through a series of what they called cells, that had aluminum sheets that were in those cells—that hung in those cells. That solution went through, it was electro—electrolysis [ed. note: electrolysis]. So, as that solution went through, the electricity went to the cells, so it attracted the tiny particles that were in that solution to the cell. Okay. And every twenty-four hours, those sheets were pulled up, and the zinc was stripped off those cells, those cell sheets, and then that zinc, which was ready and pure, was then taken to a place where it was melted, and then it was purified at that point. And then it was cast in two-thousand, two-hundred-pound ingots that left the refinery.

**MV:** Wow, that's really neat, I never knew any of that. So, let's see, let's see—how would you say that the environment of Asarco changed over time?

**CV:** Well, Asarco was not a very good corporate neighbor. Uh, Asarco got cited many, many times for pollution violations, for dumping, uh, cadmium into the ship channel. You couldn't fish right there in the ship channel because all the water was polluted, and Asarco was not a good environmental partner. They skirted the laws and the rules forever, and they never updated their equipment. There was equipment that could be used to minimize the pollution that they were putting out into the air and harming the neighborhood around there—which, that neighborhood is called Dona Park. And those people there all had—not all, most of them—had cadmium or zinc in their bloods, which was detrimental to their health. But Asarco got cited many, many times, and eventually they had to close down because the plant just could not operate anymore. They were really on them because they never modernized anything, or they just keep operating. They kept operating like they did when they started operating the plant back in the early forties, and, I mean, they just—1985, that was the end of the dance because, it just—the EPA would not let them deal out all that pollution into the air, and dirty the air, and of course make life miserable for the residents of Dona Park and elsewhere in the community.

**MV:** Um-hm. So more about that, what were the working conditions like for you?

**CV:** Well, the working conditions, being a member of the union, we negotiated for working conditions, pay, and things like that. So, the working conditions were tough. It was hard work. It was hot, and it was dusty and dirty. And you had to wear a mask in certain parts of the process, and one of the things that we worked with was asbestos. As the ore was loaded through the process in different pipes, of course there's those tiny bits of zinc in the ore, and that's—the ore ran through all these pipes and everything, well in the turns, there was holes started to be made in the pipe. And how did we patch those holes? We had a bucket with asbestos, and we put water in it, and made, uh, kind of like a dough, and go and patch those holes with asbestos. So, a lot of the guys that worked there would test us for asbestos, and they tested positive. I was always very, very firm about wearing my mask, to—when I was going to do jobs that put me in more danger than just the mere fact of working there, so, I got tested and I tested negative. So—but those that tested positive, they received a monetary settlement, which I was not interested in. I wanted my health more than any money, so.

**MV:** Um-hm. Okay—

**CV:** (Both speaking at once) I was—

**MV:** Yeah that's pretty scary. So, for people—once you were in the union, what did it look like for people trying to join the union?

**CV:** What, what?

**MV:** Whenever—so you, you were in the union, right, and then—

**CV:** (Both speaking at once) Um-hm.

**MV:** So, what was it like for people trying to join the union?

**CV:** Oh, it was easy. We encouraged all new employees to join the union—

**MV:** (Both speaking at once) Um-hm.

**CV:** Because every benefit that we had there had been negotiated by the union, and those of us that came in like me in 1967, well, somebody had negotiated those benefits for us, before us. So, and nothing is free, you know. We negotiated it with, uh, with Asarco for the benefits that we have, and we had very good benefits.

**MV:** Yeah. So, as a union, what did you guys accomplish inside the workplace and outside the workplace?

**CV:** Well inside the workplace we accomplished very good working conditions for our members.

**MV:** Um-hm.

**CV:** Good pay, good health benefits. I had—we had two, two in the family, your father, and your aunt, Adrianna. And those kids that my wife and I had, we didn't pay one cent, uh, for their hospital stay, their maternity misses for my wife, your grandmother, and all of that. So that was a benefit that we, among other benefits, healthcare benefits that we negotiated for. So, healthcare was good, the pay was good, as I said, we were making three times the minimum wage. And one of the things that we found out—and I forget what year that was, the Steelworker Union filed a suit against the school district because of defacto and de jure segregation.

**MV:** Um-hm.

**CV:** That soon went to the Supreme Court twice, and twice we won the suit. And it was concerning that schools on the West side were in very poor condition in relationship to those on the South side. So, one of the examples was whenever Moody [Foy H. Moody High School] was built. Well, it was built at the same time King [Richard King High School] was built. Well, King

had a planetarium and Moody did not have anything, not even close to that. But that was the way the discrimination was going on in our community, and those on the schoolboard, and—were, of course, they were a party (??) to that. So, we sued the school district, and we won. After we won, there was school bussing, because they were putting, too many people in—of the same race into one school. You know, there were many schools on the West side, so everybody was having to go there. Well there was so much aggression (??), you know. So, the students that were in the schools on the West side never knew how the students in the South side were living. So, consequently, it was a surprise, whenever they finished school, that all the things that the kids on the South side did. Well, bussing opened up the eyes of the students in the West side to find out that, they actually were being brought to school by their parents in a car, instead of going on the bus or walking. So, this opened up the eyes of students to find out, “Well, how did that come about?” And, it came about by them having a more—a better interest in education, and in improving themselves and their livelihood, as they became members of the workforce. I always believed, and it’s a fact that the unions in this country created the middle class. The unions, the unions and the G.I. Bill created the middle class, because it gave us—it gave the people a good salary, gave them good benefits, which, they can aspire for better things, and educate their children, put money away for college. They could go on vacations, eat out every once in a while, and things like that. So, it was a great boost of quality of life. Everything that any worker has today was, at some point or another, negotiated in a union contract by the union. And I’m talking about the forty-hour week, the eight-hour day, time-and-a-half after forty hours, and all those things. Reynold’s Metals had a great negotiated plan that every five years, their employees got thirteen weeks paid vacation. And you wouldn’t get docked for jury duty, and so, a bunch of benefits. We got the membership which helped men live a better life and become more aware of all those benefits. [We] got a card through the union, and through us electing candidates for office that promoted our union, through the legislature and things like that. And help pass laws that now, everybody works eight hours a day and forty hours a week, time-and-a-half after forty hours. We got paid double time-and-a-half if you worked on a holiday. And a series of benefits that was a good thing for the members. The quality of life was improved, so, consequently our members lived a, a good life, and made them aspire and dream for better things.

**MV:** Uh-hm, okay, wow. That’s so cool (laughs) that you had all those benefits, and you got to be there, and experience everything. So, did you ever experience, or see discrimination or racism at the plant? And what happened?

**CV:** No. At the plant, there was no discrimination because we had a union contract. And so, everything was done within the contract. Now, if the company, uh, violated the contract in any way, well then, we would—the member would file a grievance and we would go through the grievance process to make the member whole. So, there was never any overt discrimination because we had a system of seniority. So, if you didn’t have the seniority, and you applied for a job and somebody else with more seniority than you applied, well, the seniority would rule. So,

there was really no way to discriminate somebody other than just treating them bad and things like that, and those things were taken up in the grievance process.

**MV:** Oh okay, well that makes sense then.

**CV:** Um-hm.

**MV:** So, I guess, um, let me see. I know that Dad told me that—I was talking to him about this, about how we were going to do the interview, and he mentioned that there were pranks that people would play at the plant, and sometimes they were mean, and, there was—he was saying that—something about the zinc, and they would make the, the bar real hot for the next person to touch it?

**CV:** Oh—

**MV:** (Talking at the same time) Is that—(laughs)

**CV:** (Talking at the same time) That was, uh—

**MV:** So can you tell me about that?

**CV:** (Laughs) That was a prank that people (Mia laughs)—people do that all over the place.

**MV:** Um-hm!

**CV:** You see it in school, and you see it all over the place, but, what he's talking about is, there was a—we had to do certain jobs that required using tools, electrical tools, power tools.

**MV:** Um-hm.

**CV:** And one of the things [we used] power tools for was, in the process of zinc-making, how we separated the residue, what we call that red mud from the—to make a clear solution, to where you could extract the zinc from it, they went—the solution went into these huge, uh, round, cylinders \_\_\_\_\_ [ed. note: phone disconnected/cut out for a few seconds] and they held five thousand gallons.

**MV:** Oh, can you repeat that? It cut out, sorry.

**CV:** Okay. The solution went into these long cylinders—

**MV:** Um-hm.

**CV:** —That held about five thousand gallons. Okay, once the five thousand gallons were in those cylinders, that air pressure was put in there to push the solution through a series of pyramid structures that were made out of wood and covered with canvas. And the air pressure would push the solution through that canvas, and into that wooden structure that was there that had a bunch of little channels. And it would channel that, the solution, and it would come out through the middle. Well, eventually, those, uh, triangles had to be pulled out and the cloth had to be changed on those elements. Well, when you took the—there was a big ole nut that held the—there was two nuts that held those elements in place. And so, we would take the nuts off and the elements would fall out. Well, in putting the, in putting those nuts back on, sometimes you would get a \_\_\_\_\_ [ed. note: phone cut out]. And the guys sometimes, they would strip that nut on purpose just to get it extremely hot. So one of the \_\_\_\_\_ [ed. note: phone cut out, again] that was there—

**MV:** Oh, wait, sorry. Can you repeat that? It cut out for a second.

**CV:** Okay. One of the times that we were changing out the elements, uh, they stripped the nut—

**MV:** (Talking at the same time) Um-hm.

**CV:** And the nut of course got real hot, the nut got hot (Mia laughs). We were wearing gloves, and they passed it off to this new guy who had just gotten hired, and told him, “Hey can you take this to McGee?” So, when the guy took the, the nut, it was flaming hot, and he didn’t have any gloves on, so it burned his hand. You know, it was (both laugh), it was a prank—not a prank but, not a really nice thing to do. But that was what your dad is talking about.

**MV:** Yeah (laughs), I wanted to—I wanted you to mention that because that’s not something you usually see in any writings, or—that’s only something you can know from personal experience. So (both laugh)—

**CV:** (Talking at same time) Yeah, yeah.

**MV:** So, I wanted to hear about that. Well, um, I’ve asked about all I wanted to know. So, are there any things that you wish I would’ve asked, or that you want to talk about?

**CV:** No. What I want to say at—since unions (unintelligible) became (unintelligible) [ed. note: in both cases here, phone cut out again] unions for necessity. Without unions, there was child labor. There was people that were worked to death and things like that. So, unions came about by necessity. And as soon as unions became legal, businesses and corporations have tried their

best—not all of them, but the majority of them—have tried their best to make it hard for unions to organize, make it illegal for unions, and things like that. So, and now, union membership has gone down because they’ve made it hard for people to join unions. But I sincerely believe that if we had a unionized society, we would have more people making a decent salary, to where they can make a decent living, and their families and their children (unintelligible)—not their children, that’s the same thing—but the family could enjoy more things like vacations, going to the movies, eating out, and things like that. You could save money for your kids to go to college, and those kind of things. So, it would benefit society as a whole. But, of course, fairness is not something that our society is really famous for. Our history is checkered with incidents that, over history, where things like slavery and other things have happened in our country where human abuse has been very prevalent, and it is still today.

**MV:** Um-hm.

**CV:** So, unions created—unions played a big part in our society today, where people enjoy the middle class, make good money, and people always say, “Well, you’re going to ask for more money and then the company’s going to go broke,” I mean, how stupid can you be to try to negotiate something like that? And how stupid can the company be to give you something like that, that’s going to make them go broke? We know how much we can ask for, and the company knows how much they can give, and that’s what the negotiation’s all about. So, bring about a fair salary for a fair day’s work, and the members can enjoy the fruits of their labor. And, the family can enjoy many things. A good quality of life.

**MV:** Yeah. Okay, well thank you so much, Grandpa, for helping me with this and answering everything so diligently. And I appreciate your time so much, and I love you! (Laughs)

**CV:** Well, you know what, there’s nothing I wouldn’t do for my first grandchild. (Mia laughs). We love you dearly, there’s nobody that loves you more, except your parents. Your parents love you more than we love you.

**MV:** (Speaking at the same time) Maybe.

**CV:** We waited for you for so long, and we are so happy with you, and as I told you earlier, I am so proud of you. And I am sure that there is many, many grandparents out there that would just love to have a grandchild like you. (Mia laughs) Yes—

**MV:** (Both speaking at once) Thank you. Aw.

**CV:** And I mean that sincerely. And I always talk about you all, and one thing I don’t do is, I never lie (Mia laughs). But I tell the truth, and the truth is just beautiful to hear, other people say,

“Dang, you’re so lucky.” Yes, we are. We are lucky. Lucky to have my two children, lucky to have my five grandchildren, all of them people that are doing good in society, good people that learned the benefits of education, of course, their parents had a lot to do with it along the way. But I wake up every day, and I said, and I always say, Thank you God for another day, and thank you for all your blessings, and the blessings include every single one of you all.

**MV:** Aw well, we learn from the best. (Both laugh)

**CV:** Well thank you.

**MV:** So, well alright, well—

**CV:** (Talking at the same time) Well okay Mia, if you need anything else that I can do for you, you know that I am at your beckoned call twenty-four-seven.

**MV:** Of course, and if there’s anything else, I will not hesitate to ask you.

**CV:** Please don’t.

**MV:** Okay, well I’ll talk to you later. Thank you again so much.

**CV:** Okay, goodnight Mia—

**MV:** (Both talking at the same time) All right.

**CV:** And we’ll see you. We leave Friday, so we’ll see you over the weekend.

**MV:** Okay.

**CV:** And love you dearly.

**MV:** Okay, love you too. Goodnight.

**CV:** Okay, goodnight.

**MV:** All right, bye.