

Patricia Adrianzén de Vergara

# I DIDN'T ASK TO BE GOLD

Victory through Faith  
in the Furnace of Affliction



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*I dedicate this book to Roger Vergara Vargas, my husband, a dedicated and courageous pastor, tender companion and lover, best friend, and sweet father.*

*To my little children Rogger, Nataly, and Stephanie, key players in this story of faith, to their tender consciences that are beginning to understand the spiritual truths, because I love them dearly and because they are our crown.*

*To the congregation of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church in Arequipa, because you are the reason and the fruit of the battle.*

*To my closest girlfriends on this side of the volcano, who helped me in the most difficult moments and are key players in this story.*

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## FOREWORD

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*“I didn’t ask to be gold. I didn’t even aspire to be silver. I would have been content to be a simple, inexpensive metal. . .”*

These words begin the paradox taught in this book—a paradox in which human pain and joyful faith intertwine in an apparent confrontation that is happily resolved. The book presents reflections on the path of emotional and physical suffering that surprisingly confront us with questions such as, “Why me?” “Why does God not seem to answer me?” “Why am I denied peace, when all I want is to faithfully serve Him?” These are the personal and family struggles and experiences of everyone who matures; they bring to light the need to grow in maturity, to develop who we *are*, and not just what we *do*.

It is precisely through struggles and difficult experiences that the Holy Spirit’s consolation, the Lord’s sustaining power, and the affection of the brothers and sisters work to strengthen our desire to serve Him and renew our compassion for people in need.

Before the church, the author uncovers the truth that every family that wants to serve the church will have to wage a spiritual war in the intimacy of their own home. This war will profoundly challenge our lives and the lives of our children. Yet the book is a joyful expression of the hope and confidence of every child of God: that strength will always come from on high, even in the midst of pain.

**Javier Cortázar Balta**  
President of the LED Convention  
Lima al Encuentro con Dios  
International Speaker

*In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith —of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire— may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.*

*(1 Peter 1:6-7)*

*And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.*

*(1 Peter 5:10)*

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# Chapter I

## ***ON THE EDGE OF THE CRUCIBLE***



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*And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while . . .*

# 1

## *I DIDN'T ASK TO BE GOLD*

*The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold, but the Lord tests the heart.*

*(Proverbs 17:3)*

I didn't ask to be gold. I didn't even aspire to be silver. I would have been content to be a simple, inexpensive metal, whose brilliance could be seen every once in a while glinting in the sun. I was not particularly interested in the shine or the quality of my material; I had my place in the world and that was enough. To leave the dark mine was my greatest desire. Why should I look beyond that? I had been rescued, processed, cleaned, and converted into an instrument that He could use. I thought that was enough, but God had greater plans. Only He knew my imperfections and my impurities, and only He could have thought to transform, transmute, and purify me in the way He did. I was involuntarily taken into the crucible.

When I began to suffer, I submitted meekly. I knew that a little pain was necessary to grow and mature, to know more of His power and strength.

I thought that learning would be easy and that God would measure out the suffering in doses according to my capacity, that He would not give me more than I could bear, as His Word says.<sup>[1]</sup> But when I understood that the pain would continue, and my limits were not in accordance with His limits, nor my thoughts with His thoughts, then I resisted. Often, I wanted to leave the crucible and escape from His will. I complained, rebuking Him for not being faithful to His own Word about suffering, that suffering would overwhelm me. I began to feel defeated and loosened from His grip, and I wanted to enclose myself in a cocoon.

But He never abandoned me; He was always faithful, always by my side. He controlled the temperature of the fire so that I truly would not suffer more than I was able to endure. I didn't understand that immediately. As the days passed, He gave me the assurance of His love. I needed to learn so much, and there was no other way without experiencing it myself. How else could my faith be strengthened? How else could my dependence on Him mature and my self-sufficiency end? How could He perfect my maternal love? How would I be able to console and even teach others in the future, without these experiences? How would I be able to break down the pride of my heart, which rose up against His promises? How would I understand the spiritual world and its struggles if I had not fought any battles?<sup>[2]</sup> How would I finally know God's power? Only by trusting, waiting, praying, and depending uniquely and exclusively on His grace.

For all these reasons, I had to recognize at last that His crucible and His fiery furnace are proofs of His love. He never leaves us alone. He is always very close to us, catching each tear, providing at the same time the rest and stillness that our soul needs.

Therefore, I must thank Him for His intent I making me into a precious metal, when my eyes could not see anything past the dull shine of my little-valued self.



## ***THE GLASS CANEL***

*The Lord will vindicate me; your love, Lord, endures forever—do not abandon the works of your hands.*

*(Psalm 138:8)*

I believe that God was always molding my shape. He constructed me in such a way that I would not have dared to wish to be anything other than what His mind conceived. If I ever rebelled, it was not to the extent of daring to stretch my curve, the curve He formed to hold another. For I never longed to discard it, much less to stretch myself upward; I allowed all that He was teaching me through suffering to be concentrated in that then incomprehensible form in which my cane body ends.

From the beginning He prepared me to be a glass cane. I did not understand why I always had to learn by suffering; why I could not be like other girls, or later, like other young women, and laugh and enjoy life instead of always bearing the weight of someone else's emotions or problems. The thing is that nothing made me happier than serving, but it was an aching happiness. Can there be such a thing as an