

Martyred Missionary's Daughter Shares Jungle Childhood in Children's Book

Valerie Elliot Shepard, the only daughter of martyred missionary Jim Elliot and his wife, Elisabeth, has written a children's book about her unusual upbringing. Vision Forum released *Pilipinto's Happiness: The Jungle Childhood of Valerie Elliot* Oct. 8, the 85th anniversary of Jim Elliot's birth.

Told through the eyes of a child, the book begins two years after Shepard's 29-year-old father and his four Wheaton College classmates were killed by a primitive tribe of Quichua and Auca Indians, now called Waodani, in the Amazon jungle of Ecuador.

After Jim's death, Elisabeth and their daughter stayed to live with the Quichuas until they were invited to live with the Aucas tribe that killed Jim. They ministered to the Aucas for two years as Elisabeth and another missionary, Rachel Saint, learned to speak the language and shared the story of Jesus with them. Many Aucas converted to Christ as a result, abandoning their savage ways.

The Indians gave Shepard the nickname "Pilipinto"—meaning "butterfly"—as she walked, climbed and fluttered around the jungle where she lived from ages 3 to 8.

"The gift to me, and what mother and God taught me, was the principle of being perfectly content," Shepard said about the story her now-85-year-old mother suggested she write more than 15 years ago. "God puts us in all kinds of situations as we are growing up. My situation was unusual, amazing and simple."

Married for 36 years and the mother of eight grown children,

Shepard chronicles in her book how the Indians, their language and even the dangerous jungle elements created a playground for learning to trust God's hand and to respect the simplest of His gifts.

"There is an awful discontentment among young people," notes Shepard, who recalls having only one book to read when she wasn't outside playing in the jungle. "I do look at the youth culture and just feel only the Lord can bring about a heart contented with simple pleasures and gifts from the Lord."

[Click here](#) for more information on *Pilipinto's Happiness*.