

Delivered From Voodoo's Spell

Today Contessa Adams is free. But the horrifying story of her bondage to Santería and voodoo stands as a strong warning to anyone experimenting with Afro-Caribbean religions.

By Cedric Harmon

For some people the month of October is a time to don clever costumes, take the kids trick-or-treating or tell ghost stories. For others, it is the season to host harvest parties. But for Contessa Adams, October is a time of spiritual warfare.

Each October, Adams says, the devil reminds her that he is out to draw her back into her former lifestyle of witchcraft, voodoo, sexual promiscuity, perversion and demon possession.

"It doesn't fail. Every October somebody [involved in the occult] comes and seeks me out," says Adams, who today is a Christian speaker, author and the director of Love in Action Ministries. "Once you've been in that realm, they spend the rest of your life trying to get you back."

A lady once approached Adams at her workplace, telling her that her ancestors—the French pirates who laid claim to Adams' native country of Dominica—sent her to Adams. Others have been bolder. One woman told Adams she was sent to do a tarot-card reading for her. On the same day, Adams says, the enemy dispatched a witch and a warlock to her.

“They walked past me, just checking me out,” Adams told Charisma. “I had to say, ‘Fear cannot come in here.’ The power of God made them identify themselves. Thankfully, the anointing of God protected me.”

Although Jesus delivered Adams from Satan’s diabolical vice-grip more than 20 years ago, she still faces severe spiritual opposition at times. In her characteristic honesty and transparency, Adams admits that her challenge has been to remain free.

“I’ve been attacked so much,” she says. “It’s a continuous thing. Being saved is just the beginning of the battle.”

But the battle hasn’t stopped Adams from experiencing victory or from helping others find freedom from the snare of witchcraft. Now 47, the energetic lay minister attends the 900-member Family Worship Center pastored by Derrick W. Hutchins in Columbia, South Carolina. She travels across the United States, sharing her testimony of how Jesus Christ can set captives free.

Hundreds of people have been saved and delivered through the many ministry opportunities afforded Adams since the first time she gave her testi

mony at a women’s prayer breakfast in Ashland, Kentucky, in 1982. She has since ministered in various outreaches to teens and prison inmates.

“When she tells her story, people are in tears, hearts are broken, and they recognize a lot of things about themselves,” says Joyce Salisbury, who lives in Columbus, Ohio, and is a close friend of Adams. “Her testimony gives people hope.”

And for that reason, Adams believes, Satan is enraged.

“I’ve embarrassed hell,” she says. “[And] hell’s going to do anything it can to kill me.”

Indeed, before the Holy Spirit set her free, hell almost did destroy her. The testimony of Contessa Adams vividly illustrates the dangers of dabbling in the occult. But more important, her story demonstrates the power and freedom that can be found in Christ.

Dedicated to the Devil

Adams says that from an early age she had been groomed by the devil to use sex as a weapon to destroy the lives of men and women.

By the time she had turned 21, she had become a world-class stripper who performed throughout Europe. When she came to the United States nearly 25 years ago, she had every intention of becoming one of the grandest prostitution madams in the country. Her ability to entice men into temptation and sin made her feel powerful.

With her knowledge of the Bible today, Adams says she would have been Delilah, Salome and Jezebel all rolled into one.

“Jezebel would have been my girl,” Adams told Charisma. “She

had the power. Men were scared of her. If you're going to have power, that's the way to be. I could have been her in a heartbeat. I would have acted the way she would.

"I could look out into the audience, and I knew I could have any man watching me. You knew they left their wife. You knew they left their girlfriend to come in there. I was a drug. They had to come. I was that fix they needed."

Today Adams knows how to warn men in the church about sexual temptation: "I want men to understand how dangerous the wrong women can be. We might be one of the most beautiful creations, but we're dangerous outside the realm of God."

According to Adams' autobiography, *Consequences*, Satan claimed her from birth by using a midwife named Flossie—a known witch on the Caribbean island of Dominica.

"In retrospect, my theory for all this was that when the servant of Lucifer blew breath into my spoke," she writes. "The monarch of hell uttered, 'Both can live, only if I have the soul of the child!' [My] mother admits that she was voodooed or hexed, as it were. One could easily say that from my birth I was raised by a hexed, voodooed or a demon-possessed woman."

Adams had other relatives who were involved in the occult. The most notable was her maternal grandfather, who was a witch doctor. He was considered a "good" one because he reversed spells and curses that were cast on family members.

For Adams, practicing voodoo and various forms of Santería was kid stuff, she says. There was a deeper evil she craved, and

she literally had an appetite for it. One of her favorite delicacies was “black pudding”—a concoction containing raw animal blood.

“To me, I just felt like it was something I had to do. I just had to eat the raw blood,” she recalls. “Looking back, I realize my life was being set up for Satan.”

By the time Adams had turned 16, she had long since moved from her island paradise home in the Caribbean to the damp and dreary setting of Bradford, England. There she was raped by her future boyfriend and common-law husband, and she became pregnant with her first child, Terrance.

It was during Adams’ volatile three-year relationship with her boyfriend, to whom she also bore a daughter named Tracy, that the devil came to redeem what he had claimed at her birth.

Adams says that Satan sent a ruler of darkness—a high-ranking demon in the form of a man—into her life under the premise of liberating her from the abusive relationship with her boyfriend. This “man” had features that were almost too good to be true: a handsome, majestic, powerful demeanor and appearance that commanded attention.

“Nobody has ever had a picture of him. Nobody knew how he came to England,” she claims.

Twice this man, whom Adams describes in her book as a “prince,” appeared on the scene to rescue her in the nick of time. “He would just manifest,” she says. “It was like I was in a trance.”

The first visitation occurred after her boyfriend erupted in a jealous rage at a party and pushed her head through a pane of glass, causing a severe wound on her forehead. This prince escorted her away that night and consummated

what would become a longtime affair with Adams.

As bizarre as it sounds, Adams believes she had sexual encounters with a demon spirit. Many Christian ministers who practice deliverance say this happens more often than we would like to think. In fact, they use the term incubus to describe a male demon

that attacks women through nightmares

and erotic dreams.

Joseph Thompson, an associate pastor at New Life Church in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and a leader in deliverance ministry, told Charisma he has ministered to more than 100 people who have suffered sexual attacks by a demonic spirit. He recalls one recent example of a woman who came to his church seeking help.

"She would lie in bed, unable to sleep," Thompson says. "She would go into a trance and would not be able to move. A tall, shadowy, manlike figure would appear in the room, call her by name and come closer to her.

"Then she would feel [it] settle on top of her and enter her. She would wake up in the morning with scars on her body. It happened so much that it became part of her lifestyle, and she just accepted it."

Thompson believes the root cause of such encounters is a pact made in the past between the devil and the person, whether or not he or she was conscious of the pact. He has observed that most people who suffer from this type of attack were at one time the victims of satanic ritual abuse or heavily involved in witchcraft.

In Contessa Adams' case, her demonic "prince" consumed her life and became a sort of personal bodyguard.

The demon's second visitation came after Adams' boyfriend had kidnapped her for two weeks. The demon retaliated by putting a scar on her former boyfriend's forehead in the same place she had sustained hers.

Adams says this prince also became her pimp. He was the one who influenced her to become a stripper.

"It was scary. The prince was my god. I was somebody he got at a very young age. He got me at age 18," she says.

At the height of Adams' popularity in the mid-1970s, she went by the stage name of La Contessa Tabu. Part of her act was pouring hot wax on her scantily-clad body, which was draped with chains.

"I was brainwashed into thinking that pain was my reward. You were pleased to do [his] bidding. You didn't have your soul," she says.

But that was soon to change. The Holy Spirit had marked Contessa Adams for redemption.

Finding Deliverance in Christ

Adams says she had been in the United States for almost five years when God intervened in her life. She was living in Ohio, and her second of three husbands—a man with whom she had an affair in Europe—had just left her for another woman. She decided to move to Washington, D.C., having aspirations of surpassing the notoriety of Xaviera Hollander, who was known for her 1970s book about her life as a prostitute.

Before embarking on her goal, Adams thought she would entice one more man into sin. She found her next “target” and offered him a private strip show in a hotel room. But standing in the dark before this stranger, she ended up divulging her feelings of depression and suicide.

The man didn’t want sex. Instead, he offered her Jesus and invited her home to meet his mother. But Adams ran away in fear—she says she felt like a vampire when the sun begins to rise.

But she wouldn’t run for long. She ended up meeting the man’s mother, Ramona Daisy Bracey of Huntington, West Virginia. And that’s when Adams discovered how the Holy Spirit had orchestrated their meeting.

Bracey, now deceased, told Adams that for 11 years God had given her visions of a young woman to pray for. At first Adams resisted forging a relationship with Bracey, but something kept drawing her to the woman, who was the wife of a Baptist

preacher. "It was the love of Jesus," Adams says.

It was on Memorial Day weekend in 1979 that Adams finally accepted Christ. Bracey had invited her to spend the night. This hospitality was something Adams would never forget.

"What she did was run the bath water. Anybody who ever ran bath water for me wanted something from me," she recalls. "I had already told her I was a stripper. She allowed me to be in her bathtub. She just showed me love. She took me for who I was. She was the closest I'd seen to Christ in the flesh."

That night, Adams says she felt a severe pain in her stomach. She felt like gagging and screaming for help and wanted to yell, but nobody apparently could hear her.

"The pain got worse," she says. "Then this thing started coming out of me. It was so tall—a big black blob.

"I couldn't understand what was going on. I was about to lose my mind. I heard voices. I kept saying: 'Please come closer to me whoever you are. Come help me.' Then I heard voices singing to me that God can do anything but fail.

"The demon got bigger. Then I heard voices saying, 'Satan, the Lord rebuke you.' The thing left. A light came through the bedroom door toward me. I fell out."

When Adams woke up the next morning, Bracey was kneeling beside her bed.

"I asked her what happened, and she started crying," Adams says. "She explained the presence of God came into the room."

The pastor's wife led her to Christ that morning. After the prayer, Adams felt the same power that had earlier caused her to fall to the ground.

"I could say nothing, but these words came to me. 'I just met Jesus,' I said, looking at her. I felt His presence, the warmth and cleansing."

Satan declared his war against Adams within a matter of weeks. She says that one night voices told her to kill herself because she was not worthy of the kingdom of God. "I had left the stable, and it was an outcry to Satan. I had embarrassed hell," she says.

But God provided Adams a means of escape. She says that just then, a man who had just shot his wife after catching her with another man ran into her kitchen, trying to elude the police.

"He has a gun, and I have a knife in my hand, wanting to kill myself. We stare at each other, and he runs off, and I drop the knife," she says.

Adams headed for Bracey's home across the bridge in West Virginia. On her trip, she claims, demons fought her for control of the steering wheel. But God proved faithful. She saw a light ahead of her—light, to her, was symbolic of Jesus.

"As soon as I saw the light, out of the depths of [myself] I screamed the name of Jesus with such was the power of the name

that came out.”

That was Adams’ first lesson in spiritual warfare. She eventually learned about the spiritual authority that could be hers through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Satan could no longer have his way, causing her to bounce off walls or visiting her through sexual demons.

“When I read Acts 1:8, I knew it meant more,” says Adams, who in 1980 married Bracey’s son, the man who had witnessed to her in the hotel room. “I knew the Holy Spirit within me took over. The war is not about Contessa. It’s between God and Satan.”

It is a war in which Adams is finding daily victory. A war she hopes she can help others bound by Satan’s power to win.

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Demons From the Islands

Sandy shores and rolling waves offer a picturesque view of Dominica, the homeland of Contessa Adams and one in a string of Caribbean islands north of Barbados. But only tourists are fooled by the romantic facade. Residents of the exotic island tell of freakish occult activity that dates back for centuries.

Stories are told of people whose faces contort into animal-like features, or who transform themselves into zombielike creatures. Others say they have been victims of voodoo spells. In Contessa Adams' family, it was understood that if anyone needed to have a curse, hex or spell broken, all they had to do was seek her grandfather, who was a witch doctor.

The occult practices that pervade Dominica, as with many other Afro-Caribbean nations, are widely accepted. These activities can be traced to two forms of worship whose origins can be linked to Africa: voodoo and Santería. According to its adherents, voodoo is a mix of many African tribal rituals. All voodoo deities have African names.

Both voodoo and Santería practice forms of animal blood sacrifice, which according to their traditions is required for any petitions to their deities. Animals most commonly used are chickens, pigeons or goats.

"It's Satan trying to copy the blood of Jesus," Adams told Charisma. "Animal blood is very important to these demonic religions. Just as we speak of the blood, they do not perform anything without the blood."

Other articles used in sacrifices to their deities are herbs, food, money, liquor and even cigars. The rituals are accompanied by vigorously rhythmic drumbeats and dancing. Individuals who become extremely proficient in these practices achieve the status of high priests and high priestesses.

Those who practice voodoo or Santería do not recognize a supreme being. Rather, their adherents often will say they recognize a supreme "energy" that empowers them to do whatever they want. Common among different forms of voodoo is the

practice of summoning psychic and supernatural powers, and casting and breaking spells, all of which are usually performed by a high priest or priestess.

Voodoo gained its entrance into the United States mostly through Haiti and Jamaica. New York City and South Florida have the largest Haitian and Jamaican populations in the United States. Other places known to have strong havens of voodoo are Louisiana and the coasts of North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia.

Santería is mixed with Catholicism, and it is widely practiced in Cuba. Miami has the largest Cuban population in the United States and has been the main entryway of the religion into the United States.

Many participants of Santería rituals often fall into deep trances and perform unusual acts

such as levitation. Other known examples of demonic possession through Santería feature women unknowingly dancing bare-chested or nude, and in some extreme cases engaging in wild sexual acts.

There are seven primary deities in Santería. All seven have favorite days of the week, but only one of the seven is not identified with a Catholic saint and does not have certain favorite foods, colors, ornaments, herbs or animals it prefers to be sacrificed.

Ironically this particular deity, Olodumare, is supposed to have characteristics linked to Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit. It is presumably the king of other gods and actually has a fear of mice.

According to Santería's adherents, Olodumare has become old and weak and its power is to be given to other kings. Yet Olodumare presumably has power and dominion over all the other deities except for one, Elegua (St. Anthony), who according to Santería tradition saved Olodumare's rule and dominion by getting rid of all the mice.

For that favor, Elegua was granted the right to do what he wills. Therefore, those who practice Santería do not have to go to Olodumare for any favors, nor do they have to adhere to Olodumare's 11 commandments, which are supposed to mirror the Ten Commandments noted in Exodus 20.

Raped by the Devil?

Can demons engage in sexual activity with humans?

As bizarre as it sounds, those who minister to people in occult bondage say it's more common than you think.

For nearly two decades, Contessa Adams felt as though she had no power against the demonic violators of her body. She felt trapped in secrecy and shame and knew that the demons tormenting her wanted things to stay that way.

But God had another agenda for Adams when she found Christ in 1979. And now the 47-year-old former stripper has a ministry through which she exposes one of Satan's darkest secrets—sexual demons.

These spiritual rapists, as Adams describes them in her book, *Consequences*, often prey on people by performing sexual acts through nightmares and erotic dreams. Some people become so dependent upon these demonic experiences that they actually look forward to them.

“Anybody that has been attacked by them will tell ‘re worried [that] they could not find that pleasure with mortal people,” says Adams, who claims she was once possessed by sexual demons.

The two most identifiable sexual demons are the incubus, which is a male sexual demon that traditionally assaults women, and the succubus, which is a female sexual demon that assaults men. Sometimes they also lure people into homosexual behavior.

Adams notes that one evangelist, whose name she would not divulge, was so troubled by the sexual pleasure the succubus gave her that she even contemplated suicide.

Adams says the succubus spirit that used to attack her confused her so much that she contemplated becoming a lesbian.

“Unless you’re strong enough to rebuke it, they’ll keep coming back,” she says. “You must speak the Word of God, knowing you have power in the name of Jesus.”

Eddie Smith, the president of U.S. Prayer Track and a respected leader in deliverance ministry, believes that experiences like Adams’ are common. He and his wife, Alice, have ministered to “at least hundreds” of people suffering from demonic sexual attacks.

"Many people don't realize that there is even historic documentation of this," Smith told Charisma. He says that it is especially common in pagan religions such as Santería and voodoo because people who practice those religions invoke demons to come and interact with them.

Adams believes the most valuable tool against these sexual demons is based on Matthew 12:44, which speaks of when a demon is cast out and then looks to return, but finds the house is clean, swept and in order. People must have their houses in order so that a demon can no longer gain entrance, Adams says. It is a part of the reprogramming process that takes place when an individual submits his or her life to God.

"The Holy Spirit has to reprogram you. If you're not programmed for obedience, it's hard to do so," she teaches. "Once you come out of that world, you're learning what you can do and what you cannot do. With the Holy Spirit, if [you] go to touch that fire, He will quicken you and tell you, 'No.'"

Adams also notes that disobedience also produces fear, which is another tool Satan uses.

Adams says: "Fear is their forerunner. If you get paralyzed by fear, they actually will come and rape you. But if you draw near to God, Satan has to flee. Satan's job is to suggest that you not draw near to God, so that he does not have to flee."