



Always Running: La Vida Loca: Gang Days in L.A.

Luis J. Rodriguez

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There has never been a more clear and compelling account of a gang member's life than Always Running, Luis J. Rodriguez's eloquent, impassioned, frighteningly vivid chronicle of his youth in Los Angeles in the late 60s and early 70s. Growing up in Watts and East L.A., Rodriguez joined his first gang at age 11 and was drawn into "la vida loca" - the crazy life. Gangs were "how we wove something out of the threads of nothing," he remembers. By age 18, he was a veteran of gang warfare, police killings, drug overdoses, and suicides that had claimed 25 of his friends and had driven him and so many others to despair. In part, Rodriguez survived the violence and desperation of his youth by writing down his experiences. They were only woven into this astonishing book years later, when his son, Ramiro, joined a gang in Chicago where they now live. Always Running is packed with episode after episode of high drama, but within this honest and powerful depiction of social devastation, there is a father's impassioned message of understanding and hope to his son, and to thousands like him. Rodriguez's inspiring story should be read by anyone who cares about the future of children in America.

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