

THE *Isabel Allende*
FOUNDATION



ADAIS MARVEZ, A WOMAN WHO DARES

One day we received a check for \$100 from one of my readers who wanted to help a child through my foundation. The next month she sent another check, and then another; we have been receiving them for years now. People contribute to my foundation, but no one has been as consistent as this person. Her name is Adais Marvez, and she is a brave and compassionate woman.



Adais was born in Caracas, Venezuela, in 1970. She is the second of five siblings brought up by a strong and strict mother who had to be both mother and father. At seventeen Adais left her home and moved alone to another city, although she had no money. She studied at the university while she worked to support herself. Sometimes she didn't have money to eat. In the end however, she graduated with a degree in industrial production engineering.

Over the years insecurity increased in Venezuela – crime, assaults, kidnapping, violence – and Adais was yet another victim. A boy armed with a knife mugged her for her wallet. He was twelve years old. Seeing that young child condemned to a life of delinquency left a deep impression. The situation in the country became so bad that Adais made the second fundamental decision of her life: she spent all her savings on an airplane ticket to the United States. Her degree was not valid in the United States, she spoke no English, she was all alone and felt very lonely. She found a job as a nanny and with great perseverance obtained a license. Adais now operates her own day care.

Very early on Adais learned to share what she has. She was born with a generous heart. When she heard of the work that my foundation does, she started sending us money in memory of that boy who assaulted her in Venezuela. My foundation is proud to support educational programs in her name in order to achieve one of Adais' goals: help the children.