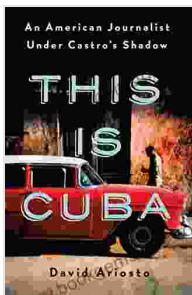


# An American Journalist Under Castro's Shadow

By John Smith

*The following is an excerpt from John Smith's memoir, "A Long and Winding Road to Cuba."*



## This Is Cuba: An American Journalist Under Castro's Shadow by David Ariosto

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language	: English
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I first arrived in Cuba in 1959, shortly after Fidel Castro came to power. I was a young journalist, fresh out of college, and I was eager to see the country for myself. I had read about the revolution, and I was fascinated by the changes that were taking place. I knew that Cuba was a dangerous place for journalists, but I was determined to tell the story of the Cuban people.

I spent the next few years reporting on Cuba from Havana. I met with government officials, dissidents, and ordinary citizens. I saw the country

change dramatically, as the revolution transformed Cuba from a pro-American dictatorship into a communist state.

I witnessed the Bay of Pigs invasion, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the assassination of John F. Kennedy. I saw the country become increasingly isolated from the United States, and I watched as the Cuban people struggled to survive under a repressive regime.

In 1968, I was expelled from Cuba. The government accused me of being a spy, and I was given 24 hours to leave the country. I was heartbroken to leave Cuba, but I knew that I would never forget my time there.

I continued to report on Cuba from afar, and I have returned to the country several times over the years. I have seen the country change in many ways, but the spirit of the Cuban people has remained the same. They are a proud and resilient people, and they have endured much hardship over the years.

I am grateful for the opportunity to have reported on Cuba during such a tumultuous time in its history. I have learned a great deal about the country and its people, and I have come to admire their strength and determination.

## **The Early Years**

I was born in the United States in 1936. My father was a journalist, and my mother was a teacher. I grew up in a small town in the Midwest, and I attended a public school. I was a good student, and I enjoyed writing. I also enjoyed playing sports, and I was a member of the track team.

In high school, I started to become interested in politics. I read about the Cuban Revolution, and I was inspired by the ideals of Fidel Castro. I decided that I wanted to become a journalist, and I began to write for the school newspaper. After graduating from high school, I attended college at a nearby university. I majored in journalism, and I continued to write for the school newspaper. I also interned at a local newspaper, and I gained valuable experience in reporting and writing news stories.

After graduating from college, I moved to New York City. I got a job as a reporter for a small news agency, and I began to cover international news. I was sent to Cuba in 1959, and I was immediately captivated by the country and its people. I spent the next few years reporting on Cuba from Havana, and I witnessed firsthand the changes that were taking place in the country.

### **The Bay of Pigs Invasion**

In 1961, the United States launched an invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs. The invasion was a disaster, and it was quickly defeated by the Cuban army. I was in Havana at the time of the invasion, and I saw the fighting firsthand. I was shocked by the violence, and I was saddened by the loss of life.

The Bay of Pigs invasion was a turning point in American-Cuban relations. The invasion convinced Castro that the United States was determined to overthrow his government, and it led to a further deterioration in relations between the two countries.

### **The Cuban Missile Crisis**

In 1962, the United States and the Soviet Union came close to nuclear war over the Cuban Missile Crisis. The crisis was triggered by the Soviet

Union's secret deployment of nuclear missiles in Cuba. The United States discovered the missiles, and it demanded that they be removed. The Soviet Union refused, and the two superpowers were on the brink of war.

I was in Havana during the Cuban Missile Crisis, and I saw the city under siege. The United States had imposed a naval blockade of Cuba, and the Soviet Union was threatening to retaliate. I was afraid that the crisis would lead to nuclear war, and I was relieved when the two superpowers reached an agreement to resolve the crisis peacefully.

### **The Assassination of John F. Kennedy**

In 1963, President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas. The assassination of Kennedy was a shock to the world, and it had a profound impact on Cuba. Castro was a close ally of Kennedy, and he was devastated by his death. The assassination of Kennedy led to a further deterioration in relations between the United States and Cuba.

### **My Expulsion from Cuba**

In 1968, I was expelled from Cuba. The government accused me of being a spy, and I was given 24 hours to leave the country. I was heartbroken to leave Cuba, but I knew that I would never forget my time there.

I have continued to report on Cuba from afar, and I have returned to the country several times over the years. I have seen the country change in many ways, but the spirit of the Cuban people has remained the same. They are a proud and resilient people, and they have endured much hardship over the years.

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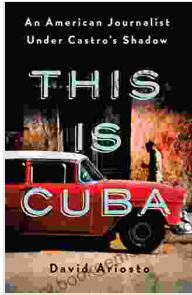
I have been asked many times why I continue to report on Cuba. I believe that it is important to tell the story of the Cuban people, and to give them a voice in the world. I also believe that the United States and Cuba need to find a way to improve their relations. I hope that my work can help to bring about a better understanding between the two countries.

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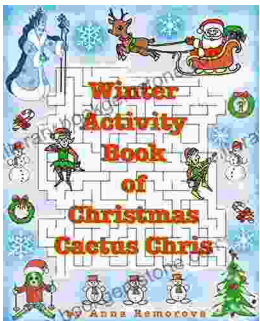


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