

# The Twins Who Were Twins ...To Someone Else

*For 20 years they thought they could not be identical twins since they did not look alike. Then they discovered they were identical—to a different set of siblings! Each had grown up in the company of the wrong twin.*

*Read the astounding story of two unrelated sets of twin brothers: One set grew up in the city with all of the modern conveniences, while the other pair grew up in a primitive village with no electricity or running water. Then one fateful day they were all united.*

*Aviva Sternfeld*



It is a modern-day Tale of Two Cities. For 20 years, two sets of twins in Colombia grew up under extremely different circumstances. One pair lived in the capital city, Bogotá, where they had access to excellent schools and modern conveniences. They grew into professionals, holding down respectable white-collar jobs. One became an accountant while the other worked for an engineering firm, drawing up plans for pipelines to transport oil.

The second pair of twins grew up on a remote farm in northwest Colombia, far from the city. They had no electricity or running water and lived a distance from the nearest paved roadway. They never saw tall buildings. They became butchers for a living; one worked in a butcher shop while the other was a supervisor in a different meat business.

Not only were the two sets of twins living totally different lives, but the two members of each set did not even share much in common. They bore no noticeable resemblance to each other. Of course, only one-third of the number of twins born are identical with 100% identical sets of genes. (Of non-identical twins, only 50% of their genetic blueprints are the same on average.)

If not for a bizarre coincidence, those two sets of twins might have gone on leading their separate lives and no one would ever have known the truth behind their story.

### “You Are Mistaken —I Am Someone Else”

One day, in the summer of 2013, two friends in Bogotá began a casual conversation

about good food. One told the other about a store with quality meat at discount prices and offered to bring him there so he could see for himself.

When the two entered the store the first man was mystified to find his acquaintance Jorge Bernal standing behind the counter and serving customers. He knew Bernal as a successful engineer from Strycon, the company where they both worked and Bernal planned pipelines to deliver oil. Why would he want to work as a butcher on the side?

The man waved to Bernal in greeting, but Bernal stared at him blankly. “Uh, this is William Cañas,” the man’s friend introduced him to the clueless butcher.

“No, no, it’s Jorge Bernal. I know him,” the first man answered with certainty. But for the life of him he couldn’t understand why Bernal was pretending not to know him. Was he embarrassed to have to set aside his business suit for the white cap and bloody apron of his odd choice of a side job?

Nevertheless, the man’s friend insisted that this was not Jorge Bernal; he knew the butcher well and the name was William Cañas. He did not work for an engineering company and wouldn’t have time for a second job anyway. He was in the store all day, leaving only to go home to sleep.

However, the first man refused to accept that. He insisted the man in front of him was Bernal and he was fooling customers with a fake identity.

The next day, when the man met Jorge Bernal at work, he asked him why he ignored him in the butcher store. Bernal laughed. “You saw me working in a butcher shop? Nah, you’re mistaken.”

“Maybe you have a twin brother?” the man asked hopefully.

“As a matter of fact I do. His name is Carlos—but he doesn’t look like me at all.”

That strange encounter could have served as a wakeup call for Jorge Bernal that something in his life was not the way it seemed. Instead, it just lodged into the deep recesses of his memory, one of those unexplainable occurrences that everyone



Bogotá, the capital of Colombia.



Village in Colombia with no running water or electricity.

## The Four Subjects of Our Story

Twins are easy to mix up, so here is brief overview of the four subjects:



**Jorge:** Born in the city, raised in the city. An engineer by profession, he is the identical twin of William and adopted brother of Carlos.



**Carlos:** Born in the village, raised in the city. An accountant by profession, he is the identical twin of Wilber and adopted brother of Jorge.



**William:** Born in the city and raised in the village. A butcher supervisor by profession, he is the identical twin of Jorge and adopted brother of Wilber.



**Wilber:** Born in the village and raised in the village. A butcher by profession, he is the identical twin of Carlos and the adopted brother of William.

The pair from the village were raised by a peasant family named Cañas and lived on a farm. The city pair was raised by a widow with the surname Bernal who worked hard to send them to good schools.

experiences at some points in life. He continued about his daily routine, none the wiser.

### “I Know Someone Who Looks Just Like You”

Everything might have ended there, but about a month later the man who brought his friend to the butcher shop began looking for a job. His friend, the one with whom he visited the butcher shop that day, informed him of a job opening in the engineering firm Strycon where he worked. The first man quickly applied for the job and landed it.