

Molestation

Chapter 3

Child Abuse National Hotline

1-800-4-A-Child

1-800-252-2873, 1-800-25ABUSE

<http://www.findcounseling.com/help/hotlines/>



I woke up to screaming and yelling, which was coming from the living room. I crawled on my hands and knees to see what was going on. I went behind a big black chair that sat right next to my bedroom door. As I peeked around its edges, I heard my stepfather and mother yelling.

Ray: I want a divorce! I want a divorce! You take the kids and live in Colorado. You'll be fine. I'll send money

Mother: No, we're a family, we need to stay together.

When I heard this, I was confused. If we needed him, then why did I want him to leave? All of a sudden, Ray threw his hands up in frustration. As I watched him walk out the front door, a sense of relief came over me. Mother ran to the door and begged him to come back inside to talk, but he continued walking, got into his truck, and left anyway.

After much pacing, Mother threw herself on the sofa and started crying and talking to herself while her face was buried into one of the couch pillows. I didn't understand why she was so upset; this was a time to be happy, he's gone.

Me: What's the matter Mom?

Mother: I'm okay, honey. I just don't feel well.

I then rushed to the bathroom and got a washrag, ran cold water over it and laid it across my mother's forehead. I thought it would make her feel better, because whenever I told her that I didn't feel well, that's exactly what she would do for me. She looked into my eyes.

Mother: You're a good girl, Shelly. Everything is going to be just fine. Go

back to sleep.

Regardless of the false security that Mother gave with each encouraging word, no matter what she said, nothing ever changed. She would tell me that things would get better, but they never did. What made her think that I would believe her this time? Of course I didn't, because nothing she ever said came true. I thought maybe she said that things were going to get better to either convince herself or she thought that if she said it enough times I would believe her. Whatever the reason, her words never made a difference to me.

Later on that night she woke me up.

Mother: Wake up, honey, we have to go somewhere. Come on. Get dressed. I was so scared. Where were we going in the middle of the night? What was the hurry? Why was Mother acting so desperate? Her anxiety broke my heart. I hated seeing her like this.

Mother: Hurry up, Michelle.

Mother was yelling from my brother's room as she was getting him dressed. She got us in the car, and off we went. As we got closer to the beach, I watched her as she looked for something, her eyes searching back and forth.

Mother: A-ha. Bingo!

With a snap of her finger she parked the car, she then turned to me.

Mother: Michelle, watch after your brother. I'll be right back.

Alone with my brother in the car, I sat and talked to myself in order to calm down, which was a ritual for me every time I felt either frightened or alone. During those times, I had one-way conversations with the invisible person of my choice. If afterward, I still felt alone and needed an image to focus on, I would stare into the mirror and resume my conversation. I know this sounds a bit complicated and probably even strange, but it worked. Thank God for imagination.

My mother soon returned and, as she drove away from the curb, I could tell that her desperation had somehow lifted. I remained both quiet and confused. As soon as we got home, Mother sent us back to bed then proceeded to call Chuck, one of Ray's friends. I stood there by my bedroom doorway to listen in.

Mother: I know he's there. I know he's there! Let me speak to him now! There was a short pause, and then she came unglued.

Mother: I moved your truck, and I'm not going to tell you where it is unless you come home now. No, come home!

There was another short pause.

Mother: Promise me that you'll come home if I tell you where it is. ... Promise!

She proceeded to give him the directions to the truck.

Mother: Fine. I'll be waiting for you. Bye.

I thought to myself, "No. He's coming home already. He hasn't even been gone long enough yet." I knew nothing was going to be okay. His coming home only reconfirmed that happiness would never be found in this family. I had to accept that this was going to be life as we knew it, and nothing was ever going to change.

I stayed awake long enough to hear him come home. I heard the front door open and then shut. As soon as he got in, Mother greeted him with soft words and affection. I heard them whispering all the way to their bedroom. Finally, silence once again.

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All of the fighting between my parents took place, after the family went on a vacation to Woodland Park Colorado that year. For some reason, this particular trip added a considerable amount of pressure on the both of them, unlike any other vacation we'd shared as a family before.

We had vacationed lots of times in various states, but I never expected us to move anywhere. Mother had decided that all the family needed was to move to a different more desolate place. I imagine she figured the more remote our surroundings, the greater her chances were to control the family. She tried her best to keep the dysfunctional nature of our family a secret from the neighbors, family, and friends. I always felt Mother had this fantasy family in her head pretending we were a family that simply didn't exist. What was this need for secrecy, why didn't my parents ask for help? It seemed like in no time at all we were moving to Colorado after they talked to a real-estate agent.

After a few days of Mom and my Ray deciding what to take and what not to take, they reached a conclusion: We needed to have a Yard Sale.

Throughout the day of the sale, I hopped around the driveway on my pogo stick in order to stay out from underfoot. I knew better than to get into my parents' way. How I knew this wasn't the countless spankings, the dirty stares or having to sit in the corner for hours at a time. All of my understanding of what I was supposed to do came to me by the unspoken rules. It was the repetition of being told to be quiet each time I tried to speak or being told to go outside every time I entered the house. This told me: "What you have to say is not important, and we don't want you around." So I kept my mouth shut and stayed at a distance. Whenever I did peer inside to see what the "adults" were doing, I would see Ray in his normal state: drinking, smoking, and giving orders.

Not much changed when company came over, with the exception of his disposition. He didn't seem to yell as much, if at all, but this side of him was temporary. It lasted as long as the company did. When Ray was around other people, he talked with them, even children. I wondered why he never spoke to me. He only yell at me, or spanked me. I knew moving to Colorado wasn't going to change anything.

Whatever wasn't sold by the end of that weekend, was loaded into the big trailer Mom and Ray rented for our move. Raymond's friend Chuck drove the trailer which was filled with all of the big furniture, and Rays truck was filled with whatever was left.

Mom gave me a choice of whom to ride with: Ray my step father or his friend. I chose not to ride with Ray. I knew he hated me, I was not going to subject myself to unnecessary punishment.

The drive was so long but nice. There was no yelling, no cursing, no threat of being spanked; in fact, no one talked to me at all until I had my little mishap. We were driving on the road when suddenly I had to pee. I was afraid to say I needed to go to the bathroom, usually when I spoke I was told to be quite or I was scolded so I didn't say anything. I laid down behind the seat that stretch the length of the cab, hoping that the urge would just go away by it's self. I curled up gritted my teeth and held in my bladder.

After awhile of laying there I fall asleep, when I awoke I found myself laying in a puddle of urine. All I could do once I became aware of my situation was cry. I laid there for quite some time. I was so anxious. What was my mother going to say?

We were pulling into a gas station, and mother thought I was asleep, so she reached behind to wake me up when she felt my clothes were wet, she asked if I had laid in water or something.

I said, "No, I had to go to the bathroom."

Mother rolled her eyes and shook her head in frustration. Ray's friend pulled into the gas station, and as soon as he got out, mother turned to me and asked,

Mother: Why didn't you say something? We would have pulled over.

Me: I don't know, I'm sorry.

(she hissed, but kept it together because we were in front of company)

Mother: It's okay. It's just that all of the clothes are packed away, and now you're going to have to wait until we get to Colorado to change.

I looked down and nodded my head. Mother didn't say another word about it, and neither did I, but I'm sure everyone could smell the urine. My stomach hurt from embarrassment, and my heart felt heavy. I couldn't wait to get to Colorado in order to change my clothes.

When we reached Woodland Park, Mother was in awe of the scenery. She was impressed with Pikes Peak. I learned it was 14,000 feet, for some reason that number stuck in my head. Here we were from Dominguez Long beach California, to Woodland Park Colorado.

Mother: Isn't this place beautiful? Look at the snow kids.

(she kept saying over and over)

All I could think about, was getting out of these wet clothes. Once we reached our destination and after changing my clothes, I was able to take in my new surroundings. I had never seen snow before and had never been introduced to cold weather, but now I was going to be living in it.

After all the furniture was unloaded and everything was pretty much placed where Mother wanted, Ray made a move on me that I will never forget.

Mother was in the kitchen washing dishes while Ray and his friend sat in the living room laughing and drinking beer. I'm sure this was their way of unwinding after a hard day's work.

He called me over, and I went. I always followed his directions. As I approached him, he said to his friend, "Watch this." He then pulled me onto himself, pulled my pants down with his left hand, and then, with his right hand, he stuck his index finger up my rectum. Ray started laughing really loud, as he held me to himself. I tried pushing myself away from him. At the same time, Mother walked into the living room to see what the noise was all about.

She looked at him and walked back into the kitchen. I then heard her yell, "Ray, that isn't your wife!" I couldn't believe she didn't come to my aid. In shock, I broke from his grip and ran upstairs and into my bedroom. I just sat there, Steven asked, "What's wrong Sissy?" I couldn't even begin to tell him about what had just happened; I myself was bewildered. I told him that nothing was wrong. He wouldn't have been able to understand anyway. He was too young, and so was I.

That wasn't the first time Raymond touched me like that, but it was the first time he touched me in front of my mother or anyone else. That night Steven and I slept on the floor together, sharing one blanket. Steven seemed to be able to sleep under any condition, I couldn't because of the cold.



Steven was my only sibling. He was so beautiful -- blond hair, hazel eyes, and a graceful "God-given" disposition. I don't know how he was able to sustain such a gentle personality. Truly, he was heaven-sent, a rose among thorns. He was always agreeable to anything asked of him. The only thing I didn't understand about Steven was why he would sit and rock himself back and forth for hours on end.

In the morning Ray announced:

Ray: I'm going to drive back to California with Chuck. I'll be back soon.

Mother: I know if you leave you're not going to come back to us.

I didn't know why she even bothered pleading with him. He never seemed to express any love toward us, and I believe it was because of this indifference that he would not compromise his interests or even consider our needs.

~O~

I started school shortly after Ray came back from California. I was overwhelmed by the difference between these new peers and myself. I dressed different, I acted different, I was different.

While I was embarrassed and quiet, these kids seemed confident and sociable. When I went to school in California, I wasn't really faced with having to socialize with anybody because my mother took over, she was in charge of all my activities. In fact she was more a part of my life then I was. She would enroll me in everything she could, so she could become apart of it. When I was a Girl Scout, she was a leader. When I was a baton twirler, she made costumes for the entire squad. She would always remind me of how fortunate I was, because when she was a little girl, she didn't have the same opportunities that I did. But in truth, she was living out her lost

childhood in my place.

~O~

My new school seemed so different then anything I had ever seen before. In California there were always so many kids in the classroom that I just sort of blended in with the woodwork, but in this small Colorado school, everybody seemed to know everybody, and not just on a first-name basis.

They were like neighbors; they were as one.

I knew the score as soon as I walked into my first classroom and saw one girl who sat all alone at a table. The other tables were surrounded by students all huddled together, all motioning for me to sit with them as opposed to sitting with her. Not only would it have been uncomfortable sitting with them for lack of room at the table, but this girl obviously had no friends in that class, which made it all that much more desirable to sit next to her, and so I did.

I knew how she felt. I was lonely and didn't have any friends either. As soon as class was over, some of the students ran over to me and filled me in on Karen's standing at the school.

Me: Why doesn't anyone like her?

The only answer that I got was, she's weird.

It didn't make any sense to me. Just because she was different didn't give anyone the right to throw her away. This just made me want to become her friend all the more. I tried to become her friend, but she seemed reserved. I think she never believed that I really wanted to get close to her. She probably thought I was just like the rest.

She was relentlessly teased and insulted. In the end I too became a black sheep among the students. I eventually left Karen alone and kept to myself.