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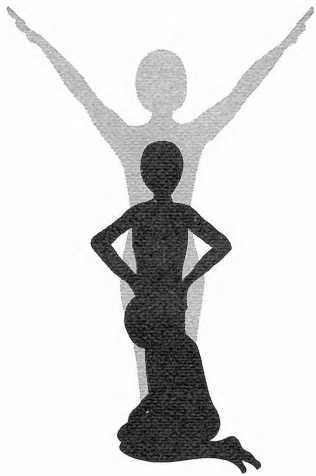


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THE “LOOKING UP” TIMES

By Maine Survivors of Incest/Child Sexual Abuse
With Guest Contributions from Survivors Throughout The World

Vol. 6 No. 2

Fall, 1990

Is It Safe To Come Out?

Is it safe to come out? Have the storm clouds rolled away? Has the lightning quieted down? Has the anger and the tears and the shouting stepped outside to knock on the door of someone else's soul? Is it safe to come out? (Or should I stay inside?) Will I be hit or beaten or raped this time? Is it safer to run and hide? (I've learned to do it well.) Will the looks and words and actions cut my spirit into pieces like a knife that only lives to destroy? Is it safe to come out? I will timidly peek out the corner of reality with a question mark in my eyes and try to interpret the family today and wonder about my safety and survival today. It's tricky. Somedays it's hard to tell.

— Jay



— Sketch by Tamara

In The Sun, In The Rain

(Song Lyrics)

Inside, I hear a child as she cries,
I see the truth before her eyes;
and somehow I feel
if she could speak she'd reveal
the secrets of the years
spent behind the tears...
And within myself I know so well
that there are things I'll never tell;
but I, also, know,
through the days as I go,
that I'll laugh, I'll dream, I'll share
my joy and my despair...

In the sun, in the rain,
while I'm living in the pain,
I can still listen to the song,
and find a place where I belong;
I can try as I please,
and like the wind in the trees,
there's a chance
that I can learn to dance.

Outside, the world, at times, I find
is often less than kind;
and, I see at last,
with regard to the past,
how those hearts so made of stone
left me weak and so alone...
Alone, in some corner of the night,
just a little child with a little might
against the hand so stern
that had fate in its turn —
oh, the fear that held me then
will never hold me again...

For now with a friend at my side
I'm not so apt to run and hide
because it feels so good
believing someone would
care so willingly
to journey through this with me...

In the sun, in the rain,
while I'm living in the pain,
I can still listen to the song,
and find a place where I belong;
I can try as I please,
and like the wind in the trees,
there's a chance
that I can learn to dance.

...I can try as I please,
and like the wind in the trees,
there's a chance
that I can learn to dance...

— Tricia

Searching For The Key

I put her in my room with all
the other untouched, unused
treasures I hide
from the unmerciful world.

She's lonely — always, and calling to
the gatekeeper now "Please
let me out, I can take care of myself
with beauty and" ... what did she say?
I shut her in again.

She waits for someone to love, someone
to bring their warmth into her world.

The gatekeeper keeps out those who have
warmth to share. This gatekeeper only
knows the cost of the warmth; the gatekeeper lives
the cost of the warmth; the gatekeeper is the cost of the
warmth I know as true.

What about the warmth I don't know about? How do I
steal her some of that? How do I steal her out to drink
in some of that?

She is the warmth without the cost.

— Donna Marie Murphy

Innocence Betrayed

She was small

He was big

She was powerless

He was powerful

She needed affection

He betrayed her need by forcing his need
on her

She was vulnerable

He took advantage of her

She tried to be good

He made her feel bad

She was a child

He was an adult

It was his fault.

— Kerrie

My Eyes

Look into my eyes,
but not too close.
You might see
the pain.

Look into my eyes,
but not too close.
You might see
the truth.

Look into my eyes,
but not too close.
You might see
they don't look back.

— Tamara

Me

Cold and empty
Black anger and hate.
What can be done?
As distant as a star,
No beauty so far;
blocked by fear,
tangled with confusion.
A prisoner.
Why?
Tears of pain.
Raindrops on my soul.
Scared.
My life
lived in an unshed tear.

— Lisa Rogers

Great Strength

Perhaps there is great strength
in recognizing how strong a woman really is.
To give birth and suckle young infants 'til they grow
into young children — and then to stand watch
at sickness' door, with a bowl of chicken soup,
a warm blanket, and a comforting hug.

Society looks down on this woman
“the weaker sex”
for having been born female and
teaches her status only as it relates to males.
Her achievements are won through manipulation
and how well she marries, or serves her father's God.

She is trampled and worn and beaten
in subtle ways that wound the soul
perhaps even before passing into adolescence.
And “the curse of blood” stains her undergarments
... or so she is taught
as she slaves to make comfort from chaos.

Perhaps there is great strength
in recognizing how strong a woman really is:
to have struggled and survived through
pathways of dissentience;
to have nurtured and suckled against an emptiness within.
And without education, to learn and grow.
To have achieved without recognition — in her own right.
And usually, to have done it all alone.

— Sally B.

Courage

*All has been taken away, betrayed, sold.
My body, cast into an unloved city, is not
glad of the sun.*

Anna Akhmatova

All has been taken away.

Betrayed.

Sold.

My body.

My body betrayed.

Sold.

Cast away.

*If not for the courage of the fearless crew,
the Minnow would be lost, the Minnow
would be lost.*

Gilligan's Island Theme

If not for

Courage.

*God, grant me the serenity to accept the
things I cannot change,*

*The courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.*

12 Step Serenity Prayer

My mother's tear-stained cheeks

blood red eyes

Praying, pleading

to her oppressor/God

that he bestow on her

the courage to overthrow

her Oppressor/God

Waiting,

Praying,

for the holy gift of courage

so she could save herself,

While her children were being ravaged

by her Oppressor/God,

Ravaged,

While she waited,

and prayed,

with self-declared impunity

not responsible for gifts the

Oppressor/God fails to give.

*Courage is a moral quality; it is not a
chance gift of nature like an aptitude for
games. It is a cold choice between two alter-
natives, the fixed resolve not to quit; an act
of renunciation which must be made not
once but many times by the power of the
will.*

Charles McMoran Wilson

All has been taken away,

betrayed,

sold

My body betrayed,

sold.

If not for the courage

to change the things I can

by the power of my will to fix resolve

to renounce,

to choose,

If not for courage,

all would be lost.

— Mary Beth Crocket

I Can't Breathe

It's late the room is dark, the kids are asleep, their cribs are lined up three against the wall. Three babies sleeping in the same room as Daddy. He and Mom lay there, heavy breathing; the smell carries through the entire apartment. I lay in my bed looking at the shadows in the other room, shaking, trembling, listening to the whispers. They are getting louder, they are screaming. I hear smacks against a body and I know that I must keep them quiet for they will wake the babies, the babies will cry and make him mad. I lay there shaking under the single cover so cold I can't get warm. Oh no, I hear them yelling again. I hear her say no, no I'm just so tired, but he yells out no you're no good. And I wait, I know what is coming. Before I can pretend to be asleep, he is at my bed. He is so tall, his penis is sticking straight out. I almost want to reach out and break it. He picks me up and I pass where the babies are sleeping. I must keep them quiet, the babies will make him mad if they cry. I look at the bed and I see Mom laying there half asleep, half awake and I want to keep staring at her holding on to the fact that she will help. He lays down and takes my hand and puts it on his penis and proceeds to go up and down almost at 100 miles per hour. I feel like I could fly because I am flapping so hard. I keep staring at her. She lays there with a blank daze on her face. I hear him moaning, telling me what a bad mama I am and that I am so much better than the lazy bitch that was lying there watching. Before I know it the worst is happening. I die looking in her eyes and he pushes and shoves it. It feels like the roof of my mouth is on fire. It feels like he is all the way down my throat, I can't breathe. I can't breathe. I need to throw up, maybe if I throw up he will stop. My throat is burning he comes in my mouth and I feel it coming out the sides, he takes his fingers and pushes it back and tells me to drink it. That they are his love juices and I will have his love with me forever. He lays there moaning and looking around the room. He stares at my mother and tells her that that's the way it is done. I then go to leave and he grabs my ankles and pulls me back. He then puts his mouth between my legs and I feel like he is sucking the insides of my body out. I feel like I need to grab on to something. I reach up above me and grab the wall holding it hoping that he does not suck me into his body and we would become one. I look down at the cribs. I see the baby standing at the edge of his crib. I see my mother reach for him and cuddle him. Wait I yell! If I cry out will you cuddle me, would you hold me, hurry before I become one in his body. His large hands are all over me. I am freezing, his hands are cold and hot. One minute they burn my flesh, the next it is frozen solid. I see her leave and go into the other room, her naked bruised body leaves and her shadow follows. He continues to hurt me. I feel like I am screaming but the sauce from his body still lingers in my mouth and if I yell it will come gushing out and he will be mad. Don't let him be mad. The smell in the air, I try to forget it. I try to smell my own body, but it stinks of a smell I can't clear from my nose. Mom never comes back, he finally falls asleep his body on top of me his penis attached to my body. I can't breathe again. I don't want to breathe anymore. He's crushing me. I can't breathe. The light in the other room dims. The babies are asleep. I still can't breathe.

Maybe I won't ever breathe.....

— Debbie Gonzalez

What's Really Important?

If I concentrate, I can hear the rain bouncing off the windowpane. But I am somewhere else. Far away, in another time. "It is not then," I say definitively to myself. The pain that rips through my body is just a memory. I feel I am evaporating. I can't hold onto my pain. It's not true. But then, what is true? What is real? What can I believe in? At times I wish to do something radical. Anything to change the awful fear inside of me. Death seems the perfect solution, though I would miss the cold noses of my dogs prompting me back to the world. If I could just cut in the right place. Strategically so that the black tar of the memories could ooze out for good. But I know from experience that radical doesn't work. Instead I have to recognize that those slow little steps, the fact that I *know* radical won't work, is important.

— Deb W.

To My Mother

I have finally put to rest any delusions I had that you would ever love or accept me. All you have ever done is reject me since I was eight years old.

There are a lot of people who know what you have done to me. You hide the truth from your friends and from yourself. I am here to shout out to the world the truth as I know it. You cannot stop me from talking.

You told me that the Lord has forgiven you. You are sadly mistaken. God only forgives those who confess their sins and those who feel remorse for those sins. Since you do not admit those sins to yourself, but blame me, the innocent one, you are not forgiven.

I mourn for the mother I never had. It has left a big void in my soul and in my life. You told me that my problems are my own and of my making and your problems are yours. How nice it must be for you to believe that. Many of my problems are directly related to things you did to me. I will continue to work hard to undo the damage you have done.

I accept responsibility for my mistakes in life. For years I felt responsible for our family being so messed up. I felt guilty about everything, especially for not having a good relationship with you. The truth is setting me free. I can now see that you never allowed me to get close to you. You never let any of your children get close to you. Instead you tell me I am the one keeping some of them away from you. As long as you continue to blame me you will not have to accept responsibility for yourself. I refuse to continue being your scapegoat.

I am sorry your family hurt you and caused you to feel like a black sheep. You could have gotten help for yourself but chose not to. Instead you make me the black sheep in my family. I will never understand how you could hurt me as you had been hurt. You had a choice not to hurt me.

You can continue telling people and continue convincing yourself that I am a bad person, that I am crazy, and that I have different personalities. Shout it to the world if you must because I will shout right back that I am a kind, caring, sensitive and wonderful person.

I am just as sane as any person could be. Considering the terrible craziness I grew up with, the terrorist environment I had to cope with, the times I fought to stay alive and the times I had to struggle to hang onto my sanity, I feel that I am an amazing, wonderful human being.

I don't know how long I will continue to feel the pain you have caused me to bear. I can only hope it will be less and less as time goes by. I do know that I will continue to heal the scars and grow.

Each step I take will bring me closer to finding what happiness is all about. Each step will take me farther away from your distorted view of me. I am finally free to grow up and to discover a whole new way of thinking, feeling and living.

There are a lot of people who believe in me; who give me emotional support; who praise me when I do well; who encourage me when I am down; who stand by me when I make mistakes; who guide me when I feel lost; who point out my good qualities even if I can't see them; who show that they care about me; and more importantly they accept me because I am me. These are the things you were supposed to teach me as a child so that I would grow up feeling good about myself. These people have replaced you. They are doing your job.

Not having me in your life is your biggest loss. To miss out on sharing and watching my personal growth after all the hell I have been through is tragic for you. As I said to you when I was leaving your apartment, some day I am going to be happy but you will have to live with what you have done.

I am all through keeping secrets from you for fear that you wouldn't believe me. I no longer care what you think. When I was a young girl I told you that my father raped me. Because I was already a victim I was too scared to tell you that later on I was also sexually abused by Dane and Gary. You didn't protect me from my father so I knew you wouldn't protect me from my brothers. Dane raped me when I was 18 years old. When I wrote to Dane to confront him I told him to never come near me or I would have him thrown in jail. Gary made me jerk him off many times when I was 13 to 16 years old up until I went to reform school. Gary claims he doesn't remember doing anything. He even said it wasn't in his nature to force anyone to do something against their will. He used as a threat that he would have sex with me if I didn't jerk him off. I had already been raped by my father and didn't want Gary to do the same. The denial in this family goes on and on and on.

I not only talk to people about what happened I also write about those experiences and my writings are published in the *Looking Up Times* for thousands of people to read. I have the power to reveal the truth about my childhood. The truth is setting me free from the past. The truth is protecting me in the present and will protect me in the future. So go ahead and stay in your delusional world and I will stay in my reality.

Your wonderful special daughter.

— Brielle Daniels

P.S. I want to let other survivors know that I am still grieving but a peacefulness is falling over me.

I Was Sadder Then

I was sadder then, when I was seven. I hated you when I was thirteen, but wasn't sure why. I married a wonderful man, had a baby and remembered why. Looking at this sweet innocent baby — THE BUCK STOPS HERE! I got help. You didn't. You will never know my baby.

I was sadder then, I am happy now. You took away my childhood, but I'm having fun with my child. You never will.

I was sadder then, I don't remember days when I was little. I think because we didn't do much. But I do lots with my family now. You never will.

I was sadder then, my husband never knew, but now he knows. He's the wonderful person I always knew him to be. You'll never know him.

I was sadder then....

— Debbie C.

Patience

her father
casts his warped shadow
between us
she feels him mounting her
and her child wails!
Like a quilt
I wrap myself around her
My breasts
Now her pillows
Stay soft
Listening
for the sweet sound
of her breath
moving far away
his shadow fades
her child clings to me

II

Shamelessly
My womanhood
blooms
with the pleasure
her touch sends through me
in gentle waves
my body begins to dance
to our music
again tonight
I will dance alone.

— Patches

The Struggle

in the shadows of our love-making
visions of the girl-child
who didn't want this
Do you see it too?
the fear still haunting
quicken your pace
I turn my head
and cry
knowing you will not notice
as they didn't notice
naked you are no different
with the clothes,
the mind the smile
the person that I thought
I am falling in love
has disappeared to join
those other manic beasts
I do not want to hate
you

— EEVI

My Friend

You came into my life the summer that the memories came back. To volunteer, so unrelated did it begin.
Your sudden smile, you knew who I was, and I was still trying to figure it out. You waited, your smile always there.
You knew what was coming, and you were ready.
Your so-real laugh, whoever, whatever you are is OK. I loved that laugh, it kept me real through my fear. But, I waited
for you to change and think me terrible for the memories and the past. You never did.
Your so-real laugh was always ready, and when I was, so were the warm and so-accepting hugs just when I needed
them. Those beautiful arms waiting after the terror-filled call, could I come over to talk.
At the door, my beautiful friend, you waited. You had been waiting and you were ready. I was still OK you said. You
said it with warm hugs and a real smile and a tissue for my tears.
We have all been there, at the beginning, and understand.
I love you, my friend. I was afraid to tell you that summer, the one that the memories came back. I love you. You
made it OK to be me, no matter who that was, and now I am. Thank you, wherever you are, thank you.

— Vickie P.

Incest Legacy of An Unborn Child

The pain of never feeling a fetus inside.
And uncried tears for the growth years of that unborn child,
Is yet another incest legacy.
My mother once said to me,
"It's a good thing you never had kids.
You'd be a terrible mother — that I can see."
I can finally disagree.
As does my good friend, Stephanie.
For with her help I have once again learned to respect motherhood.
Perhaps if I become a mother myself, I could cover the rest of my wound.
And try to understand that my mother did the best that she could.
But the child within me blames her, the one who was supposed to protect me, rather than my step-father
whom she says I should.
I have stopped the cycle of victimization.
Been too busy with that to establish an intimate relation.
At thirty-five, my child-bearing years are numbered.
And I wonder —
Shall I always cry out for yet another unmet hunger?

— Susanna Maria

Of What Can I Speak?

The things I cannot say. I cannot say what happened to me, or who I was, or where I was, or why I was even there. I cannot name my abusers and I cannot target my rage in a specific direction. I cannot connect the feelings, the terror, the pain, the rage, with anything substantial. I have no memories to speak of.

I only have ideas inside my head (of a mother willing to prostitute other babies — but my sister says “no!”). I do not know who I was or where I lived before the age of eight. But I have this idea that the unbelievable pain and horror that I endured as a child is REAL. . . .

These are the things I cannot say. I have no memories to speak of.

— Mareike

Just Another Nightmare

As I open my eyes, I see a familiar room.

My heart begins to pound with tremendous sounds bouncing off my eardrums.

Sudden panic. I can't breathe. My mind is racing over and over again, “Please God, help me, please make him go away.”

No Answer.

Footsteps. Oh no, he's here. I can hear his breathing, smell the booze on his breath.

“No, please don't touch me there.”

Then a familiar voice in my mind says

“This is not real. Calm down. Let's go for a walk.”

That's it. Yes, it's just a dream.

“I'm here with you. It's okay.

Lie down, close your eyes, calm your heart and sleep, my sweet.”

Once again the reality of life is twisted into becoming just another childhood nightmare.

— Cheryle L. Coburn

For Keoka

I too have no memories but. . .

My mother says I was always terrified of men. She also says I hated to be touched, even cuddled as a baby. (She says these things as if they were as normal as the color of my hair.) I began wetting the bed when I was six? and never stopped until I was married. I remember lying in the snow at five and wishing I were dead. Why?

I have a history of: self mutilation, anorexia, food addiction, nail-biting. It is a family joke that I was always accident prone even though I was very athletic and not clumsy. I have grown up with a **GRITTY**, dirty feeling inside. I react violently to animal abuse, but sometimes have the bizarre feeling that children who are abused somehow deserve it. I let no one know me.

My best friend (a survivor) read my volumes of writings and looked at my artwork. She promptly bought me *The Courage To Heal*. I was all those people, I had every symptom. But where is the abuse? I search through my mind. I invent scenarios and dismiss them. I was called a liar often as a child. My mother always said, “You would lie if the truth would save you.” She tells me certain things I remember never happened, at least not the way I remember them. I'm still looking, Keoka. Me too.

— Kim L.

MEMORIES

Special Lisa

Cool water flows across my warm skin,
he's getting into the pool.
Mom, Grammy, Grampy, aunts, uncles, cousins, I can
see them all, I can hear them.
He's getting closer to me. The water feels colder,
I begin to tremble.
Aunt Brenda, are you coming in the water?
"Not now, Lisa."
Mom, are you coming in the water?
"I'm busy, Lisa."
He's right beside me
His fingers push aside the bottom of my bathing suit.
Tell Mom to watch you plug your nose and go under water.
I yell, "Mom, watch this."
As he slips his finger inside of me and I slip below the
water's surface.
I come up for air.
I can't believe the whole family is only yards away.
"Good job, Lisa. What a big girl."
I want to drown.
Why doesn't someone stop it? Why?
Good job, Lisa. What a big girl.
I feel sick. I'm nine.

— Lisa Rogers

A Party With Broken Windows

it is with amusement
that I invite you to my party
a party with broken windows
and an old man
holding one single lit candle

there will not be one single party hat
not one single magic trick
not one single clown
not one single balloon
only one single me

history will be told by all the absent faces
and it will be a reminder
to me
that death is not so far away, after all

it will be a party because not one single me
will be present
only part of Dad
part of me
part of Kate
and two for tea

so
it is with amusement
that I invite you to my party
a party with broken windows
and an old man
holding on single lit candle

— R. Grebler

'A Simple Description of a Room That Appeals to all the Senses Much too Short, Vague & Confusing'

Grunting, wheezing fire came from down there.
My tiny left foot jutted over the back of the divan,
My right anchored the green area rug.
The room floated by as I stared.
Sheers hid a wall pretending to be glass.
The TV's position, half on the rug, half off,
Held my eyes.

Why couldn't the rug reach the walls?
A burning tickle rose through me.
I wouldn't look down at the greasy head between
My knees.
Round, oval, rectangular wood tables
Merged into one, tinted in watery green.

A creak of the stair's wood sat us up,
My full skirt down:
"I'm sorry," he said.

— Jennifer Hill

Be Good

"you be good for your uncle..."
for your mother
for your father
for your brother
for the little ones who came later
for your friend
for your lover
for the others to lie with, to lay with
for the others to lie at
for the causes great and small
for the masses, the ones, them all
for the teachers
for the students
for the employers
for the employees
for ice crystals on lashes
for the healing of bloody gashes
for the nights of people gazing
for the days of food grazing
for the booze to work
for the booze to work faster
for the nightmares to go

Was I good for you Uncle?
Was it good for you?

— Sandy

I Remember You

I see your dark silhouette emerge from my door. I hear your heavy footsteps on the floor. Down come the stars from space; I feel your hot breath on my face. I feel your repulsive touch; now you're saying how you love me so much. Finally your figure leaves, and all I'm left with is dry heaves. You took my innocence away from me! Why couldn't you leave me be?

— Paula

My History

My mother was mentally ill. I was always highly intelligent and I could read novels by the time I started kindergarten. I had to be smart, for I had to know which meds Mom needed and at what time and whom to call if she had a relapse, etc. By the age of 10, I knew all the medical terminology pertaining to her case and I could have an in-depth discussion with her psychiatrists. She was in a mental institution a lot. Seven and a half years before my birth, she had a complete nervous breakdown and was hospitalized for six years. The breakdown was caused in part by her discovery that her sister and my father had had an affair which produced a son, my first cousin *and* half brother. About eighteen months after her release, I was born. She was 39 and Dad was 48 and they'd been married for 14 years.

I was a victim of my father's molestation when Mom would go into the hospital frequently for a few weeks or months. He did not penetrate me, but he did other things and told me it was our secret. I had been brought up to believe that my father was the most honest, well-respected, moral person on earth! My cousin/brother lived in another state, but he and his mom and "dad" visited frequently. For such an intelligent person, I was sheltered and very naive about the matters of life. At that time I knew he was my cousin, but I didn't know he was also my brother and I'd never heard the word "incest." He is ten years my senior, but when I was thirteen, we fell head over heels in love with each other. We "made love" every chance we got. Then he had to go home a few weeks later, our Sunday School teacher told my class the facts of life. It hit me so hard when I heard the word "incest" and its meaning and how God felt about it that the entire affair was blocked out of my memory for several years.

Dad died when I was fifteen. Mom died when I was nineteen. When I was twenty-two, I learned the truth about my cousin also being my brother. I had documented proof. Having buried the affair, I was ecstatic to learn that my favorite cousin was my brother. He decided to hate me when he learned the truth. When I had the flashback that revealed the incest I'd hidden, I knew why he hated me. He blamed me for it and for a long time, I hated myself, blamed myself and was ashamed of myself for loving him as I once had, even though I'd been in ignorance of the true circumstances.

I feel robbed of many things. Robbed of my childhood and my teenage years. Robbed of the truth about my parents. Robbed of the truth about my cousin/brother. But I'm a SURVIVOR. I am in therapy and have been since my first flashback in '87. Growing up is painful. I cry a lot now. I find it difficult to trust people. But I survived the incest, I survived rape by two "lifelong friends" when I was seventeen, I have been sober for almost 13 years, I'm straight from a past addiction to prescription drugs, I survived a bad marriage and painful divorce and I remarried, I survived "friends" stabbing me in the back. I have four wonderful, healthy children and every day that I live, I am blessed. I don't go to church. I believe in God right here at home. I shared this story in the hope that it will help someone. If it only helps one person then it was worth sharing and I didn't survive in vain.

If my parents were alive, I'd have plenty of choice things to say to them, because now I see through the whites of their lies. As for my brother, *he* should've known better. He was 23!

— Sandy

The Hotel Room

She lay there, in the bed, the Grandpa's hotel, waiting for your return. You said you'd be back to get me! A small country child believed you. She waited patiently. Big brown eyes open wide, looking out the window, watching each car pass by, longing for her mother's touch that never came.

Others strolled the hallway of Jefferson Hotel, looked at you, they laughed, "She's not coming back." A small country child believed you. She waited patiently, big brown eyes open wide, looking out the window, watching each car pass by, longing for her mother's touch that never came.

She has left you small country child, never to return for you, for what?

— Joyce Slone

Frantic Survival

I stand here watching
The fire ants carefully
Building a house of sand
One grain at a time.
So carefully the
Tunnels are weaved
Each for its own
Special purpose.
As I watched them
The urge to disturb
Their neatly built home
Overwhelms me.
Gently I push the
Sand with my foot.
Ants begin to scurry around
Frantically trying to
Save their precious home
So it is with my life.
My thoughts are disturbed
By the rustling of leaves.
As I turn to look,
A lizard scurries
Hoping not to be seen
By the "monster" figure
Towering above him.
Walking farther down
The sidewalk,
I see another lizard.
His body stiffened by fear.
He is frightened of
What would happen
If he tried to move.
Wishing he could find safety
But there's nowhere
For him to hide.
So it is with my life.
My life was built
With many tunnels
Just as the ants' home was.
I carefully placed
All the hurt, and pain
In the tunnels of my heart.
Once they were stored,
I went on with my life,
Then Daddy would come again like
A "monster" in the night.
Crushing my fragile heart.
I ran around frantically
Trying to piece
My life back together
Only to have it destroyed
Again in the night.
My nights were
Filled with terror
As I heard the sounds
Of my Daddy's feet.
Just as the lizard
Was frightened by mine.
My body stiffened with fear
At each sound I heard
I was so afraid to move.
I just wanted to sleep.
Wishing I could find safety,
But there's nowhere
For me to hide.
Daddy comes in, and
I die in the night.

— J.J.

I Said "No"

When I was two I screamed "NO" kicking and scratching and defying with every fiber of my being.

When I was five I said "NO" crying and pleading with hope and prayer.

When I was ten I said "No," please, please, please, please.

When I was thirteen I said "no" without force, mouthing the words.

When I was fifteen I said "no" with a toss of my hair and a turn of my shoulder.

Was I saying it wrong or were they not fucking listening?

— Kim L.

Trapped

The fog never lifts and
the pain overwhelms me.
I try to back out,
but the power is so strong.
These feelings are in control.
Will they ever let go?

I feel so lost and confused.
Flashes of hurts keep flooding my brain.
The bathroom floor,
the shoes, the zipper,
that penis, the tension.
do I have to?
I cry, I suck it.
I gag and cry some more.
What is the meaning of all this?
Will I ever know?

— Deb

My Doctor

He would prepare me for himself, casting a spell on my mental health. The smell of the wrinkled-up "johnny" I wore, emphasized the disease of his decor.

I transformed into the five-year-old child. His persistence would turn to a smile. Once again I had failed with the trial. Once again a victim of his beguile.

— "L"

Dear Daddy

You were my savior in my world as a child. You were the one I thought of when Ma would talk about how black and ugly I was — how much I looked like you — was like you. I took comfort in that even as the pain of her words ate away at my soul. You loved me and I loved you — of that I was sure. Throughout all the physical, sexual and emotional abuse by her — in between the prayers and rituals which I thought would bring me death and release — I thought of you. You were the only one who hugged me; who made me feel touchable. When I was a child, I used to fantasize about being held. I felt like I would die from not being touched. And you touched me — and touched me. Perhaps that is why it is so hard for me to allow myself to feel all the pain attached to your incestuous relationship with me. If I look at it, I think I will die. But you did abuse me Daddy — a subtle abuse — shrouded in love.

Your drunken sloppy sexual kisses, the touches which made me feel vile and wanted at the same time — I thought — well he's just drunk. I had gotten used to your drunken episodes which continually put my life in jeopardy as you fell asleep at the wheel of your car or that flung you into violent rages. But you were never violent with me, although I always waited for the time you would lose it and kill us all. Through it all, I knew I was your favorite — everyone knew it. I've paid a high price for your love, Daddy. Now when I want comfort from someone, I feel terrified. If I get what I want will it feel as horrible as before? It does feel horrible when I can't separate then from now.

Today while I am trying to heal, I still punish myself for making such a big deal of your touches — after all, I wasn't raped by you — that happened later and I was as silent then as I was with you — not really there — just having the pain and blood as a reminder that it was real.

I am frightened of speaking out — this “telling” which I know is so important. In order for me to live, I must heal. Talking about the abuse is part of my healing. I am trying to learn that it is possible for me to give my love and trust to someone without being betrayed.

Daddy, will I ever feel like a whole person? Will I ever stop believing those things I fear others feel (am I to blame because I loved you so much)?

Will I ever stop trying to cut you and Ma out of me with a razor?

— Diane

In Spirals

In spirals I remember the horrible pain that was my childhood. The compelling, yet shameful secret that was mine to hold. The unending fear of detection and pain more horrible than before.

In spirals I remember, Dad, what you did to me. Like all dads did, you said. The teeth grated together to keep in the screams. The eyes shut so tight to keep in those tears and my nails digging into my palms to keep from dishonoring my father by striking out.

In spirals I remember Ma, how hard you worked at not seeing what was going on in your house. How you must have seen the obvious, the horror, the pain, and turned a blind eye for fear of shame, of bad recognition. I remember you told everyone that I was daddy's girl and that I was never any trouble. I remember the lies and you knew. I am beginning to remember my anger.

— Vickie P.

The Beginning

I sit and watch the change take place that starts to show on every face. Each one changes a little more, until they've lost what they were before. I can't understand the process or call the things that happen to one and all. It seems so strange to see the way. I used to live in another way. What is it that bothers me so? Is it just that I've lost touch? Am I so changed that I can't share, or is it just that I don't really care?

— Joyce Slone

Survivor's Prayer

Give me the strength Lord to help this little one
understand
Help me Lord as I take her by the hand
Help her to lead me through those by-gone days
As she tries to communicate with me in many ways
Her fears and feelings of uncertainty
The mass confusion that permeates this entity
Give me the knowledge Lord to help her understand
That she did nothing wrong and had no control over
man
Help me to free her Lord, she feels so small and
insecure
Help her to accept that she was innocent and pure
Give me the wisdom Lord to help her trust in you
and me
So I can grow to see what you intended me to be.

— Catherine Walter

Where's Patty?

Patty has shiny black hair and big brown eyes. She loves her daddy with all her heart. She trusts everyone. She likes to play with her gray and white kitten, named Toby. Her daddy changes into an ugly, scary monster at night. He steals her innocence. He shatters her lollipop world of sunshine. She carries pain and shame like a sack of coal. She is dark and evil. Did the precious child die?

No! She has been hiding until it was safe to come out again. It's okay now. It's safe now. The child can live again. The child can dance and sing in the warm sunshine. She is whole and good. She always was. A beautiful child of God.

— Pat M.

The Package

I was given a package at birth, a very special and precious package, to do with it whatever I pleased. It was my father's will in the beginning. But then others took full advantage of my small size and quiet nature; then the nightmares began. My once beautiful package became damaged and broken, almost totally destroyed. But I never gave up. The will to survive was too strong. Stronger than I. My package was my very life and soul; yes, damaged at a very young age, but now being made new by my father in heaven because he loves me so much. The package contained unconditional love and trust and true peace and joy. Once broken and shattered it lost all its love and trust as it spilled out my very innocence, taking with it my peace and joy. It was all replaced by a false sense of what love is. My joy, peace and trust were replaced by mistrust. Hate took over where love once grew. Anxiety replaced the joy and peace.

All this happened in one short moment of time. Rape is that way you know, it takes all and gives nothing in return. Nothing positive, that is. My package was so shattered after years of continual abuse I just wanted to die. And I almost did one night. Oh so close to the end, I know it would have been the end, but my father in heaven called me by my name and he stopped me by his incredible love, his unspeakable love for me. God gave me a brand new package that night so long ago. He can and wants to do the same for others in this situation. The only thing you have to do is let him love you. I know to other survivors it's hard to trust again, but it's worth it. God loves you.

— Mary

Freeing Of A Soul

I am the owner of my heart. The believer of my life's expression, leaving me new, quite fragile, as a bird freshly freed from shell to air.

I have bled a lifetime of sorrow, held against my own freedom. Locked in dark gray, looming castles with no walls; no safe and valid reason.

To continue to display, a beam, a shred of light, unknown so rarely was it seen.

I look again once more, and there I hear you. Calling so softly. Falling on fragmented minds that could not hear you.

Your gentle sorrow, a wounded heart, torn and left alone, left to bleed in frozen walls.

A child of grace, a bird on wing. I come to free you to the blessed spirit within.

A re-emergence into life, as shining threads, glimmering strong and smooth. To lift a child from despair. Giving reason to unreason. Giving rest to one so weary. A freedom for the soul of one who has come to sing a song of love.

— Devon Holm

A Long, Hard Climb

Why did you harm
the innocent child?
Through fear and charm
to be thoroughly defiled.

Did that child hurt you?
Didn't you care what
happened?
That child is torn in two,
with shame hard to
mend.

She trusted your touch.
She needed your
protection.

You hurt her so much,
through your selfish
ejaculation.

The child wanted love,
care and attention.
Not the grunt and shove
of things she could not
mention.

The pain in her heart
matched the fear in her
eyes.

As her legs were spread
apart
and her ears filled with
lies.

You betrayed her trust,
destroyed her childhood.
Through your callous lust,
through your distorted
manhood.

Why must she suffer
now as much as before?
She can trust no other
because fear guards her
door.

What has become of you
and others that are the
same?

No remorse or shame shows
through
as you deny and shift
blame.

She took your blame
for many years.
She hid behind shame
and many unshed tears.

The disgust that she felt
was aimed at her own
body.

She took what life dealt
though it was often
naughty.

She is all grown up now.
She has a life of her own.
She is going to get better
somehow
though she's afraid and
alone.

She can't reach out
though there are people
around.

She feels the urge to shout
and fall dead to the
ground.

Recovery is a long journey
It takes all she can give.
She must fight to be free
and struggle to live.

One step at a time
and day by day,
She will finish the climb
come what may.

— Joann Knapp

I Remember Wondering

I remember wondering what was wrong with me.
Why did I feel so much pain?
What had I done to deserve this?

I remember wondering why I always wet the bed.
Why did I do that?
What had I done to cause this to happen?

I remember feeling so lost.
Why didn't I feel okay?
What was wrong with me?

I remember being sexually violated!
Why? I'll never know.
What had I done?

Surely no one ever does anything to deserve that!

— Gary L.

Soul Survivor

A wounded child in a woman's body,
a sun that's set too soon.
You melted my heart with the depth of your pain.
I saw a life in ruin.

Gradually, there came a spark,
a flicker of hope in your soul
and that spark, if sheltered, would give birth to a flame;
a tortured spirit made whole.

When you walked out that door, you gave me a hug
and a tear found its way down your face
You said it had been awhile since another's touch
had made you feel warm and safe.

And through the months I thought of you.
It seemed God was on your side,
for though you'd hurt and been a victim,
I knew you could survive.

But you didn't know, and you didn't reach out.
You took a handful of pills instead.
I guess you thought you'd find yourself
joining the peaceful dead.

Now you lay near death, in a coma.
Unable to breathe on your own;
While I pray for yet another miracle
or for God to call you all the way home.

— Lori D'Amico

How Many Others Have Suffered At Your Hand?

I will not be quiet
I am always around
Even now you can barely escape the memories
Look over your shoulder
Dare to dream at night
Touch the woman child next to you
I am there... she is me
You taught me pain, disgust, hatred
You made me feel dirty, foul, wrong
I know better now.
You are these things, not me.
I reclaim my birthright of life-giver, nurturer, healer,
lover.
It is you who is dirty and foul
I am welfare
You are wealthy
And yet you are nothing
I have it all
I look down on you
I see your rot
I laugh as it eats away at your soul
My healing has begun
Blessed Be

— Elizabeth J. Towers

Godfather

K-k-k-Katie, beautiful Katie...

Oh I couldn't wait to sit and write this cuz it's been COOKIN' for a lot longer than just tonight when Thomas wouldn't go to bed and all the dishes had to be done in the KITCHEN. That SONG!

You're the only girl that I'll ever adore...

I'd think, "but I'm not your girlfriend, why are you doing this in front of everyone? I'm so ashamed." And Grampa said it OUT LOUD in front of HER, "Don't tell Gramma I'm your boyfriend." I knew she wanted to kill me. How did I know that at two or three or four or sixteen at most?

When the m-moon shines over the mountain...

I always liked the way he sang m-moon, his face was red and shiny and happy like the moon.

I'll be waiting at the k-k-k-kitchen door.

Fear. Sheer terror. Oh God, please don't be there. That's where it happened. I think. Sometimes I know. Yellow walls, a narrow table where he extinguished cigarette butts on the inside of my thighs. Like a sacrificial lamb as I look back doesn't that sound like...oh shit. I was only two or three or four or six at most. He was my godfather. God? Father? Grand? I go crazy. But here's the tricky part cuz when Bruce flicked his tongue at me playfully from across the room or gyrated his hips suggestively if I even hinted at a yawn, grinning that same red-faced grin, I'd want to vomit or at least kill him.

Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah...
does it end?

— Katie

Never Meant To Be

You stole my innocence, childhood, and manhood, some
30 years ago;

You picked the quiet one, the middle one, the one who
doesn't even say hello.

Brothers and Sisters, you must've known;
For all the suffering, I have shown.

Where are you oh great protector, oh dearest dad;
Can't you see what's happening, to make me feel so
sad.

Mom, I think you knew;
I know, I gave you a clue or two.

For man as victim, is no crime;
You'll have to wait for another place, another time.

Somehow you knew, I'd never tell;
You picked your target, very well.

The world has no place for wimps like me;
So I'll be still, and let it be.

All my life, living in fear;
While all the girls shouted, "isn't he queer"!

For ten years he had his way;
Now it's my turn to stand up and say:

"Hey brother, can you spare a dime;
I want to stop, to report a crime."

Dear Dad, I wish I could be so big and strong;
to show you that, after all, I belong.

But no, I guess you'll have to settle for my sensitivity;
And a pinch of creativity.

Injustice against a boy who doesn't smile much
anymore;

He sits in silence, oh what a bore!

If by chance you meet a boy who holds it all in;
Please tell him to let it go, he did not commit a sin.

The little one survived and did his best;
Now it's time to get on with the rest.

Oh brothers and sisters, heavy with shame;
Let us go back to whence we came.

This time we'll be ready, to do it right;
We'll all join hands, and put up a fight.

Touch me no more, you total zero;
For there's safety in numbers; we must be heroes.

It would have been better if you taught me to tie my
shoe or ride a bike;

The only thing I learned, was the person in the mirror, I
did not like.

Life is funny, don't you see;
Some childhoods were, others were never meant to be.

— James

Hating Women

Dad had lots of jokes about women.
He used to say women aren't naturally inferior
they just have to prove they aren't.

He often talked about the service he was entitled to;
from me
women in the house.

Dad and the guy who shot up the engineering building
in Montreal and killed all those women
had a lot in common.

— Maire MacLachlan

Somewhere

Somewhere out there,
There is a peace place for me.
Or is it somewhere in there
Where the peace begins to be?

Someone's in charge of the peace price
And holding the purse for me.
When I get out of the black hole of Shawne,
The price will cease to be.

And that day I will know
How it feels to fill the hole.
Because someday, somehow I will put
Together all the pieces of my soul.

— Shawne Mantyh Smith

The Following Includes Aliases Necessary For Protection Of Survivors.

Dear Merilynn,

I ran into your brother the other day. I know him, professionally. I did not know that he was your brother. He wanted to buy some of my work. Some of what I do very well. He wanted to deal. We chatted, trading insights and information, my mailing address for the promise of a letter. He congratulated me, in conclusion, on another recent contract and mentioned that his sister worked for the same firm. . . perhaps I might know you. Your name left his lips like an opinion of the weather, like directions to a restaurant that I might try, like the name of a family member spoken by a normal person. Your name.

The conversation went on. I began the deep chill without cold. I became the standing up person, the praying mantis, in the canning jar. "I think I've seen her around." I felt so vague, so trapped, so furious, shielded in outrage. I thought I could not breathe and wanted to throw up. I wanted to run and find you, Merilynn, and hold you and tell you that I love you.

I stared at him without realizing that I refused to turn my eyes away. I stared not realizing that what I felt was not fear, but fury. He fidgeted, he danced a little child's dance in a way, and I felt compassion for someone that sick and I wanted to puke. I knew that if I ever have the chance to pass judgment, to pass sentence, to commit that person to a life without freedom of contact, that I will do it. With compassion in my heart for the child he had been, I will seal the door myself and write in final letters his name and his crime.

He walked away in that happy little dance, anticipating the deal. I thought of the children. I was sick. I have not knowingly dealt with a perpetrator since I killed my father and his associates. I wanted to scream his ugliness in his face.

I said not a word of you and I. I could not, your confidence my sacred trust.

For now, let us say I have changed my mind, too busy; I wish his life depended on it. If you ever decide that I can say it, I would like very much to tell him why. . . why there will be. . . *no deal*.

Your friend,
— Shirl

The Clearing

I've come to the clearing. My private place where I quietly visit my soul. It's not a place to share. I would not want to disturb the peacefulness. Tall pines form a ringed wall filled in with scrub oak and wild Mountain Laurel. My bed of pine needles waits for me. Warm and comforting in the daylight's sun. I lie down to listen. A breeze moves the forest and she speaks to me. I press my cheek to hers and listen to the pulse of her heart. Moving some needles away, I reveal her velvety green skin, smooth, soft to touch.

I roll over onto my back to feel the sun on my face. The warmth feels good. The late spring day brings a fresh clean smell to the woods. I taste the new life in the breeze, crisp and delicious. It feeds me after a long winter fast. I open my eyes to the sky. The white puffy clouds move briskly against the sharp blue sky. For a moment I feel dizzy from all the movement. I let myself be settled and peace returns. I watch the tops of the pines dance with the clouds. It's a beautiful dance, both in sync, dancing to the music of the wind. Occasionally a bird joins in. I wish I could be on the wind dancing like a cloud.

In my mind I float on my bed of pine needles. Wanting to remain forever. Peaceful. Calm. Thankful for the resting place.

— Sueellen

Gathering Together

I went to a Gathering with hundreds of others; an experience I'll never forget. There were good times and bad, some in-between. And feelings I don't understand yet. As we laughed and cried and felt our pain, I could hear strong voices roar. We began as individuals and merged to fight one war. For a few short days we could be ourselves without pretending to be free. It was hard to go back to the real world, to regress to what we're expected to be. Being with so many other survivors gives new meaning to the word. For years I have learned and I've listened, but this was the first time that I heard. Now I know that much of the battle is not having to do it alone. My body began to allow feelings, my heart is no longer a stone. The ribbons symbolize collective strength; something that others don't see. The truth of the Gathering was felt by all: they can't take away our dignity.

— Nancy

To Make The Right Move

Mommy please don't beat me anymore,
is this all that life has in store,
she beats me even when I do my chores.

She hates me this I know,
for pain and hurt is all she wants to show,
'Why don't she let me go?

She beats me even when I'm good,
I make her feel like she should.

She beats me with her hand, a stick or a belt,
it's the worst pain I ever felt.

She says I left her in her time of need,
on Sharon's power she went to feed,
a happy life I would never lead.

A good brother or son I cannot be,
for I was only thinking of me.

My little sister had to pay the price,
before my mother beat her she was so nice,
when I should have been a man I was like a bunch of mice.

I should have stayed instead of trying to flee,
and took the pain that was meant for me,
for to stay would let Sharon free.

But I didn't do what a big brother should,
to stay and take the pain I wish I would.

I wish I could take Sharon's pain away,
but when I had the chance I didn't stay.
For what I didn't do one day,
I will have to pay.

To be a big brother I would not allow myself to be,
for all I could think of was me.

Did I make the right move?

— Peter

The Storm

The thunder roars, the lightning cracks, but I'm safe within
my bed.

The rain pours down as I remember back to the "storm" I
used to dread.

I never knew when the "storm" would come praying it would
never return.

I heard his footsteps, smelt his rum and felt my body burn.

The thunder covered my little girl cries, the lightning reflected
his face.

My tiny spirit never said good-bye, as she left to run her race.

Now I open my eyes and ears to the lightning dancing outside.
Remembering, remembering, the passing years and the
"storm" that made me die.

But I am here, three decades gone
Snuggled within my bed.

The storm outside plays a victory song for it is he who is
dead.

The rum smell has cleared; the burning no more.
He's dead. Thank God, he's dead.

I don't hear his footsteps at my door:
For he has left me nightmares instead.

— Kathy

For The Children

There are millions and millions of little faces staring up at me. Each one is unique and precious. Different features, different colors — dark, fair, amber, bronze, olive, tan. They all need love and nurturing and hope.

I cry for the children. Tears fall like rain; steady pounding, pouring the grief, the sadness, of abuse. These faces and bodies and souls are covered with bruises and blood and broken bones...sometimes it's not seen.

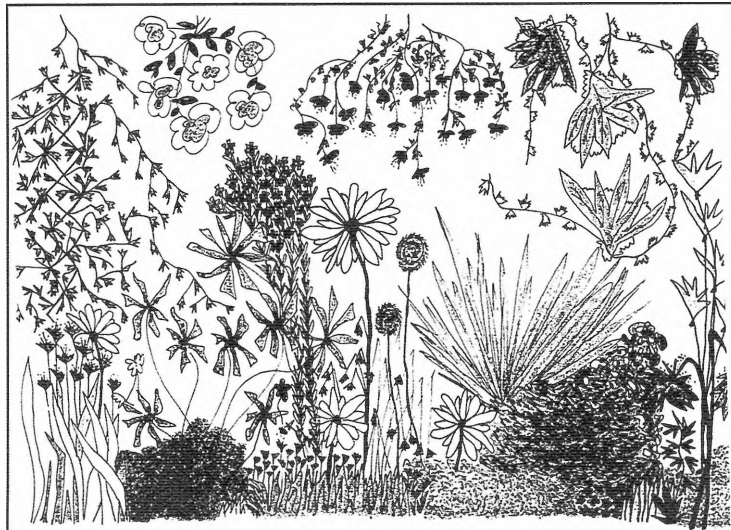
Inside a dark, quiet place, the rain beats down on a tin roof; a steady rhythm comforts me in this sadness that I FEEL.

The words of the song go "Jesus loves the little children..." but how could He? When he gives them to such cruel, sadistic, evil people as my parents and Enid's parents and Danielle's and Bonnie's and Chris' and Katrina and Brent's and on and on and on and on and on and on...All those millions of abused and suffering children — that includes me. I was abused too.

There are so many that don't make it. But their beautiful, smiling faces shine down on us on clear nights as brilliant, twinkling stars.

Good night, sweet children, sleep tight.

— Suzanne Riccaboni



Sketch by Kim L.

Maybe The 'Rose Dusties' Could Keep the Tunnels Clean

The back leg of the chair grazed the edge of the
flagstone patio threatening to empty itself of me, leave
me lying in bunches of red, gold, and pink — lilac
flowers.

Long stems of what the inn-keeper called 'rose dusties'
stretched up looking over my shoulder.

With the wind they might brush against me and sweep
away the cobwebs that trail behind like an antique
wedding veil.

Who am I married to?

Who placed this veil, that made me forget who I am,
over me?

Tiny green spiders trail over my arm jumping between it
and the stems of 'rose dusties' like I jump between
thoughts.

I had a dream in which I frantically kept brushing
something out of my face. Cobwebs? Hair? A veil?
It felt a part of me

A part I wanted to rip off and throw away but all I
could do was keep brushing the nest of hair, the veil
away from my face.

Veils can conceal, veils can shield the light from one's
eyes.

But this veil did not keep the dirt from falling into my
face.

Where are the 'rose dusties'?

I could use them now, carry them with me through the
corridors of tunnels as I crawl looking for a place that
feels mine.

— Anna Bowen

This Little Girl

This little girl is broken.

This little girl is terribly frightened.

This little girl keeps quiet, her sexual abuse goes untold.

This little girl is very sad.

This little girl begins to pretend nothing is happening.

This little girl learns not to feel because it hurts so
much.

But somehow this little girl still grows into a woman and
this woman is very angry.

This woman thinks she is to blame.

This woman hates and abuses herself.

This woman becomes very depressed,

Doesn't even know why???

Then this woman gets some help, tells her story. All of
her deep dark secrets

Kept in she has now told!

Someone listens and believes her!

Helping her to unlock her frozen feelings.

This woman starts to love this little girl and finally they
become one!

"Hooray"

— Darlene

It Does Get Better

I have reached out to many a man;
given my heart, shared my secrets,
revealed my tears, my joys, my fears.

I've cared for their being. I've taught love
and I've learned love;

... a love I must learn to separate from.

I've feared many a man's anger and I've feared my own.

I've caressed their pain and comforted their anxiety.

I've welcomed many into my home,
offered my spirit, my thoughts, my body.

Sang my song, sung of the heart.

I used to love to sing to you.

... I thought you were singing, too.

I've opened my ears to the cries and the laughter.

I've heard their rage and have tested their poison,

drank their pain, and I've felt the fear of changing the
game.

I couldn't hang on and I couldn't let go.

I've endured the sting of many a hand and survived
many unwanted demands.

Yesterday I followed like a lost puppy.

Today I live in no one's shadow.

I am searching for a place under friendlier skies;

a place where the sun shines upon my face
and I am allowed to feel its warmth.

A place full of life and color, peace of mind.

Where I'm able to laugh when I'm happy,

to cry when I'm sad

... without guilt

... without shame.

A place that accepts me the way I am.

... I'll find myself there.

— Jennifer T. Willar

Care Provider

He is three years old, and he needs to pee.

"I think I'll wait until my Daddy comes to help me."

He shifts his weight frantically, grinds a toy into his
crotch. He can't possibly wait another hour! Yet he has
stated his preference so clearly.

What can I do to help? I offer him a cup, tell him I
will not look, even go so far as to unsnap his overalls.

"I think I'll wait until my Daddy comes to help me."

I hear vulnerability in that "I think". Would he feel
abused if I insisted on helping him?

I am supposed to be doing child care, and I am in-
competent! I just have such bad feelings about how I was
touched as a child.

At last my wife arrives, takes in the situation at a
glance, just *does* it. I collapse into a chair, shaking with
relief.

Afterwards, I study the little boy's face. There is no
hint of him feeling invaded, no trace of humiliation.

Just relief that someone knew how to help him!

— Stephen Bies

The “LOOKING UP” TIMES

“LOOKING UP”

P.O. Box K

Augusta, Maine 04332-0470

Telephone (207) 626-3402

“Looking Up” provides a variety of services to survivors of child sexual abuse and those who care. Services include telephone/mail support education and referral; consultation and training; a wilderness program; workshops and conferences; advocacy; and more. We are a non-profit organization which spends most of its money on direct services offered at little or no cost to participants. We depend largely on donations from the public to continue our work. Please donate what you can.

We invite all survivors of incest/child sexual abuse to send original contributions for possible publication in the *Times*: essays, letters, poetry, artwork, anything of a literary nature. No simultaneous submissions, please. We edit for length, clarity, spelling and punctuation. Our intent is to publish survivors' own words and not to alter their meaning within these quality/length guidelines. If you have questions or requests concerning this editing policy, please let us know and we will be happy to discuss it. For more detailed submission guidelines, request them from our office.

PLEASE SPECIFY HOW YOU WANT YOUR NAME SIGNED. IF YOU DO NOT LET US KNOW OTHERWISE, YOUR WORK WILL BE PUBLISHED ANONYMOUSLY.

All material in this publication is protected for the individual and “Looking Up” by copyright law. Please respect the law.

The next issue of *The “Looking Up” Times* is scheduled for Spring, 1991.

DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS IS MARCH 1, 1991

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Gayle M. Woodsum, Editor

INFORMATION — DONATION FORM

**When You Write To Us For The First Time, We Will Send an Introductory Packet With
Information On How To Be Added To Our Regular Mailing List and Receive Our Publications**

_____ I am a survivor of incest/child sexual abuse and would like to receive your introductory packet of information.

_____ I am a concerned person and would like to receive your introductory packet of information.

_____ I am a service provider and would like more information about your Service Provider Network, and please send me a resource questionnaire.

_____ I am already on your confidential mailing list.

_____ I found out about “*Looking Up*” from _____

_____ Age _____ Sex

_____ Please accept the enclosed donation in the amount of \$_____.

Donations of all sizes are much needed. Please make checks payable to “*Looking Up*.”

My Name: _____

My Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____ Tel. _____

THE "LOOKING UP" TIMES

A Literary Publication Written By Survivors of Incest/Child Sexual Abuse

Submission Guidelines

The "Looking Up" Times is a literary publication published by "Looking Up," twice a year. It is produced Fall and Spring, generally the end of May and the end of November. A minimum of 4,000 copies of each issue are distributed internationally. Following are guidelines for submission.

- Author must be a self-identified survivor of incest/child sexual abuse. Authors of both sexes and all ages are encouraged to submit material for consideration. The work of incest or other sex abuse offenders are not accepted for publication.
- All forms of writing/artwork of a literary nature are encouraged and welcome, including essays, letters, poetry, sketches, etc. We are especially interested in work that treats the pain as a reality while offering a sense of hope and direction for personal healing work and social change.
- Only original work will be considered. We do not want to publish material that has been previously published or is currently submitted elsewhere. If your material is not used, you are free to place it elsewhere. Additionally, if your material is published in The "Looking Up" Times, it is free for you to place it elsewhere one year after publication with us.
- Written material must be clearly legible, preferably typed and double-spaced if at all possible.
- Drawings or sketches must be submitted as black ink on white paper in order to be reproduced. Photographs must be black and white.
- Authors must clearly state how they want their name signed, if at all. If there is no clear statement on each submission, the work will be published anonymously. This is best made clear to us in a cover letter attached to the work, each time something is submitted.
- Due to the heavy load of demand for service from "Looking Up," we are unable to return submitted materials, so please be certain to retain a copy of your own work.
- We edit for length, clarity, spelling and punctuation. Our intent is to publish survivors' own words and not to alter their meaning within these quality/length guidelines. We retain full discretion on format, placement in the publication, etc.
- Short items (250 - 500 words maximum) have the best chance of being published in their entirety.

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- If you do not want any changes whatsoever made in your submission(s) should it be accepted for publication, you may make this clear in an attached cover letter. However, please understand that due to space constraints, this request might mean we will not be able to publish your work at all. Due to time constraints and limited staff, we are not able to check out editorial adjustments with authors prior to publication.
- "Looking Up" does not offer financial compensation for publication in The "Looking Up" Times.

The "Looking Up" Times has been published since the spring of 1985. It is a highly acclaimed publication with a readership that stretches throughout the United States and in at least a half dozen other countries as well. It is an unsurpassed forum for the diverse thoughts, feelings and perspectives of survivors of incest/child sexual abuse. It has been a consistent opportunity for survivors to reach out to one another with truth and hope, while simultaneously educating service providers and concerned individuals who want to help eradicate this crime against children.

Thank you for your interest in submitting material for possible publication in The "Looking Up" Times. We look forward to hearing from you.

SUBMISSIONS SHOULD BE SENT TO:

THE "LOOKING UP" TIMES
"Looking Up"
P.O. Box K
Augusta, Maine 04332

