

**UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF EVIL
A BRUTALLY ABUSIVE CHILDHOOD EXPOSED**

DARLENE DEACON



Child Abuse Awareness Month is April. Please don't forget us. Proudly display a blue ribbon each year in support of awareness and prevention.

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This is a work of nonfiction. The events portrayed are true to the best of Darlene Deacon's memory. Some names and identifying details have been changed to protect the privacy of the people involved. Anyone wishing to come forward to claim themselves as one of the characters in this book assumes full responsibility for their actions and following repercussions. The advice and methods for healing may not be suitable for every situation.

Cover photos and design by Darlene Deacon

THERAPY ONLY HELPS US WHEN WE HAVE A GENUINE DESIRE TO KNOW
OURSELVES AS WE REALLY ARE... BUT IT DOES LITTLE GOOD IF WE ONLY WANT TO
KNOW WHO WE WOULD LIKE TO BE.

FROM THE SERIES, "HANNIBAL."

UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF EVIL
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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the millions of boys and girls, men and women worldwide who have suffered abuse at the hands of the people who were supposed to love and protect them. The long lasting, sometimes life sentences of suffering, can be, to some degree, overcome with hard work and brutal self-honesty.

I wish I could put my arms around all of you and make the pain go away, but it is not that easy. It is up to us to become the people we want to be. Blaming our past, or our abusers, is not productive. Unfortunately, we have to find the answers within ourselves and succumb to therapy or a strong dedication to self-help and honest self-evaluation study.

Be strong. You always have, or you wouldn't be reading this. Be brave and unafraid to look inside and see the broken places that need your love and attention. Once you start caring about yourself, your life will begin to change, and the healing will begin. The work is a tiring and lifelong commitment, but most "normal" people never take the time to work on such in-depth self-improvement because it isn't as obvious a need as ours is. We have the blessings of knowing we need to identify our deficits, grow, heal, and ultimately become the best we can be.

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Thank you, Chris Hatch, for believing in me as an employee while on this biographical emotional roller coaster. I respect your talent in the workforce, compassion as a boss and, mostly, admire you as a wonderful father to your beautiful daughters and good husband to your lovely wife.

And lastly, I'd like to thank "Tiny" for your willingness to admit, that not only you were there, but that you participated in the sex "parties" my mother initiated, and then share those stories and the details of other events that were often too horrid for me to remember fully.

INTRODUCTION
HANDWRITTEN BY MY AUNT

Dear Darlene,

I finished your book
with tears in my eyes. I
wish I had known all you
were going through all those
years. I would like to
have been able to take you
away from ~~there~~ and your
mother even not knowing
all you were going thru,
I knew from your looks

and behavior you were
down trodden. My
son, ~~the~~, first bloody
lip was because some boy
called you a whore and
he punched him. I gave
him the devil for fighting,
but he never told me why.
I feel one of my biggest
failures in life is not
trying harder to help you.

I called your mother and
told her to take care of
you and ~~she~~ or I would
take you away from her.

She came to our house and
had a gun on her hip
and said she would
shoot our whole family if
I tried. My husband
told me to stay out of it
before she came here drunk

and shot us all. So I
backed away. I was
afraid of her.

I'm so sorry.

Love you, Aunt
Ginny

1 - I'LL KILL YOU

I was just waking up. The dull, metallic, clunking sound as I shifted my legs and the old, thin rug scraping my bare skin reminded me of where I was—chained to the floor, again. I sat up and looked around. Dick had already gone to work.

Like any normal person in the morning, I had to pee. I wondered how long I'd have to wait for him to come back, so I turned around to see what time it was. He'd taken the clock. I was horrified.

MY GOD, HE DOESN'T EVEN WANT ME TO KNOW WHAT TIME IT IS.

I sat and waited. As the hours passed, my bladder began to scream. I thought about my options:

I COULD YELL FOR HELP... BUT HE MIGHT COME HOME... FOR LUNCH... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TIME IT IS... I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW LONG I'VE BEEN HERE... AND IF HE HEARS ME YELLING... HE'LL BE MAD.

I looked at the key that went to the padlock on my ankle; he'd hung it on the wall above the radiator.

I WONDER IF I CAN REACH IT...

I stood up and dragged the chain as far as it would go and then stretched my arm and body toward the key. A part of me was afraid to touch it; he'd trained me well and this was strictly taboo. But the pressure in my bladder was intensifying, and I only hesitated for a moment.

I could just barely touch the tip of the key with the end of my forefinger. I stretched farther as the chain dug more painfully into my ankle bones. I couldn't quite squeeze the key between the tips of my two fingers.

IF I DROP THAT KEY, THERE'S NO WAY I'LL BE ABLE TO GET IT FROM BEHIND THAT BIG, OLD RADIATOR WITH THIS CHAIN ON... AND IF HE COMES HOME AND FINDS OUT I TRIED TO UNLOCK MYSELF...HE'LL WHIP THE HELL OUT OF ME.

I slumped to the floor and rubbed my sore ankle:

THIS IS GETTING BAD... HE'S NEVER LEFT ME HERE ALL DAY BEFORE.

I'd just turned 16.

I didn't get into this situation overnight; it took a little coaxing, but believe it or not, things were actually worse before I got here. Not many people knew how bad it was, but the ones who did, still don't want this story told. My mother is one of them.

"I'll kill you if you hurt the family with that book!" It was her first response without any hesitation. I often wondered—and still do—if she'd have followed through with her threat. With the safety of thousands of miles between us, however, I continued writing despite my fear of her.

I began by jotting down my thoughts and feelings about my painful life. Those little scribbles led to a fierce obsession to continue writing. It soon became therapeutic and the more I wrote, the more I had to write.

Some people can't fathom the fact that children live through such a myriad of traumatic experiences. Maybe it's because not many survive well enough to tell their stories, but I did. Now, more than two decades later, I am ready to bring you on a journey I hope will change your perspective on life and the true meaning of challenge.

2 - DADDY, WHY DO WE DO THIS?

The abuse and resulting damage started long before I can remember. Even as early as my first day of school, I can remember how much I hated to leave my mother home alone. I couldn't help feeling guilty as I left her standing there at the bus stop. I'd been taking care of her in one way or another for several years already, and I felt like going to school as just another one of my adult-like responsibilities, like going to work I suppose. It was June of 1969. I was six years old.

I liked school, but I can't remember much about my friends or activities. I do remember the night when Dad was standing by his bureau, undressing. I was sitting on my parent's bed; I was naked.

Mom was probably out bar hopping again, which gave Dad the perfect opportunity to be alone with me and practice his perversion; something he did whenever Mom was out. We'd been doing this for so long that it seemed perfectly normal to me.

I don't remember the whole conversation that night, but he made me feel flattered and that I was exclusive to him. We were talking about my "privates" again. That was the only thing I'd ever called them. He said, "Daddy's the only one who can touch them."

During our naked times together, sometimes Dad said the most ridiculous things as he coaxed me into doing what he wanted. This time, we were sitting on his bed when he said, "Maybe someday you can lick it and suck it like Mommy does."

I was stunned and I scrunched my face all up and said, "She does that?" I couldn't believe my mother would do such a silly thing. I figured he was lying just to get me to do it.

Finally, I blurted out, "Daddy, why do we do this?"

He said, "Because I love you, that's why, but you can never tell Mommy or we won't be able to do it anymore."

A sickening feeling went through me. I remember feeling angry because he assumed I wanted to do it and angrier with myself because I didn't dare tell him how I felt.

For many years into my adulthood, I blamed all my problems on sexual abuse. I didn't know I'd been abused in several ways since I was an infant and by more than just the two people I called my parents.

A much older cousin filled me in on some of the things that had happened when I was an infant. She said I was less than a year-and-a-half old when my mother came home from work to find my unemployed father in a drunken sleep. Apparently, I was running around the apartment

without a diaper. Mom told my cousin about it, who later told me, when she went to put a diaper on me, she found a crayon in my vagina. Then, she told me with a great deal of disgust, my mother said I did it to myself.

I also learned, from several sources, my mother had physically abused me from the time I was an infant. I've heard countless stories about her violent temper during those early years, but this story seemed to stick out in several people's minds.

It was one of Mom's countless jealous rampages when she kicked the television so hard she broke the screen. She was angry with my father because he was watching a show with good-looking women in it. Magazines, newspapers, or anything with images of pretty women often sent her into a rage.

Mom often became violently angry with the smallest of things. I remember feeling frightened anytime she showed the slightest sign of displeasure. When I felt afraid, I knew that I had to stifle my own feelings and try to evaluate hers. Then, I'd try to figure out what to do, what to say, or how to act that would most likely prevent her from becoming more upset. It was my way of deflecting her anger away from me since I usually became the target. Nonetheless, I'd always felt frightened, and thought it was just part of life, a normal feeling.

I began to respond to both my parents and everyone else purely out of fear. This is [co-dependent](#) behavior, and it was just the beginning of mine.

As I rehashed the horrid events of my life on these pages, I began to understand why I was afraid to make simple choices that would have little or no effect on anything; like which bottle and brand of ketchup to buy at the grocery store. I had no emotional independence, so I was afraid to express my feelings—even simple laughter—without some kind of permission or sign that it was okay. It may seem ridiculous, but this was my world. Eventually, I was able to understand better why I felt guilty about nearly everything, including my first day of school when I left my mother home alone.

3 - GAME OF LOVE

There were signs of mental illness and instability when, my mother, Jean, was a young girl. She was the younger of two daughters. Her sister, Jo-Ann (Aunt Jo), was two years older.

“You don’t know the abuse I’ve had to put up with through the years—since I was very young—because of your mother’s meanness and actions—[it was] embarrassing and shameful even as a young girl.” My aunt’s voice still harbored signs of fear and pain as she told me this at age of 70.

My mother’s jealousy and competitiveness about everything was fierce. Her sister was the first and closest competitor and the target of the resulting anger and bitterness. It became more intense as the years passed, and eventually no one was exempt from my mother’s deep-seeded jealousy.

Both girls were very pretty. Mom had gorgeous strawberry-blonde hair, blue eyes, and a great build. Still, she was viciously jealous of Aunt Jo, her marriage and children.

The two women became pregnant just weeks apart in 1961. This would be my mother’s first child and my aunt’s second. Aunt Jo and Uncle Tony already had a three-year-old son, Craig. Mom wanted to have a boy, too and always had.

Much to her disappointment, I, a girl, was born in the summer of 1962. Then, to add insult to Mom’s psychological injury, Aunt Jo gave birth to their second son five weeks later. Many times over the years, Mom told me how much she’d wanted a son instead of a daughter.



Darlene before head injury

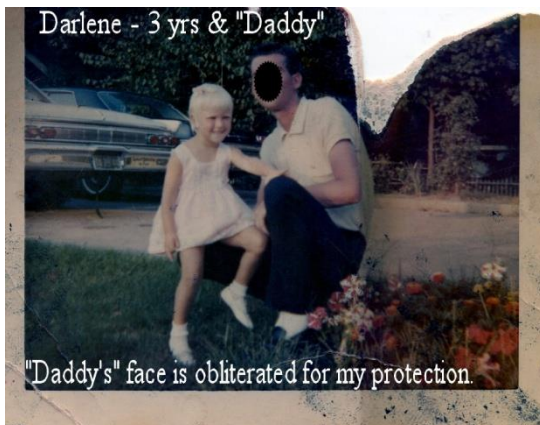
From what I understand, Mom couldn’t afford to pay someone to watch me during the day while she worked. I stayed with my aunt and uncle in the

suburbs of Boston during the week and visited with Mom on weekends. It may have saved my life since Mom had no trouble admitting that she abused me.

I was no different from any other infant. I squirmed and wiggled when my mother changed my diaper and she had no patience for that kind of irritation. So, she beat my legs with a brush in an attempt to make me stop. She admitted it when Aunt Jo asked why I had so many bruises on my legs. "Isn't that a little rough?" My aunt asked. Mom callously said, "She was driving me crazy." I was about 16 months old when Mom brought me back to my aunt's house with six stitches in my head. She claims I fell down a flight of stairs.

Not long after that, Mom said I hit my head on my crib and ripped open the same wound. There are few, if any pictures for a year or so after that, and then I wore bangs to cover the scar. It eventually healed and turned into a hefty scar on my forehead that's still too wide to look like a wrinkle at the age of 53.

Ironically, Mom often told people that my aunt beat her kids with the implication she beat me, too. For a while, a lot of people believed her since, back then, I always had so many bruises on my body. My mother also accused various other people of ridiculous things over the years, but Aunt Jo and Uncle Tony seemed to be a constant target of her accusations and lies. After many years of witnessing my mother doing the same things she accused other people of doing, I realized she was actually describing her own feelings and actions. I'm sure she was trying to draw attention away from herself.



I was about three years old when Mom and Dad bought their first home in Massachusetts. It was a nice ranch-style house in a middle class neighborhood. It had a big yard and lots of woods behind the house for me to play in and cranberry bogs next to the house with lots of trails and sandpits.

Though I finally went to live with Mom and Dad all the time, I remember feeling very uncomfortable and shy around Dad. I guess I hadn't seen much of him, so I hardly knew him. My father is six feet tall with dark-brown, curly hair, and glasses.

Meanwhile, my mother's competitive nature didn't end with her own battle to be the best. Apparently, I was in direct competition with my younger cousin from the day he was born. Mom became obsessed with making me learn everything first and fastest. She also demanded explicit obedience whether her orders were right or wrong. She insisted on having the best-behaved and smartest child of all the children she knew, especially her sister's.

I know now, this really had nothing to do with me. It had to do with the fact that Mom believed my behavior and mental acuity reflected directly on her. This obsession would later drive her to extremes.

My oldest cousin, Craig, remembers one of her over-zealous methods when he was visiting us at our new house. He was watching while Mom taught me how to count. I'd count out loud for her, but each time I made a mistake, she'd slap me across the face. Then she'd make me start over again. I was three years old and Craig was six, and it upset him terribly. He told his mother he didn't want to visit us anymore after that. I don't remember it at all, but I have no doubt this was one of the many twisted ways she taught me how to be afraid of making mistakes of any kind—a fear I carried long into my adulthood.

It wasn't long after we moved into our new house when Mom and Dad played a bizarre game with me, which I've never forgotten. First, Mom told me to go stand in the hallway while they sat at opposite ends of the kitchen table. I could see Dad through the doorway, but not Mom at the other end of the table. Then, both of them started calling my name, "Darlene, come to Mamma"—"No, Darlene come to Daddy." I was confused and scared:

Which one of them am I supposed to run to?