



Never a Hero to Me

Tracy Black

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Tracy Black was only five years old when her mother was hospitalised for the first of many occasions, leaving Tracy in the care of her father. His behaviour, seemingly overnight, changed from indifferent to violently abusive and, for the next seven years, Tracy was sexually and physically abused by her father, his friends and her own brother. All of the men were in the British Armed Forces. Tracy's father compounded the abuse by sending her to baby-sit for his paedophile friends - whilst their own children slept in other rooms, these men would find excuses to leave later or return earlier than their wives in order to abuse her, with her own father's blessing. When she sought help and safety the doors were closed as the authorities closed ranks. In this shocking and compelling book, Tracy Black pieces together the jigsaw of a story that has haunted her for the past forty years. She reveals the horrific betrayal of trust perpetrated by men who were considered upstanding citizens and heroes. Tracy's tale reminds us all of the terrible ways in which paedophiles work and the secrets too many children are forced to carry alone. It is only now that she can tell her full story of recovery.

Never a Hero to Me Details

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Smitha says

Tracy Black is the pseudonym for the author who writes about her childhood of abuse. Tracy was just 5 years old when her mother got hospitalized and her father uses the opportunity to abuse her.

She was told to be the 'woman of the house' because her mother was not around. She is made to do the housework, and subjected to sexual abuse by her father. Hers was a dysfunctional family, with no real affection between her mother and father. Her mother seemed unconnected with her daughter, while she was extremely protective towards her older son. Whatever Tracy did was wrong in her mother's eyes. Approaching her mother with what her father was doing to her was out of question.

She remarks how even her teachers did not pick up on the clues. Her father used to make her do all the house work – including washing and drying clothes. More often than not, she turned up in school in smelly clothes, but none of her teachers raised any concern, especially as her condition did improve when her mother was around and she was always well-turned out until her mother got hospitalized.

Her father was in the British army, and they relocated quite a few times. None of the moves made any real difference to Tracy's life, with her father abusing her, whenever he got a chance. From the age of 5 till she was twelve, abuse carried on. Her father used to call her a 'prostitute'. She recounts how once her teacher was talking about 'Protestants', and she got up and told her proudly that she knew what that was, 'I am one, My father calls me a prostitute'. Sadly, even this went unnoticed.

As she grew older, she resorted to bad behaviour outside home in an effort to get attention. At one point she told a social worker, who refused to believe her. By this time, her father had started 'loaning' to his other paedophile friends by sending her to baby sit their children. She even gets abused by her own brother.

Finally one Commanding Officer listened to her, believed her, and helped her get away from the hell that was her home. She gets sent to a boarding school that the army paid for her.

The author says

I know I'm not the only child who suffered these horrors, but if in writing this I can reach out to even one person and that them what I've learned, it will be worth it. It is never the child's fault. There is nothing you can do that makes abuse something that you deserve.

She goes on to say, 'Some people complain that books like these are distasteful. I think raping children is distasteful.' Can't really dispute that, can we? The book is written in a very straightforward manner, without overly graphic descriptions, while ensuring that her confusion and pain comes through. A little girl forced to do things which she has no way of understanding, being told that the only way her mum can get better is if she is a 'good girl' for her father. And her confusion when no matter how obedient she was, her mother still continued to be ill, and still showed no love towards her...

How was the book? Depressing, upsetting, heart-wrenching. Makes you sick to think that someone could do things like this to their own children. Reading this is not pleasure, but for me books like these is a reminder that we can never be sure of where the danger lurks. That our precious children can be at harm from almost any quarter. Child abusers are regular people, even respected people, ordinary people, who don't carry

badges or 'looks' that set them apart.

In the author's words,

They don't have 'evil' stamped on their foreheads, they don't carry placards proclaiming what they are. They hide and stay hidden. They are among us and they are very, very clever.

All we can really do is be alert, educate our children, be ready to listen to them and let them know that they can approach us with anything.

Emily V says

brilliantly written and a book you will not out down once start it, 1st class and as good as her other book "never a mother to me"

Dana says

Well, the most horrible autobiography! I truly feel sad for you Tracy (I know it's a pseudonym). I can sympathize but not empathize. I appreciate your courage in writing this book and once again facing your dark past! May all pedophiles be punished and may every child enjoy a confident and happy childhood.

Karen says

What a sad story how can a mother turn her back on her child illness is not an excuse I hope she reads the book herself and feels totally ashamed. This also applies to the social worker who didn't listen even the CO although he helped by removing her from the family didn't seem to try and expose the abuse.

Marianne says

Another true story... I can't believe it. What Father would do that to their child. At the end he was dying, she forgave him to let him go.

What a remarkable true story of this girl. The pain and anguish that her Father and his friends put this girl through. Parts I just was cringing and just couldn't read it, but of course reading these type of stories, your motivation is to read the ending and you want justice for the victim.

The Father died a slow painful death, in which he deserved (sorry, but a Father, should love, protect and cherish their child), not the opposite.

What a truly strong, relentless and inspirational women. To forgive her Father for his wrong doings, with all the years of abuse and to come out the better and stronger person.

Danielle says

This book was written beautifully, however I was cringing and I have to admit some parts of the book were very graphic in parts where at one point I was going to stop reading it but I decided to keep on reading it and finding out more.

I would recommend this book, but readers do be aware that some events are detailed.
I wouldn't let young adults read this book....just because of the graphic details that are in this book.

Can't wait to read more of Tracy Black books.

Angelina Kalahari says

This was a gripping account of a young girl's horrific abuse by her father and his paedophile cronies. It was a difficult read because my heart was bleeding for the vulnerable little girl. But it is extremely well written and left me feeling battered and bruised and yet inspired by the confirmation of just how strong we are. I wish with all my heart that such abuse towards defenceless children can stop. Highly recommended.

Stephy Steph says

It was great. I love it!

John Hennessy says

My love for reading is the same as many of you, I suppose. I want to be thrown into a world of fantasy, of magic, of horror, of mystery. I rarely want to read a book that has elements of realism so potent and strong that the reading experience can actually become a harrowing one.

However, **the overriding feeling left with me regarding Never a Hero to me is its incredible power.** It is hard to read in certain sections, but I tell you this - it is so well written you cannot help but flip through the pages.

The story of five year old Tracy Black will hit you harder than perhaps any fantasy character you have invested your time in. Why? Because little Tracy goes through things that no one should have to go through. You'll have already gotten an idea from the synopsis.

So whilst not an easy read, it is essential reading. People need to understand that the monster in this book does not have horns or carries a pitchfork. He's a hero to some, because Tracy's father is an Army man, and of course, there are many unsung heroes in the Forces and their sacrifice should always be appreciated.

The army fights an enemy, and in this case, Tracy's father is the enemy. He abuses her. At first, the abuse

starts at the kind of level that instantly horrifies - but as this happens early on in the book, I suspected worse was to come. Even in my thoughts about how awful it might be, it was worse. I can't imagine how Tracy coped.

Oh, the story takes you through the years, but the main bulk of the book is Tracy from age five to age ten.

Her father has her just where he wants her. He almost makes the abuse of his own daughter reasonable, often citing 'You want your mother to be well, don't you? So you'll have to be a good girl.'

Yes. As children we are told to be good. But when abuse is the centre of your young life, and your feelings tell you that this is wrong on every level, what does good mean anymore?

This is a story that literally drags you through the pages. You feel Tracy's pain, confusion, resentment, and yet I began to cheer when I could see the start of her rebellion. A rebellion she should have never had to start.

Her father doesn't stop there. He uses the mother's 'condition' as a reason to punish Tracy. I found myself getting increasingly annoyed with the mother, who seemed oblivious to the abuse her own daughter was suffering.

At the same time, Tracy's brother seems virtually impervious to blame. Both parents - especially the mother, lavish him with praise, whilst Tracy is treated no better than something you'd put in the bin.

Not only are we taken through Tracy's life, we are taken through several countries. When in Germany, things start to turn for the better, and there are signs Tracy may finally be able to defeat her tormentor. She just needed somebody to listen.

The cover is very striking. An innocent, beautiful looking child, but there is so much emotion and angst in that face, if one looks closely. So my congratulations to the team behind the book cover.

As ever, a book stands or falls on its content. Tracy Black has delivered a hard hitting tome which in its 300 pages deliver more than many longer books.

Uncompromisingly graphic, it may upset some, but the world isn't always butterflies and bunny rabbits.

I can't remember a book exhausting me as much as this one. It will leave you absolutely floored, and I have to say, the last two chapters are the real treasure of *Never a Hero to Me*.

We often see those lists - 1000 books to read before you die, and so on. This book needs to be on that list, and yours. Do not miss it.

Eirlys says

Survival

This was a well written book that exposed the terrible abuse that innocent children suffered.

I admired the way that she explained how the abuse started and then escalated. She stripped bare her life and

how bewildered she was by what was happening to her. Her mother, who should have loved and protected her, was as almost as much to blame as her father was.
I was happy that she eventually found happiness with a family of her own.

Fiona MacDonald says

Deary me, what a horrible book. Very well written though, the things that poor girl went through! I find it important to read a book like this every now and again because it grounds you and makes you appreciate how happy your own life is compared to some people that go through horrendous abuse.

Paulette Mahurin says

Never a Hero to Me by Tracy Black is a true narrative into the unthinkable systematic torture and sexual abuse of a child, the author. Starting when she was five and escalating into one nightmare worse than the last Tracy Black lets the reader in to her life as it was ripped from her, from a criminally deranged father and criminally cold and negligent mother. This is not a book for the faint of heart or seekers of light storytelling; no this isn't an entertaining read. But it is a crucial and important read into the life, through the eyes and emotionally tormented and broken heart and soul, of a young girl who through the years had no escape, no voice, no life other than the inconceivable evil cast on her body, mind, and psyche. How she managed to live through it all without committing suicide or homicide is beyond me. It is a testament to the beautiful heart of the little girl (that never had a chance), living inside this exquisite author, that words come forth so well written that this book is a lifesaver. Perhaps not just to Tracy Black but also to others who are fortunate enough to pick it up and read it. It is my professional opinion, being a health care provider, that this book be mandatory reading in medical and nursing schools, in all schools where professionals interface with children, so a mark is made into the cortex of their brains—a profound image of severe sexual child abuse so as to know to look for its signs and not turn a blind eye. My hat's off to the very talented and courageous Tracy Black who grew up to function compassionately as a parent, grandparent, and healthy female. You are an inspiration to all of us out here who struggle to understand the dark side of the human condition.

Angela Lockwood says

This was one of the most difficult books I've ever read. Not because of the writing, which was very good, but because of the rather graphic descriptions of child abuse. I read in stunned amazement about a father who subjected his daughter to horrific abuse. The mind boggles that someone who is supposed to be the protector of a child, becomes her vicious attacker. Even though I wanted to stop reading and shed a few tears, I read on. I'm glad I did. I think this should be essential reading for anyone who works with children. It highlights the behaviour of an abused child and the way a paedophile covers his tracks. They are often well liked members of the community and people just don't want to believe that this nice man is a monster at home. I would advise the reader to read the foreword, in which the writer explains that she now lives a good and settled life in the sun. Had I not known this I would have found this story unbearable. It is also good to know that social work has now moved on and that current social workers are much more aware of the danger signs. Unfortunately child abuse is still common and we should all be aware that children are seldom 'bad' it is often a sign of a deep rooted problem, and this book illustrates this perfectly.

Joy Jennings says

A gut-wrenching, heartbreaking and compelling memoir. Abused by her father, passed around to his buddies, abandoned by her ill mother who refuses to believe her and then preyed upon by her brother. Life couldn't have been worse for this poor innocent child.

Her first glimmer of hope came only through her own courage and bravery. An easy and straight forward read. I perhaps would have enjoyed a little more description in the storytelling but otherwise a great memoir, well-told.

Emelyn Way says

OK, I think most of us have heard of 'A Child Called It' by Dave Pelzer. I have nothing much to say on that one but DAMN! His mom was atrocious, but people say it wasn't that great because rumour has it, he bought his own books to boost its ratings and his brother(s) pathologically lying during interviews wasn't helping either. So, how 'bout this? How many of us have heard of this one?? My sis randomly found it in a second-hand bookshop after being pressed by Mom to buy a book and I flipped through it, trapped in a boring hi-fi shop afterwards with the family. As I was currently on another book, I felt a little lazy to look inside. However, after Chapter 1, you can say I got hooked. I took 3 days straight to finish it, and my laptop was off the whole time. AND IT WAS THE HOLIDAYS!! Weird but wonderful for an average teen (to most parents).

Right, down to biz. The depicted events happened around the 60s' and 70s', the golden age of music, but an era where rape and the like was extremely taboo and thus few reports were made. We are introduced to her diva, apathetic, bitchy socialite mom and the monster in her dad who serves the Army (with a desk job?! Really??). Initially, I expected him to be a real soldier. However, it seems like any job there was enough for respect back then. And he used his 'power' well to his advantage. Those supposed to be concerned on all this are to be blamed, like her teachers and social worker (who actually was doing it all for money; may God bless her to hell too).

Forcing her to submit to him in order to heal her mom with a rare illness is very much an insult to intelligence. But, to a hapless 5-year-old, it meant well. Nothing mattered, really as her mom ended up sitting back, WATCHING her get beaten up and keeps escaping to her stupid bingo nights! Just like in Chinese Cinderella (another favourite, though very passive in the abuse), she had ABSOLUTELY no love for her as her BIOLOGICAL MOTHER, OMG! Guess sharing DNA does NOT promise you a place in the family. She easily believes the lies her husband tells her about Tracy. That Christmas when he burned her Barbie was too much (although as a tomboy back then, I only played with mine because I had them)!

The pedobear goes so far as to call her 'my little prostitute' (ooh, how I shudder!) and makes sure she really is one by selling her services to friends just like him. It's bad enough they are real soldiers! Soon, her bro finds out how spared he is from the abuse and uses his power over her too, also thanks to her biased mother. No surprise he can't find a real job!

Nobody knows what was his problem as he chose not to tell why or even apologise for all he'd done. I assume it was all voluntary as the writer finds out later: it was all for dominance and rule. He has enough

balls to strangle her when she finishes high school and leave her in such a huff. He blames his schizophrenia (which he contracts waaay later, probably due to sexual deprivation!!) when we know he is still sober when he rapes, despite all the booze he drinks. Then, the good Lord (or his own smoking) gives him cancer as judgment. Just like the mother who has the audacity to deny and sweep the matter under the carpet, YET demand to be a 'good granny' since her dear son had crushed her hopes for grandkids, he just waited out his death to escape. So, in retrospect, he has still won the battle. Not surprised. I expected this hardened beast to be even more aggressive, like tackle all the officers when he was found out.

This book wasn't meant for entertainment because I doubt we enjoyed it at all. It is meant to raise awareness (ok, that's cliched) and possibly induce us to care for others a bit more. Ever since reading this, I do not like being called a 'good girl', even in a non-sexual way. There are so many other adjectives we can use. I dunno why this was listed as Y.A. because things really get graphic in there! Best to discuss with parents afterwards.

May Harry, Valerie, Mrs Walker and Gary (or whoever they really are) burn in hell as castrated demons and harlots.

**Sorry for the language, got too emotional
