

A Way Out

Victoria Lee

Moore Than Enough, Inc.
P.O. Box 472204
Tulsa, Oklahoma
918-398-0391

Website: www.restoreyourselfimage.com
Email: restoreyourselfimage@yahoo.com

Copyright 2008 by Victoria Lee
All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Manufactured in the United States of America
ISBN 978-1-888225013
LCCN 2003115387

Chapter One

It was a hot, humid July day in the mid-western town of Tulsa, Oklahoma. I had just turned four years old and the next best thing to playing with my bride doll was sitting in the dirt with one of Mama's favorite kitchen spoons, occasionally tasting our fine earth to see if any changes had been made since the last scrumptious taste.

Sometimes I would play on our homemade teeter-totter that my Father had made for my sister Sara and me. The only thing I hated was when she decided to get off of her end quickly while I was suspended in mid-air. She liked to hear me scream at the top of my lungs and land on the ground with a thud. Boy that was a hard landing on a little girl's behind!

I tried to spend most of my time outside or alone in my room. Even as a small child I knew things weren't right at my house. The only thing that made me feel safe was to crawl inside the little shell of silence I had created. I was a timid, shy and somewhat fearful little girl. I had always been small and fragile looking with long blonde hair and blue eyes that longed for a constant, secure place in which to belong.

One day, I was held captive in a parked car, while my cousin, Clyde, who was an adult and married, violated me. Without any concern for my well being, he forced me repeatedly to perform sexual acts. I was terrified. I remember being trapped inside his car and feeling as if everything inside of me was about to crawl through the pores of my skin. There was nothing I could do to free myself.

Clyde was the typical overweight "Bubba" sort of guy with straight, brown hair parted on one side and beady brown eyes that seemed to pierce through me like a lightning rod. And there I was, a little girl, unable to keep this horrible man from hurting me. All I could do was stare into space and wait for the dreadful experience to end and then sheepishly slide out of the car as he opened the door and signaled my departure.

Over a series of months I had to repeat the agonizing experience over and over again. He had found an easy target that he was quite sure would never become a problem for him and would keep his evil desires fulfilled.

Three years later on a warm summer afternoon, I was once again staring into the eyes of this vile man who had arrived at Grandma's house. I had been entertaining Grandma Minnie by turning somersaults in the front yard, while she sat on the porch enjoying the weather. When I saw Clyde get out of his car and start walking up the steps, I knew what he had come to do. He proceeded to explain to Grandma that he wanted to take me for a fun-filled afternoon and motioned for me to hurry and get in the car. To Grandma it seemed like a wonderful idea and to her he was simply displaying the actions of a caring older cousin. In fact, she was proud of him for offering such a kind gesture.

An overwhelming surge of courage mixed with a massive amount of terror came exploding out of me. As I hung on to her arm in a frightful attempt for safety, I begged Grandma, "Please don't make me go with him again, please, please Grandma." She was shocked at my behavior and began asking why I was reacting so dramatically. As I look back on that day I can easily understand the pain she must have endured as she listened to the pleading cry of one grandchild against another. She wanted desperately to protect me and yet the one she was protecting me from was her own flesh and blood.

Grandma didn't let a day go by before she called a family meeting. As I waited for the meeting to begin, I felt like I had died a thousand deaths. I was seven years old, shy and frightened. All the adults in the family were gathered at Grandma's house waiting for me to speak. It was almost as if I, too, was looking on in anticipation for another little girl to emerge, when in fact I was the one. I longed to be released from this horror but it wasn't easy to form the words. I was frozen with fear. A million thoughts began racing through my mind. "Would this cruel man try to hurt me again later because I told? Would anybody even believe me? Would they all hate me?" But worst of all, "Would I be able to live with the shame knowing that everyone knew?"

Grandma began gently questioning me about what had happened but I couldn't get the words to flow from my mouth. Tears began to stream down my face as if a faucet had

been turned on full blast inside my soul. I hung my head in shame and my whole body began to shake in fear and humiliation. I cried out, "Please don't let him touch me again. I'm so afraid to be alone with him."

Mama was sitting not too far away, in a corner staring at me with a hint of disbelief. I could imagine the questions running over in her head as she wondered what I was desperately wanting to tell. Clyde and his wife, Ellen, as well as his mother and dad sat speechless around the kitchen table. I deeply loved Aunt Marie and it broke my heart to see her eyes questioning mine. I felt like I was being swallowed up in a sea of eyes that were focused intently on me and all I could do was cry.

Finally, they all started talking. The voices seemed muffled as I shut my eyes and tried desperately to put the situation far from me. For a few minutes, I couldn't distinguish one voice from the other, until I heard Ellen speak up. "I saw Clyde in Victoria's room last week, but nothing really happened."

"Oh no," I thought, "Do they really think nothing happened? It's true nothing happened that day, except that he terrified me with his overbearing power." I knew then that I was in an uphill battle. Why would anyone believe that he had been forcing me to do all those horrible things when I couldn't find the strength to explain what they were? After all, Clyde was a family man with a wife and three little girls of his own that he loved and cherished. At least that's what everyone thought. He did have a certain charisma about him. When he laughed everyone chimed in with what seemed to be a joyous exchange of humor. Yet no one knew Clyde the way I did.

The meeting ended with Clyde getting a slap on the wrist, so to speak, and being told to stay away from me. That was more for his sake than mine. I, on the other hand, walked away feeling every bit violated, defeated, shameful and very much alone - more reasons to withdraw into my shell of silence.