

# STOLEN

THE TRUE STORY  
OF A SEX TRAFFICKING SURVIVOR

**KATARIINA ROSENBLATT, PHD**

*with* CECIL MURPHEY



*a division of Baker Publishing Group*  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Katariina Rosenblatt, PhD, with Cecil Murphey, *Stolen*  
Revell Books, a division of Baker Publishing Group, © 2014. Used by permission.

(Unpublished manuscript—copyright protected Baker Publishing Group)

© 2014 by Katariina Rosenblatt and Cecil Murphey

Published by Revell  
a division of Baker Publishing Group  
P.O. Box 6287, Grand Rapids, MI 49516-6287  
www.revellbooks.com

Printed in the United States of America

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—for example, electronic, photocopy, recording—without the prior written permission of the publisher. The only exception is brief quotations in printed reviews.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is on file at the Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

ISBN 978-0-8007-2345-3

Scripture quotations are from the Holy Bible, New International Version®. NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com

To protect the privacy of individuals who are still living, some names and details have been changed. The following is the author's personal recollection of the events of her life.

14 15 16 17 18 19 20            7 6 5 4 3 2 1

In keeping with biblical principles of creation stewardship, Baker Publishing Group advocates the responsible use of our natural resources. As a member of the Green Press Initiative, our company uses recycled paper when possible. The text paper of this book is composed in part of post-consumer waste.



Katariina Rosenblatt, PhD, with Cecil Murphey, Stolen  
Revell Books, a division of Baker Publishing Group, © 2014. Used by permission.

(Unpublished manuscript—copyright protected Baker Publishing Group)

Dedicated to all survivors  
of abuse and sex trafficking.  
May God fill you with hope  
and set you free forever.

Katariina Rosenblatt, PhD, with Cecil Murphey, Stolen  
Revell Books, a division of Baker Publishing Group, © 2014. Used by permission.

(Unpublished manuscript—copyright protected Baker Publishing Group)

# Contents

1. Why Was I a Victim of Human Trafficking? 11
2. My New Friend 17
3. “You Can Call Me Daddy” 27
4. The Bridal Game 37
5. “You Have to Make It Right” 43
6. Left to Die 53
7. My Vulnerability 59
8. Enduring Rage 69
9. From Bullying to Cocaine 77
10. Another Escape 89
11. Enslaved . . . Again 101
12. Unsuspected Predators 107
13. Fearing Paco 111
14. Almost Busted 125

Contents

15. From Clubs to Gangs	131
16. A Modeling Career	135
17. Wedded Bliss?	145
18. Learning about Boundaries	155
19. Lessons from Law School	161
20. Making the Break	169
21. Living Alone	175
22. My Emancipation Proclamation	183
23. Changed	191
24. Rescue Ministry	195
25. Survivor Stories	205
26. Setting the Captives Free	217
About There Is H.O.P.E For Me, Inc.	227
Acknowledgments	231

# 1

## Why Was I a Victim of Human Trafficking?

Sex trafficking doesn't happen here," people often say, especially those from small towns. If it doesn't happen where they live, they're not personally affected. "It's a terrible thing," they admit, but it's also removed from them.

*Or so they want to believe.* And yet, sex trafficking happens everywhere, and no city or small town is immune. It happens to victim-prone children. For me it occurred in Miami, but it could have happened to any girl or boy in Cub Run, Kentucky, or Cedar Falls, Iowa.

My cowriter, Cecil Murphey, wasn't caught in human trafficking—but even in Iowa where he grew up, he easily could have been lured into the sex trade. He had many of the same problems and conflicts as I did.

He also fit the profile. Every story is different; each victim and survivor has a distinctive experience, but most of us can be profiled easily enough. And it's not a gender issue. The problems and needs of me (a female) and Cec (a male) weren't much different. Our dissimilarities revolve around what happened *after* our early molestation.

I tell a little of Cec's history because too many people assume that in human or sex trafficking, predators want only girls. That's not true. In my organization (There Is H.O.P.E. For Me, Inc.) I have seen firsthand that at least one-third of sex slaves are boys.



Who are we? Why us?

We who were victimized didn't know healthy ways to cope with others. Usually, we were the loners, the outcasts, the shy, the overweight, or the smaller kids. Because we were needy children, perpetrators sensed that vulnerability. Most of us didn't meet some evil person lurking in the park, and we weren't accosted by a stranger on a dark street.

If those who lured us were strangers, they groomed us by winning our trust before they took advantage of our vulnerability. The point is that we knew our perpetrators and they taught us to trust them.

As you'll read in this book, my horrific childhood made me an excellent candidate. A woman named Mary groomed me—and *grooming* is the correct word. It means the perpetrator won my trust, showered me with attention, and made me feel important and special. That misplaced trust lured me into sex trafficking.

Why did Mary's methods work? Like other victims, I



didn't feel I had anyone who understood or cared. I felt useless and worthless. When my new friend Mary asked questions, listened to my answers, and made promises, she implied we would be friends forever. I received the attention I yearned for.

Although every child needs to be loved, the entrapment is more than just expressing affection (even though it's false affection). All children deserve to know they're loved and that they're special to their parents. It's not only whether they *are* loved but also whether they *believe* they are loved. That knowledge makes the difference.

Even though I always knew my mother loved me, she was a victim of my father's physical and verbal abuse. To make it worse, her submission to him was the only role model I had.



It's easy enough to say that we victims fit the profile of kids who had little self-esteem, although that's true. The label means we didn't feel we were worth much or that anyone cared about us. (Remember, it's how we assess the situation and not the reality.) If we don't feel loved, we have a built-in human need to seek affection and attention. That's how our victimization happens.

Several times I contemplated suicide. Another common theme is that most of us didn't learn from our families how to set boundaries or to take control of our lives. As you read my story, you'll realize that my father destroyed my boundaries, and so did those with whom I associated. Before I was out of my teens, I believed that females were inferior to males and deserved mistreatment. Why wouldn't I have been a good candidate for trafficking?

That's who we were as children: needy, insecure, anxious, lonely, and vulnerable. Without the maturity to make adult decisions, we didn't always know what was right or wrong. Instead, we felt something was wrong *with us* and that we were inferior to other children.

With that background, we wanted to believe our perpetrators' words and promises. When they flattered us, we believed them because we yearned to hear such words.

If you ask us, "How could you allow the abuse to occur?" we don't know how to respond. None of us wanted to be sexually assaulted; we never asked to be victimized. Who wants to be a sex slave? We wanted to feel worthwhile.

Our predators lied to and manipulated us. Worse, we believed their lies. We *needed* to believe someone—anyone—cared about us.



Because of my experience and my working directly with American children who have been victims of sex trafficking, I refer to the vulnerability factors that lead to recruitment of American children into sexual slavery.

Here are the most significant:

- abuse within the home, which normalizes that type of maltreatment
- economic disadvantages, such as coming from a single-parent home
- exposure to drugs and alcohol in the home, which makes that lifestyle seem normal
- seeking a father figure to fill a “daddy hole”

Opportunists are out there seeking to exploit genuine needs

for love and affection as well as basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter.

This book is about my experiences. Despite the terrible things that happened, I am one of the lucky ones. I'm a grateful survivor and want to be the voice for those who cannot or will not ever be able to speak for themselves.

Most human trafficking victims don't survive. By the time they reach their twenties, they are worthless to the human trafficking trade. They're either drug-addicted or they become recruiters themselves. Many die from disease, drug overdose, or murder. Sometimes they see that their only way out is through suicide. In many cases, once children are recruited, their families don't hear from them again.

My story recounts a different ending. I survived because I escaped—more than once. The fact that I experienced human trafficking on more than one occasion is a phenomenon that should never have occurred. But once we're hooked into the lifestyle, it takes a great deal of courage and persistence to get out for good. God's pursuing love finally gave me that courage and enabled me to leave and to keep resisting the temptation to go back to slavery.

Many children never escape the life of commercial sexual exploitation. When their traffickers are finished with them, or if they run away, most of them—as I have seen many times—become deeply involved in the adult entertainment industry as a way of life. Because of the abuse and exploitation, that's the only lifestyle they have known since childhood.

Just escaping isn't enough, which is a major reason for this book. It took me years to believe in myself and to realize that God wanted me to have a good life that I deserved.

Since I escaped and grew in my faith, God has enabled me

to use my painful experiences to reach out to those young girls and boys who remain trapped in a life of sex trafficking.



Two things I need to point out:

First, I've tried to tell my story as honestly as I can, and obviously sometimes I can say only how I perceived someone else's actions.

Second, the stories about the girls and the traffickers in this book are true. For the safety of the girls, I have changed their names. Their lives may still be in danger, and I want to do everything I can to protect them.

After reading this book, I hope you'll see the need to help people like me and organizations like There Is H.O.P.E. For Me, Inc. that seek to rescue enslaved children and teens.