

The
Color
of Pain

Boys who are sexually abused
and the men they become

Gregory Reid

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The Color of Pain

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DEDICATION

For Joel, Johnny, Jacob, Joshua, Bryan, and all the brave little guys whose time to heal is coming.

For Mark . . . this book is really for you.

* * * * *

Publisher's Note: The photographs on both the cover and throughout this book are taken from stock photos and used for illustrative purposes only. It is not to be implied that any of these persons are the victims of abuse.

Caution: This book deals with sensitive issues; it should not be read or reviewed by young children. Parents and teachers should use discernment and wisdom to determine the appropriate age for their children or students to read it.

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CONTENTS

Preface. 11

Introduction 13

Part One—Just The Facts. 15

1/First, My Own Story. 17

2/Looking for the Signs. 21

3/Where Predators Hunt. 23

4/Myths about Abused Boys. 25

5/Types of Abuse and Abusers. 27

6/What a Victim Looks Like. 29

7/What Not to Tell Us. 31

8/A Predator’s Toolkit. 35

Part Two—The Heart of the Matter. 41

9/Sleeping . . . Sort of. 43

10/The Hurt of Being Different. 45

11/Doubt and Denial. 47

12/Sadness. 49

13/Telling the Secret. 53

14/What Being Molested Cost Me. 59

15/Why We Don’t Talk. 61

16/Predator Radar—Then & Now.	65
17/Out of the Revolving Door.	69
18/Touch . . . the First Time.	71
19/It Felt Good . . . Sort of.	75
20/Authority.	77
21/Feeling My Skin.	81
22/Teddy Bear or Tiger?.	83
23/Letting Go.	87
24/Letter to a Molester.	89
25/Letter to Joel.	91
26/I've Got Nothing to Prove.	93
27/I've Got to Do Something.	95
Epilogue.	97
Hope.	99
Appendix #1.	100
Child Sexual Abuse—Disclosures.	100
Endnotes.	102
Photo and Illustration Credits.	103
About the Author.	105
Exposing The Darkness Seminar.	106
Also by Gregory Reid.	108
Related Resources from Lighthouse Trails.	110

Preface

AS a youth minister and someone who has worked in the law enforcement field advocating for kids who have been sexually abused, I saw a great need for a book that was specifically written for those who have been abused as boys. I found there was very little written about that difficult subject, and much of what was available was unhelpful, if not completely useless.

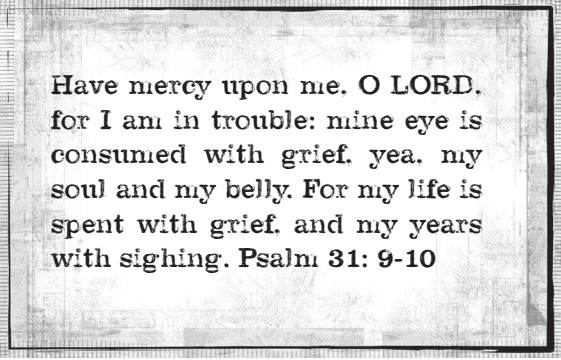
I realized that probably no one was more qualified to write such a book as someone who had suffered such abuse and grown up and healed. I realized I could be that person.

I began writing, not knowing how long it would take or how hard it might be. To my surprise, I was able to complete the first draft within a month. I first self-published this book under the title *Orphans in the Storm*—I am grateful that first edition was distributed fairly widely and hopefully helped a lot of kids who were afraid to talk, afraid someone would find out their terrible secret. After all—no one likes to admit that boys get abused too. That is why I was in my thirties before I told anyone my worst secrets.

Part one of this book is more for professionals, pastors, and concerned family and friends. More stats and facts. The more people that know those things, the less chance others will be victims of pedophile predators.

Part two was written from my heart—for survivors, from a survivor. It is not slick or polished—just me bleeding on paper and spilling my guts. I hope it helps others to know they are not alone in their suffering and isolation—and to know they too can find healing and dignity again.

Gregory Reid



Have mercy upon me, O LORD,
for I am in trouble: mine eye is
consumed with grief, yea, my
soul and my belly. For my life is
spent with grief, and my years
with sighing. Psalm 31: 9-10

INTRODUCTION

I'M a male sexual-abuse survivor. I'm also a ritual-abuse survivor.¹ I am rare, and belong to a company of men and boys, mostly silent and scared. So few have survived well enough to talk about it. I know I have to talk, because I DID survive, and because I see them in every group I meet, from five to seventy-years-old suffering, silent victims who are not really considered REAL victims by many, since the male species, in their minds, should be able to fend off any abuse. No matter how little they were. No matter how bad and scary it was. So we keep mostly quiet, to avoid the humiliation of questioning, cynical eyes that seem to say, "Come on, you could have done SOMETHING to stop it!" Can you imagine the public outrage in most places nowadays if you said that to a female rape victim? But no one really defends boy and men victims. So we've stayed silent. Wouldn't you? If you're a victim, you probably do. You probably picked this book up with a big knot of fear in your gut, hoping no one would suspect you might be one of the one in six boys who are sexually abused.

I want to tell you, you've got nothing to be afraid of. After all, being molested was something that was done *to* you, and you shouldn't feel you have to apologize for looking for some hope, that you feel you have to hide because of someone else's sins against you. Do those who are cynical have any idea what it's like, what it feels like, how much it pain it causes? Then forget about the doubters. You need a friend, and I hope you just picked it up—a book with a voice, one you'll know is also maybe yours and one that is warm and real. A voice, mainly, of a brother who's struggling out of his pain, too.

I try not to look too hard at how much progress I've made; I get too introspective and then it goes into self-pity, and that's

The Color of Pain

worse than anything I can think of. When things about being molested come up, I do my best to face it. I've totally overcome some things (like blaming myself) but I'm still struggling with others (like being afraid that it's written all over my forehead and people just "know"). Some struggles are no surprise, some are very fresh and event sensitive, and some knock me sideways when I'm not expecting any more to handle. But now I have hope, because little by little I've been healed, and I want to give a little of that to you.

I've written from my history, my head, and my heart. There's not a lot of statistics, but I've put in a few for those who just want to help. A lot of the following is from my own experience, as graphic and real as I dare. For me, no one knew. No one should have to struggle that way. Accept this as a gift from a friend to let you know YOU'RE NOT ALONE.