



Chapter Excerpts

Snow Angel (page 30)

“The deeper the love we experience in life, the deeper the pain when that love is lost... or so it was with Cheryl. She carried on to the best of her ability, in spite of the mental illness that plagued her, and that many still today do not understand. It is not an open wound that is visible to the naked eye; it is hidden in the recesses of complex minds...”



Life on an Island (page 54)

“When I think back to my life on the island, I don’t remember being afraid - in fact I really don’t recall any feelings or emotions at all. Living in an isolated location with an abusive husband - survival was the underlying factor in my life at that time. One day in particular, exemplifies that state of being – the state of survival.”



Learning to Adapt (page 58)

“Neither of us had any personal experience with Down Syndrome. Kids in our generation who were born with it were sent away, and we never even got a chance to meet them. They were considered to be hopeless, and of course, growing up in institutions, they never learned much or achieved much, and often died young... But times had changed by 1985 when (our daughter) Katie was born...”



Sunflowers (page 40)

“It was too late for any kind of final good-byes between my sister, Vian and I, and I chose not to see her in her final state. A very difficult decision, but I wanted the memory of how we had last departed to be the one I would remember her by... We were only three years apart, but she was always my little sister to me. And after our mother died when I was 15 and she only 12, I became the little mother.”



I Didn't Realize (page 35)

“At 55, I find myself an orphan. I didn't expect to feel that way... I didn't realize I would miss the love they had for me, the soft spot they provided or the safety net that would be there if I needed it. I didn't realize I would miss the phone ringing and their voices on the other end, even the aggravations often felt. I didn't realize...”



Standing Tall (page 73)

“I felt like I was being punished; only I just didn't understand why. My heart raced and my chest hurt. I lay on the carpet, against the front of the couch in my living room, staring at the pilot light in the fireplace in front of me...”

I learned about a system we have in place that doesn't actually protect the victim, but protects the abuser...”



It Wasn't Supposed to Be Like This (page 6)

“...The resident that was left in charge ... said with grave concern that he didn't want this (me) on his hands, and that I would be better off in the city... The nurse that traveled with me by ambulance looked worried too.... Oddly, I asked (her) if I was going to live. She tried to gesture reassuringly, and then turned her head away (perhaps hoping that I wouldn't see her apprehension, and tears in her eyes)...”