



Punished: A mother's cruelty. A daughter's survival. A secret that couldn't be told.

Vanessa Steel

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Punished: A mother's cruelty. A daughter's survival. A secret that couldn't be told. Vanessa Steel 'Punished' is the inspiring true story of an unusual little girl, Vanessa, whose childhood was devastated by torture and abuse at the hands of her sadistic mother. Vanessa was nearly destroyed until she discovered a secret that ultimately saved her life.

From the age of 3, Vanessa lived in daily terror of her mother's unpredictable rage. If she was 'naughty', her mother would lash out at her – with beatings, torture, starvation and making Vanessa sleep in their garden's pigsty, tied up like an animal. Her mother said her punishments were God's revenge on her for being the devil's child. Her father lived in denial of her suffering.

When she was 6 years old, Vanessa's grandfather began to sexually abuse her – to her despair, aided and abetted by both her mother and grandmother. At eight years old, she then discovered that the 'mother' who hated her so much had adopted her as a baby and would never love her as her own.

At the most horrific times of Vanessa's abuse, she nearly lost all hope that she would escape her prison, until mysterious things started to happen to her that allowed her to fight back.

This is the story of how Vanessa survived a childhood that nearly destroyed her and how her secret led her out of the horrors of her past.

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Details

Date : Published February 2nd 2009 by Harper Element (first published July 1st 2008)

ISBN :

Author : Vanessa Steel

Format : Kindle Edition 339 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Crime, True Crime, Sociology, Abuse, Autobiography, Memoir, Biography



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Karen Ferguson says

It was sad to hear how uncaring and sadistic her mother was. No one should have to live through anything like that. I found the "speaking to the spirits" to be hokey.

Corey Bearden says

Not even sure how to put into words the harrowing ordeal suffered by little Vanessa. I have been so blessed with loving, adoring parents that this sort of treatment was foreign to me. Parts of the book I had to skim over because I could not bear to read them. The things she went through were so foreign to me that I believe it propelled my interest in the book. I so longed for Vanessa to get revenge...it brought out a side of me I didn't know of. God bless Vanessa Steel...truly a survivor.

Justine says

Spoiler Alert

This is the real- life story of Vanessa, a young girl who's life started off rough right from the date of her adoption at 6 months old. The book shares Vanessa's past and a little bit of the present, the terrible and the best times of her life. This is one of the most horrific books that I have ever read in my life. I can't believe the torture that Vanessa's "mother" put her through. All Vanessa wants is for her mother to love and accept her. A lot of awful things that happened to Vanessa made me nauseated. This book was hard for me to read because of all the graphic details.

I am very grateful that the spirits were present to help guide Vanessa through the roller coaster of her life. I'm glad they shared bits of her future that made her want to continue with her life and have goals to work toward. I am so sorry that those disgraceful things happened to Vanessa, but I am glad that she has broken the cycle. I hope that other people read this book and can be brave enough to get help. I also hope that the people that hurt Vanessa felt guilty for their whole existence. I hope they got what was coming to them. I wish that Vanessa's family had been more willing to help her so that she didn't have to endure so much unnecessary torture. I wish they would have spoke up so those bastards would have been punished for their heinous acts.

Vanessa thank you for being brave enough to survive and for sharing your heartfelt story.

Joan says

I usually can finish a book but this one is one that just didn't seem to live up to it's description. I found the story too unbelievable due to the following. Remember this is just me. I don't think someone can have that

vivid of memories from the age of 2. She seemed to have way to many details/descriptions and the way the story was being told didn't go together well.

Umang says

This book really opened my eyes to the things children have to go through and how horrible parents can be. The reason why I can't give it 5 stars is because I was depressed while reading this book. I had this cloud of depression above my head and once I finished the book that cloud gradually disappeared - but I still thought of it. I guess that's what the book is meant to do, it's meant to trigger feelings. I did like it though and I wouldn't mind reading another book like this one. Of course there are a lot of books like this but I think this one was the best. I would recommend that people read.

It's a very inspirational book.

Kayleigh says

Another amazing must-read truestory, of one child's abusive childhood.

From the age of 3 Vanessa was physically and mentally abused by her mother, whilst her father spent most of his time living away from the family, in complete denial of the truth of his wife, and what she was doing to his daughter and her brother diagnosed with a serious case of epilepsy.

But Vanessa was not just abused by her mother, but at the age of six, her Grandpa sexually abused her.

The story recalls the sickening and sadistic events featured in the childhood of writer, Vanessa Steel, who tells such an effective and descriptive story.

Some parts were harsh to read, though just wanting to know what was going to come next, kept me addictive and having read the book in one afternoon.

What I love most about books like this, is they give people a true understanding of how much painful events in someones life can be, a kind of make people realise that what goes on behind closed doors, is infact true. This book is a great example of childhood abuse, and how adults will countlessly fail attempting to save children.

Vanessa Steel, is a very stong and heroic woman, A true survivor

Aershey says

A fantastic and sad story, hard to believe anyone can survive through such horror. It's quite draggy and contains uncomfortable contents. Its unbelievable how can a person be so quite and how can people do such things to innocent girls. Love to hear more about hows is the writers present life going. The title is perfectly describes the sorrowful tale of the petite girl, hopefully the writers life isn't so troublesome any more. I would rate this 4/5

richwire says

Only read this book if you're prepared to wince in pain, put the book down in disgust, then pick it up again and keep reading. One of the most horrific stories I've ever read. I was torn over giving it 5 stars because the story is so grotesque but the fact of the matter is it's a 5 star book. It's so unbelievable at times, you know it has to be true because no one's imagination could invent the cruelty experienced here. May the author's mother, father, grandpa and grandma Pittman and Auntie Pat burn in hell.

Patrycja says

What a horrible family it was that Vanessa ended up with - including her father! I hated him throughout the book. It seems almost implausible how oblivious the father was to everything that his beautiful, and most evil, wife was doing to Vanessa. This is a very sad and touching story and it will stay with you for a long, long time.

Jennifer says

If you can stomach reading about unrelenting abuse, this book is worth the read just to learn how the human spirit is so forgiving and resilient. Vanessa's quest to be loved by someone, anyone is so heart-breaking. I literally was nauseated at reading about her mistreatment: bee stings, nights in the pigsty, being forced to drink urine, the beatings, the sexual abuse, the torture, and a lifetime of hatred and hateful, evil words from her own mother. I am still in shock at the volume/frequency and intensity of the cruelty she suffered. I truly cannot believe that Vanessa survived this torture, much less able to live out a somewhat normal life. She is a survivor, no doubt, and an inspiration to us all.

Stacey says

Very well written story about the horrible abuse that a girl suffered through. This book is so well written and so detailed that you get a very graphic, very disturbing picture of the sexual abuse of her grandfather and physical abuse of her mother. This book made me sob and I almost could not go on reading it but had to know what happened. If you can handle the graphic details of the abuse then this is an excellent read.

Georgina Ball says

A sickening tale of a little girl's cruel, sadistic childhood which ends somewhat happily. The book is written well, it introduces you to the characters and the background before launching into the story which helps you understand what's happening. It's written in short blocks so is easy to read and remember where you are if distracted. The end is nicely finished and answers all the unanswered questions, so you feel satisfied and happy. The story is sickening and heartbreakin, I read this book in two sittings, I stopped just over half way through as I found it all too much, a particular part involving Janie (you'll understand if you read it). It's gripping yet chilling; you want to read on because you want to know there's a happy ending. The

compassion and love that Vanessa has, just shows what an amazing person she is. To endure the ordeals she did and still come out fighting, not just that but able to show love and forgiveness to those who did her wrong. A fantastic well-written, heart-wrenching, tear jerking book and I would thoroughly recommend it to anyone.

Katie says

I am not sure what drove me to continue reading this book. I would compare it to a child called it. It is hard to read about the abuse of a child. I felt like i owed it to the author who is the victim to hear her story. It had a bit of a twist in it that I thought was kind of weird where she hears voices and sees the future which just made it seem made up.

Annie Kookie says

A saddening tale of the trauma that's inflicted throughout the life of Vanessa Steel starting from when she was just a tot. The writing is easy although the story is far from it. The story is tragic but it's important to have stories such as this, to bring to light the events that mar children more than we wish to hear.

I actually really liked the ending - it was reminiscent of a childrens' story (& the moral of the story is... & this redeems all of the horrors within the book). Perhaps this is due to the fact that so much of the novel was based around a childhood so a story-book ending seemed fitting, or maybe I was just happy to see that Vanessa found a happiness & a peace.

Chloe Norman says

Vanessa has been abused since she was 3 years old by her mother and her grandparents. Her mother punished her for anything that she did wrong. She would punish her with beatings, torture and starvation. She thought her mother would kill her and she almost did. When she became a little older, her grandpa would sexually abuse her. With her mother and grandma knowing he did this to her, they didn't care. She couldn't even turn to her father because he wouldn't believe her. She only had Nan Casey and her older brother. Until, her grandmother died and her brother was sent to a sick home, she was all alone. The only thing that kept her alive was the voices she would hear telling her that she will be alright. All she wanted was for her mother to love her. Throughout everything that her mother had put her through, her mother was the one that was truly punished. In this book it had some sexual content and it explains a lot of things which a lot of us wouldn't want to know.

I loved this book! It's very sad but it keeps me wanting to read on and on to know what happens. The thing that stood out to me the most is reading the things that her mother did to her mad me so sad. I can't believe that parents can do this to their own children. It's not right. I think everyone should read this book because it really just helps you be aware of things and teaches a good lesson to love your children. Abuse is a horrible thing that we need to stop. If you love sad books, than this is a perfect book for you to read.
