



# Damaged: The Heartbreaking True Story of a Forgotten Child

*Cathy Glass*

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### **Damaged: The Heartbreaking True Story of a Forgotten Child** Cathy Glass

Although Jodie is only eight years old, she is violent, aggressive, and has already been through numerous foster families. Her last hope is Cathy Glass. At the Social Services office, Cathy (an experienced foster carer) is pressured into taking Jodie as a new placement. Jodie's challenging behaviour has seen off five carers in four months. Despite her reservations, Cathy decides to accept Jodie to protect her from being placed in an institution. Jodie arrives, and her first act is to soil herself, and then wipe it on her face, grinning wickedly. Jodie meets Cathy's teenage children, and greets them with a sharp kick to the shins. That night, Cathy finds Jodie covered in blood, having cut her own wrist, and smeared the blood over her face. As Jodie begins to trust Cathy her behaviour improves. Over time, with childish honesty, she reveals details of her abuse at the hands of her parents and others. It becomes clear that Jodie's parents were involved in a sickening paedophile ring, with neighbours and Social Services not seeing what should have been obvious signs. Unfortunately Jodie becomes increasingly withdrawn, and it's clear she needs psychiatric therapy. Cathy urges the Social Services to provide funding, but instead they decide to take Jodie away from her, and place her in a residential unit. Although the paedophile ring is investigated and brought to justice, Jodie's future is still up in the air. Cathy promises that she will stand by her no matter what -- her love for the abandoned Jodie is unbreakable.

### **Damaged: The Heartbreaking True Story of a Forgotten Child Details**

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Cathy Glass

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## From Reader Review Damaged: The Heartbreaking True Story of a Forgotten Child for online ebook

### Inês says

*Damaged: The Heartbreaking True Story of a Forgotten Child* by Cathy Glass

Although Jodie is only eight years old, she is violent, aggressive, and her challenging behaviour has sent her off to five carers in four months. Her last hope is Cathy Glass, an experienced foster carer that decides to take her on and protect her from being placed in an institution.

As Jodie begins to trust Cathy, her behaviour improves. Over time, with childish honesty, she reveals details of the abuses she suffered at the hands of her parents and others.

It becomes clear that the Social Services are not seeing what should have been obvious signs. Now, Jodie lost her childhood and her development may be forever compromised.

I would like to start by saying that I'm quite a sensitive person, so I was a bit nervous going into it. My mom had already read it and warn me about the subject matter. I didn't know if I could do it but, in the end, I'm so glad I did. This is a disturbing true story. Jodie experienced many things that kids, at this age, shouldn't even have to hear about.

If you're like me and need it: *trigger warning for self harm, child abuse, sexual abuse, rape and aggressive behaviour.*

Although the author's writing isn't something too special, it kept me turning pages, always wanting to know more about the story, even it being difficult to read at times. In my opinion, it was a solid book about fostering damaged children. It sounds a bit wrong to say, but I think it was because everything was so interesting. In addition to being a really eye opening book, it is also extremely educational without seeming to be teaching you anything.

Cathy Glass is a foster carer with twenty years of experience and said: *"Jodie was the most disturbed and abused child I had ever looked after"*. I appreciate how much the author tried to help Jodie by, obviously, doing her job. I found her to be an amazing person with an amazing heart.

It's also great that we get to see the impact that all of this fostering situation and, specialty, Jodie had on Cathy's own children.

The importance that love, harmony and boundaries have in a child's life and how sometimes, in delicate situations, it isn't enough.

I don't know if you're aware, but abilities such as reading or writing can only be correctly developed after a certain age because that's when the brain reaches the maturity needed. It's also true that others, like language, if not developed in a critical period, cause the brain to interpret this ability as "unnecessary" and it atrophies the area responsible for it. The latest was exactly what happened to Jodie. Her development was compromise; not impossible to reach but extremely hard.

I liked how therapy was addressed to start helping Jodie on a deeper level.

Over time she reveals, in a very innocent way, the abuses she has suffered. What makes it more devastating is the fact that she doesn't recognize them as nasty acts. Jodie's behavior and empathy gets an explanation as well as the surface approach to the dissociative identity disorder.

We all know how flawed can Social Services be so its reference was important since they're as impactful as the child's parents or foster carers .

I read in another review that, in stories like this one, we never get the aggressors' point of view. *What leads people to do such horrible things to kids? Or why would parents do it to their own children?* I think it would be certainly more disturbing but extremely interesting.

Ending by stating that this is the authr's first published work, though not the first chronologically. I would be really interested in picking up the book Cathy Glass wrote about one of her three children, Lucy, who she ended up adopting.

*\*Unfortunately, I didn't find any quotes or mark them myself.\**

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## **Brenda says**

I'm very conflicted by this book. I think the author did a good job writing the story and I found it relatively fast and easy to read. But the content of the story is so disturbing that I also found it very difficult to read. I know these awful things happen, I really don't understand the lack of humanity in some people.

My main gripe with this book is that it seemed somewhat exploitative of the child's situation - granted names, dates, places were changed to protect her privacy. But still - why write this book? A catharsis maybe? From my reader's perspective, I felt like a spectator watching something I had no business seeing, and there was no takeaway at the end about how to help kids like this, how to protect your own kid, how to recognize signs, etc. It just seemed like "Woohoo I'm a wonderful carer, everybody thinks the world of me, and look what an awful life THIS kid had..."

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## **Michelle says**

Damaged  
Cathy Glass  
True Story  
309 pages  
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isbn: 978-0-00-723634-3

Cathy Glass had fostered fifty children over twenty years but none of them had been as disturbed as Jodie, a troubled eight-year-old whose violence and aggression had seen off five foster carers in just four months. When Jodie arrived, Cathy had no idea what lay beneath Jodie's shocking behaviour, which included smearing faces all over the house, erupting into violent rages and even cutting herself. Little by little, as Jodie's rage was met with patience and understanding, she began to trust Cathy, and to confide the dreadful background which had led to her present torment.

Jodie's childhood had been an appalling litany of mistreatment and neglect, which should have been alerted the numerous social work professionals involved with her case. Jodie's case file was so big it filled two suitcases, but apparently not one of her social workers had ever read the entire file. If they had, Jodie's story and future might have been very different. Finally, in Cathy, Jodie found one adult worthy of her trust, one who could help her begin the process of recovery.

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## Silvana (Por detrás das Palavras) says

Infância Perdida é daquelas histórias que, sem querermos, se enraízam no nosso pensamento e nos deixam dias a pensar sobre ela.

Pelo seu conteúdo emocional, não é um livro fácil de ler. Confesso que a repulsa e o nojo foram aumentando gradualmente. Quando pensava que as coisas não podiam ser piores, chegava uma nova revelação que me fazia parar a leitura para assimilar tudo aquilo que ia acontecendo.

Cathy Glass é uma mãe de acolhimento que recebe em sua casa crianças que são retiradas à família por diversas razões. As crianças ficam com ela até a família reunir condições para as voltar a acolher ou quando os serviços judiciais decretam outro tipo de medidas, como a adoção, por exemplo.

Neste livro, Cathy relata-nos os momentos em que viveu com Jodie, uma menina de 7 anos com uma história de vida ainda bastante desconhecida aos olhos das várias famílias por onde passou e onde permanecia por pouco tempo. Cathy percebeu o desafio que lhe estava para chegar às mães, mas agarrou-o com uma mestria e determinação muitas vezes superior à de um profissional.

Jodie apresentou-se como uma criança bastante perturbada. Logo de início, e por aquilo que ia sendo descrito, eu coloquei a hipótese de uma perturbação da personalidade, mas estava muito longe de imaginar os contornos por detrás desta perturbação.

Foi duro ler sobre aquilo que Jodie foi obrigada a viver. Foi duro ver que, por pouco, aqueles que tanto mal lhe fizeram iam ficar impunes. Mesmo assim, a justiça não foi totalmente feita.

Infelizmente a realidade de Jodie não é a única. São várias as crianças que não conhecem os contornos de uma infância feliz e saudável. Estas histórias enchem-me sempre de tristeza, fazem-me sentir impotente. Eu sei que não podemos querer salvar o mundo. Não está nas nossas mãos conseguir combater tudo aquilo que de mau há no mundo, mas crianças na situação de Jodie mereciam ser salvas o mais rapidamente possível.

Neste livro, Cathy Glass também nos traz a realidade da má prática profissional. Um(a) assistente social tem, por vezes, um volume de trabalho enorme, mas isso não pode justificar o facto de se desligarem dos casos. A assistente social que tomava conta de Jodie cometeu erros muito grandes e que não podem ser justificados pelo excesso de trabalho. Ela estava completamente desligada da Jodie e em nenhum momento se preocupou em tentar estabelecer uma relação com a criança. Mas, tal como há maus profissionais, há também aqueles que são capazes de atender às necessidades destas crianças e proporcionar-lhes formas de diminuir o sofrimento. Na história de Jodie destaco o papel da assistente social Jill, que apesar do caso não ser da responsabilidade dela, sempre se preocupou com a criança e também o papel da psicóloga que se preocupou genuinamente com a criança e procurou um espaço adequado para o futuro de Jodie.

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## Karen says

I am not sure of any other way to rate this book.

This book is about a girl named, Jodi, who enters the foster care system at the age of 7. Within 4mo she has already been through 5 foster homes. There is little hope for her, until Cathy steps up and agrees to take Jodi in.

When Jodi first enters Cathy's home she is very violent and rude. In fact, over the year that she is with Cathy that never completely goes away and as time goes on we start to see other disturbing behaviours from Jodi.

We will also start to learn and start to understand why Jodi is acting the way that she does. The reason(s) are so horrible that I had to stop reading and just take some time to digest what I just read. There were some

parts that I had to literally re-read to see if I read it correctly.

Remember that this is a true story, so if you are overly sensitive or are weak at heart you may not want to read this book. This book will make you cry, it will make you very angry, it will make you sick to your stomach. But, you will also read about the amazing heart one foster mother had. The patience, the love, the toughness that she had and that she gave this little girl. Jodie was passed from one foster home to another because nobody could handle her. Cathy Glass was determined to help her and she seen it through to the end. Even though there were times she wanted to throw in the towel, when she was frustrated at her situation and at social services, she was overly exhausted and running on empty, she still found just a little bit more inside her to keep going.

So besides for the hurt you will feel from reading this book, you will also know that there are still angels out there.

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### **Beth says**

This is the 'first' (as in the first written, not chronologically) book by foster carer Cathy Glass, and of the three I have read so far this is by far the most harrowing.

The story concerns an eight year old girl named Jodie, who has come into Cathy's care after being kicked out of 5 other foster homes in four months. She is an extremely disturbed child, and we don't fully begin to understand the reasons for this disturbance until some way into the book, when she begins to disclose the horrors of her past to Cathy. This little girl has suffered so much in her short life, including severe emotional, physical and utterly horrific sexual abuse that at times it was a real struggle to carry on reading. It made me very sad, and I cried a few times during it but it was a very interesting insight into the world of social care and the failings of the social services; Jodie had been on the 'at risk' register for her whole life and yet she still suffered in this horrendous way, despite social workers supposedly checking up on her every few months.

Despite the shocking nature of the book, as always with Cathy Glass it is very accessible and well-written and, unlike other so called 'misery memoirs' because it is written by a carer rather than the abused child themselves it is a lot more detailed and a lot less formulaic. If you're going to read any true life stories, make sure you start with those that Cathy Glass has written.

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### **Ashley says**

I decided to read this book because anything that has to do with psychological issues is an interest to me so I'm usually drawn to books about it. As you can see from the description, this book is about a foster mom named Cathy, who takes in a very disturbed child that has very unusual and bad behavior. Jodie is 8 years old but doesn't have the mentality of an 8 year old at all. Her learning and motor skills aren't developed, and she is very violent towards herself and others. This is all due to the physical, sexual and mental abuse that she went through. This book was very interesting there is a lot of mature content in it and it is sad and disturbing. I wasn't expecting this book to be as in depth as it was. The details of the sexual abuse that Jodie went through was almost too much for me to read. It made me sick to my stomach and I thought to myself a few times "I can't read this". I did finish this book despite all of the graphic details because I wanted to know what was going to happen to Jodie. Once we got more into the psychological aspect of the book I enjoyed it a lot more. We get to learn about the split personality disorder that Jodie develops, and also why she acts the

way that she does, and why she does the certain things that she does. Also like it says in the description, Jodie is eventually placed into a residential unit for children with psychological problems who have suffered from abuse. I was slightly disappointed in the end because (possible spoiler!) we never really got to know what happened to Jodie down the road and how she turned out when she grew up. Being that this was a true story, I was really interested to find out these details. None the less, this was a great book and I really enjoyed reading it. It's a quick read and I gave it 5/5 stars on good reads. Cathy Glass has written many other books and some of them are based on true stories as well and I look forward to reading them in the future

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### **Audra says**

Writing was so-so... I think that there are better stories of the realities of being a foster parent. This felt more like "LOOK AT ALL THESE TERRIBLE THINGS! LOOK HOW BAD THE SYSTEM IS! LOOK HOW DAMAGED THESE CHILDREN ARE!"

Why this story? Why these events? Plus, disassociative identity disorder is highly controversial, and I found the portrayal to be quite stereotypical, as if based on a movie or Wikipedia entry. I also strongly disliked the discrimination towards people with disabilities that rang throughout the book, such as when she said that, at 10? 11?, Jodie had "reached the ceiling of what she could learn". Or when she said that since her face wasn't "vacant", she couldn't have severe learning difficulties. Ugh.

I updated my review and lowered my stars once I saw that Cathy Glass has basically written a memoir about how disturbed a kid is over and over on Amazon, which makes me think that they are either exaggerated or exploitative, and I dislike both options. It's just like playing on every stereotype of foster care that there is. I am looking forward to reading other, better books, such as [Another Place at the Table](#), and I hope you will too.

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### **Shelley says**

I always hate saying that I really liked a book like this. It was an awful, sad, tragic story that made me so angry and made my stomach turn. But it was well written and told a necessary story of a child who went through unspeakable abuse by her parents. Her foster mom, Cathy was so patient and kind and gave so much of herself to the care of Jodie. I admire anyone who could do that. I for one would have found the parents and shot them on sight. Working in an educational setting I think teachers, aides, administrators, etc. should read this book and others like it. It gives an insight into behavior that is so disturbed and disturbing and possibly could help "good" adults recognize some of the signs of abuse in their students if they come across it.

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### **Jeannie says**

This was such an intriguing book, I couldn't stop thinking about it whenever I had to lay it down. The author is a natural story teller, the book is filled with her and her family's emotional pain while fostering a little girl named Jodie. She will quickly draw you into the sad and tragic life of this little girl. Even though I suspected what had happened to Jodie, when it was revealed in the book, it sent not only dread but shivers of fear through me to know that this happens and is happening to children all over the world as we speak. Unthinkable that parents could do something so vile to their own child. I admire and respect Cathy Glass for

the work she does in helping children, what a wonderful person she is! If you read one book this year it should be this one, it's just so sad that help came too late to truly help Jodie.

And on a last note, this book shows how social services breaks down and some of the problems involved with these "so-called" social workers. Cathy does make excuses for some of them but in my opinion there is no room for error when we are talking about the safety and well-being of children. Jodie's social worker in the book SHOULD not only be fired from her position but prohibited from working with children ever again. It's people like her that allowed this little girl's life to be ruined when they could have saved her when she was first put on the "at risk" list. What is wrong with these people? How could anyone turn a blind eye to such a situation, I just don't understand that. Makes me very sad.

Excellent read!! I can't wait to read her other books now.

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### **Love says**

This book it is kind of hard to describe how it made me feel....Mad, sad. How could any system just kind of look over things like this. Out of all the books I have read on this subject matter, this has touched beyond belief. I understand a little more about post traumatic disorder because of it though. I don't want to spoil it for anyone just think anyone that can handle reading such descriptive accounts of abuse should read it. I do like the writing style and the author makes you feel the pain of that poor little girl. Cathy Glass what an amazing woman to help children like this. I have taken in a couple of children with similar backgrounds but never had to deal with any reactions from it at this kind of levels.

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### **karri says**

Generally, I don't write reviews, but in this case, I feel torn about this book.

I found this book incredibly intriguing. I was hooked and couldn't stop reading it. While the writing does come off as a bit self-congratulatory a lot of the time, the story is mesmerizing and if it is true, the author should be praised for her astounding patience. At the same time, I found my interest in this book disturbing. Our society's rapt attention for reading about or watching news stories related to pedophiles and child abuse seems almost perverted itself.

Cathy Glass has written nearly a dozen or so of these novels; at this point, she is profiting greatly from these children's' sufferings. What of the children's confidentiality? It doesn't seem like Jodie could have consented to her story being told to the world. If it had been a single memoir from Cathy Glass, the story of her lifetime, I would have understood, but writing continually about it? That seems like exploitation of the children and a reflection of society's perversions that they continue to sell well.

I don't plan to read another of Cathy Glass's novels. One misery memoir was certainly enough to expose me to this horrendous side of humanity.

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### **Ailina Willis says**

Though not eloquent, Glass's writing is sensitive and solid. The sheer depth of the experience is the crown of this book. I couldn't put it down. I was desperate to read Glass's conclusion, for better or worse.

The chronology is tight and thorough, fulfilling the reader's need for detail. Glass exposes her experience honestly, which allows us to inhabit her home during her tumultuous time with "Jodie," the abused child in her care.

On the downside, Glass made it almost too clear her strong feelings of distaste for one of the individuals involved in the legal process. I understand her negativity, but I felt the portrayal of those feelings was at times a bit over the top, and it became distracting.

I come away from this book with intensified hatred for sexual predators, deeper respect for foster parents and the unfathomable challenges they face, and a raw ache for the suffering so many children endure at the hands of people who should be their protectors.

A recommended read for people who have a special concern for the welfare of children. Pre-requisite: strong stomach.

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### **Sammi says**

This book was so easy, yet so hard to read.

The writing flows well and isn't too intricate, but the material it covers makes it incredibly hard to read without feeling completely upset or disgusted.

This true story follows the life of Jodie, a troubled girl with a terrible past - but is shown through the eyes of her Carer. This, to me, was quite refreshing. When reading books of this nature I have generally only read from the point of view of the child, so this new perspective was very interesting. It really pulled at my heart strings and made me want to consider becoming a carer myself, no matter how hard it may be.

##### SPOILERS #####

What really did it for me in this book, is the letter Jodie gets Paula to write for Cathy. It brang tears to my eyes.

Whereas Jodie usually is pretty shut off emotionally, thus letter is so vulnerable and emotional and shows how she did truly love and appreciate her carer.

A brilliant book.

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### **Stephanie (Stepping out of the Page) says**

This is a difficult one to review. I'm not easily disturbed and find this genre fascinating but I think that this may have slightly crossed the line for me. I realise it's true life, but I did find this book to be quite graphic. I know it sounds harsh as it's true life, but I found it difficult to connect with Jodie and sympathise with her - her behaviour was completely out of control and, quite frankly, disgusting at points. I found Glass to be quite annoying at points, repeating the word 'sweet' all the time and feeling the need to point out how terrible social services are throughout most of the book. I also had a few issues with her in regards to her own children, personally I don't think that they were given as much consideration as they should have. Damaged certainly gave a true to life, honest view of fostering but it was a little too much for me.

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## Kristina Lenarczyk says

Such a quick read and a powerful story. Laughed and cried, and can't wait to pick up more from this author.

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## Jody Skalski says

I read this book pretty quickly as I couldn't put it down. This is a disturbing story to read. I am sometimes asked why I read such "deep" books. I have always had an interest in troubled, needy children/teenagers; the way the brain functions just fascinates me. I always find the books such a wealth of information when dealing with children with difficult pasts. I will say that this story and its details was very difficult for me to read, in relation to this young child and what she has endured. It is unimaginable and incomprehensible what happened to this little girl. I have been involved with the foster care system and could relate with this foster mom and her frustrations of the system, etc. I can only say that Cathy Glass is an incredible human being, along with her children. I'm not sure I know of anyone that could do what she has done for so many and especially what she did for this little girl. I have the highest respect for her and learned much in reading this book. Thank you Cathy for sharing this story. This book made me cry and I will think about for long after finishing it.

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## Kristina ?echová says

Možná vás ani nebude recenze zajímat. Možná vám ani tohle téma nic nebude říkat. Možná jen p?ejdete o?ima po obálce a p?jdete se rad?ji podívat na n?jakou tu dystopii ?i fantasy. Možná byste se ale m?li zastavit a v?novat se chvíli následujícím ?ádk?m, protože dost možná, se n?co podobného m?že dít pár metr? od vás.

Když se m? p?ítel zeptal, zda je tahle kniha opravdu tak dobrá, že jsem ji - na m?j vkus - p?e?etla v rekordním ?ase, nev?d?la jsem, co odpov?d?t.

Cathy Glass je pseudonym, pod kterým vystupuje profesionální p?stounka, u které se za dvacet let "rodi?ování" vyst?ídalo asi padesát r?zných d?tí. Rozbitá je p?itom p?íb?h vypráv?ný z jejího pohledu v moment?, kdy se má do její rodiny nast?hovat osmiletá hol?i?ka Jodie. Jodie je problémové dít?, za poslední ?ty?i m?síce vyst?ídala p?t rodin. Je nezvladatelná, agresivní, hrubá, vulgární, bez emocí, bez nadšení. Nikdo však netuší, pro? tomu tak je. Nebýt Cathy, nikdo by se z?ejm? nikdy nedozv?d?l, že byla Jodie od útlého d?tství pohlavn? zneužívána. Nikdo netušil, v jakém m?ítku. Ú?ady v jejím p?ípad? totáln? po celou dobu selhávaly a sociální pracovníci si Jodie p?ehazovali jako horký brambor. Tahle kniha vás donutí p?emýšlet nad tím, jaká zv?rstva se možná d?jí d?tem hned vedle za zdí u soused?. Zastráit d?ti, aby ml?ely, je snadné. My dosp?lí máme své techniky a víme, ?eho se d?ti bojí. Hnus je, když se zastrašování stane pro dít? no?ní m?rou a to je pak - dost pravd?podobn? - do konce života odsouzeno pouze trp?t a nikdy se nedat jako ?lov?k do po?ádku.

Tohle je tak citlivý a na mou emotivní stránku silný p?íb?h, že jsem nedokázala ur?it, zda je tedy "tak dobrý" nebo "tak strašný". Cathy Glass rozhodn? není povoláním autorka, takže to jde na stylu, jakým píše, znát. Píše jednoduše, ale jde vid?t, že své práci rozumí a za sv?j spisovatelský um se nemusí absolutn? v?bec styd?t. Naopak, ve vypráv?ní, jako je tohle, je to dokonce v po?ádku.

Nebudu vám zde psát, jaké hr?znosti si malá Jodie musela vytrp?t a jakým zp?sobem to jako malá hol?i?ka

vnímala. Občas to na mne, jako na matku, bylo dost silné kafe a několikrát jsem se snažila sama sebe přesvědčit, že to je všechno smyšlené a že se tohle nikdy neodehrálo. Bohužel.

Je velká škoda, že Cathy Glass u nás má pouze jednu knihu a tou je právě Rozbitá. Přitom je autorkou skoro dvaceti knih a já bych si je všechny hrozně ráda přečetla. Budu muset tedy využít zřejmě svého nadání v angličtině a přeložkat její knihy v původním jazyce.

Jestli bych tuhle knihu doporučila? Rozhodně ano! Myslím, že je důležité vědět, co se až příliš často děje za dveřmi některých bytů a domů. A dost možná tato kniha pomůže otevřít oči spoustě lidem. Mně tedy rozhodně. Jak vlastně poznáte zneužívané dítě, pokud vám nic neřekne?

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## Paul Bryant says

Are we now living in the age of Full Disclosure when everything is revealed about what people do to each other, the real truth about what human beings are? When it comes to dresses being paraded with presidential semen stains still upon them, or the latest youtube viral video horrors, you may think so. But - although it seems we have reached a plateau I think there is a way to go. The misery memoir, of which *A Boy Called It* is the ur-text, is a step along the way. Misery memoirs - my Waterstone's has a whole wall of them. *Damaged* was one of the first.

But here's what is still to be revealed: the perpetrators' stories. We might be talking about domestic abuse or rape or war crimes, but there's nothing from them ever. Ever. Probably on the very reasonable grounds that they're all nauseating lowlifes who should be given rat poison rather than a pen and paper, and also that they'll lie and try to make out it was all because of their own painful childhoods or that the rape and the war crime was consensual. The depraved are either smart enough to know they really shouldn't tell the truth, or stupid enough not to be able to anyway. So it seems that at present we believe that victims *always* tell the truth and perpetrators *always* lie. Can this be true? Probably not, but I think we'll have to live with that for a long time yet. I doubt that we'll ever get the perpetrator's stories. Why would we want to? Because no man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; because I am involved in mankind. (That last bit's by John Donne, not me!)

As regards *Damaged*, as I read I found the good angel of belief and the bad angel of unbelief grappling with each other in the space just behind my left ear. Alas for Cathy Glass, she writes very dully and competently except when it comes to dialogue, when we get stuff that sounds straight out of *The Exorcist* :

*Jodie [aged 8] spun round to face me. Her features were hard and distorted. "No" she shouted, in a gruff masculine voice. "Get out or I'll rip you to pieces. Get out bitch!"... She advanced towards me with her hands clawed, baring her teeth. "I'm not Jodie" she growled, "I'm Reg. Get out or I'll fucking kill you."*

I know there are abuse cases as bad as this one but this kind of stuff inadvertently gives the abuse the patina of bad fiction. Exactly what the perps count on, of course - *No one will believe you* . Anyway, this is a straightforward account of one foster woman's total nightmare, the nastiest most ungovernable 8 year old which everyone else had given up on. Once again the social workers get it in the neck - all the signs of familial abuse were there for years and were not spotted, the stupid feeble social workers were intimidated by the family, same old same old. I would have been interested in more detail about the degenerate birth family but Cathy Glass would not have had any access to that info. And I would have liked an uplifting and hopeful end to this revolting tale. So here's my full disclosure: there isn't one. This *damaged* child was not healed. Life's like that.

## Alexandra says

yes i'm already finished with the book, and considering the time i started yesterday and the time i finished today, i finished in about a day. the first book i remember reading on these subjects was 'one child' by torey hayden and from that moment i was hooked on these types of books and for some reason i like books where there are stories of struggle, or sadness and hardships.i don't think i completely know why, but i do know i like them because when there about children like the little girl Jodie in the book good does come out at the end.

i did struggle reading parts of this book, but i also couldn't put it down. each turn of the page either brought more trouble and heartbreaking moments, or laughter and tears of joy. Jodie was a very damaged girl,with all the rejection she went through Cathy was able to help this damaged little girl and give her a chance of hope!

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