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Cult Child



Cult Child

Vennie Kocsis



Synopsis

The harrowing first-person account of one child's ordeals inside the isolated commune of an ultra-fundamentalist religious cult. An Best Seller in Child Abuse and Religious Cults, July 2016! It is 1973. Sila Caprin's mother is recruited into "Sam Fife's Move of God"; within the year, Sila and her older siblings, Leis and Jeremy, along with all of the family's belongings, are packed into the back of a U-Haul, leaving California for their new home in Massachusetts. Eventually they will be taken deep into the harsh Alaskan tundra, to live on a compound surrounded by miles of woods and monitored by armed men. With every detail of their lives minutely controlled by Sam Fife's violent teachings, Sila endures physical, mental and sexual abuse as she fights to maintain just a glimmer of her own humanity. Creative, intuitive and smart, young Sila vies for individuality in a culture where she is insignificant and unprotected " until the day her sister becomes a victim of an act so dreadful that its sadness becomes their savior. Poignant, gripping and ultimately triumphant, Vennie Kocsis "Cult Child" will leave you inspired by the pure strength of will that children use to cope themselves through trauma. "Her fortress is no bigger than the space between her ears; but through quiet internal resistance, Sila halts her opponents and outlasts their ten year siege." Dolon Hickmon, author of "13:24".

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Customer Reviews

As an abuse survivor I found sadness in my heart while reading *Cult Child*. I wanted to scream, "RUN!" I was on the edge of my seat when "Fran" arrived. The little girl's strong sense of self and survival are apparent and I believe that is why she was able to live through the abuses forced on her at the hands of the real demons, the cult leaders and abusers in her life. I'm proud of the Author for rising up and I want to thank her for telling her story. She matters. A special message to the little girl that the Author used to be.. from the little girl that I used to be:~ The trees we relied on for those rare moments of peace may be gone from this earth, so we shall let every tree we see remind us of our growth, our power, and our worth. ~

Cult Child is a novelization of the experiences of a real-life survivor, whose physical, sexual and spiritual child abuse were abetted by her mother's deepening involvement with a highly controlling fundamentalist Christian group called *The Move*. Written in a restrained but engaging style, which I found vaguely reminiscent of Kazuo Ishiguro's brilliantly understated bestseller, *Never Let Me Go*, the book opens with a prologue that states: "The events you are about to read are all true. Only names have been changed." The heroine is Sila Caprin, who progresses from age three to age thirteen over the course of the novel. These years are spent in the "safety" and "prison-like conformity" of two of the *Move's* remote, communal farms. Upon arriving at the first of these, Sila and her family are stripped of their property, with their valuables being redistributed among other members of the commune, while sentimental items "like family photographs" are burned. From there, the family members are further isolated by assigning each to different sleeping and eating quarters. Sila's maltreatment then becomes constant. Some abuses, like disciplinary beatings, grueling farm work, and near-starvation rations, are directly commanded by church doctrine. Other crimes, such as Sila's almost continuous sexual molestation, come as the predictable result of separating children from their own protective biological siblings and parents. In the end, Sila's fortress is no bigger than the space between her ears; but through quiet internal resistance, she manages to halt her opponents and outlasts their ten year siege.

This book was exactly what I needed to read. Vennie's ability to articulate the atrocities that young children endured at *Ware* will be extremely unnerving for most readers and a brutal reminder for those that shared her horror. I could not put this book down. At the end of the book, the photo of

Frank Argento sent chills down my spine. He was my handler during my time at Ware. It's one thing to write a great book. It's another to write a great book about your own life in a manner so compelling that the reader is captivated from the first page to the last picture. Well done

â from the black cloud of physical, sexual and emotional abuse from deranged, hypocritical adults that shaped her childhood. This is a powerful story that may trigger memories in many. As I read, I wanted to take up this child in my arms and hug her and tell her everything was going to be OK. She would have known I was lying, but probably appreciated it at the moment. There were times when she was so desperately injured no one could touch her without inflicting pain. Other times, her soul was deeply wounded. In spite of a childhood riddled with emotional and physical pain, Vennie Kocsis found healing. Now she courageously tells her story, familiar to too many people, with the passion of passing this example of healing onto others.

Writing one's memoirs is a difficult task, but when a writer can do it and make it into something meaningful and compelling - that's called talent. Vennie Kocsis' memoir is an engrossing read, full of complex emotions and themes. Above all, the theme of survival and rising above your own past comes through in beautiful fashion, keeping the reader involved and getting them to think beyond the confines of an every day life. I can't recommend this book enough.

I'm not sure how to feel about this book. I think it's sad what happened to her and it's good that she wrote it down and was courageous enough to share it, I was not really very interested in the book and it did not really hold my attention well but I feel bad saying that considering what she went through.

When I read Cult Child, I was shocked at all that Sila went through all in the name of religion. And people wonder why I don't belong to any organized religion? It still makes me mad that her mother didn't do anything to stop the abuse from going on. I feel that Cult Child is a testament of something that happened and is probably still happening in different religious groups to this very day.

I have never read a book in one sitting before. From the moment I read the first word I was completely enthralled. My heart aches for these children. I feel their pain. I want to thank the author for having the courage and the strength to give us a glimpse into her life. I look forward to the sequel.

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