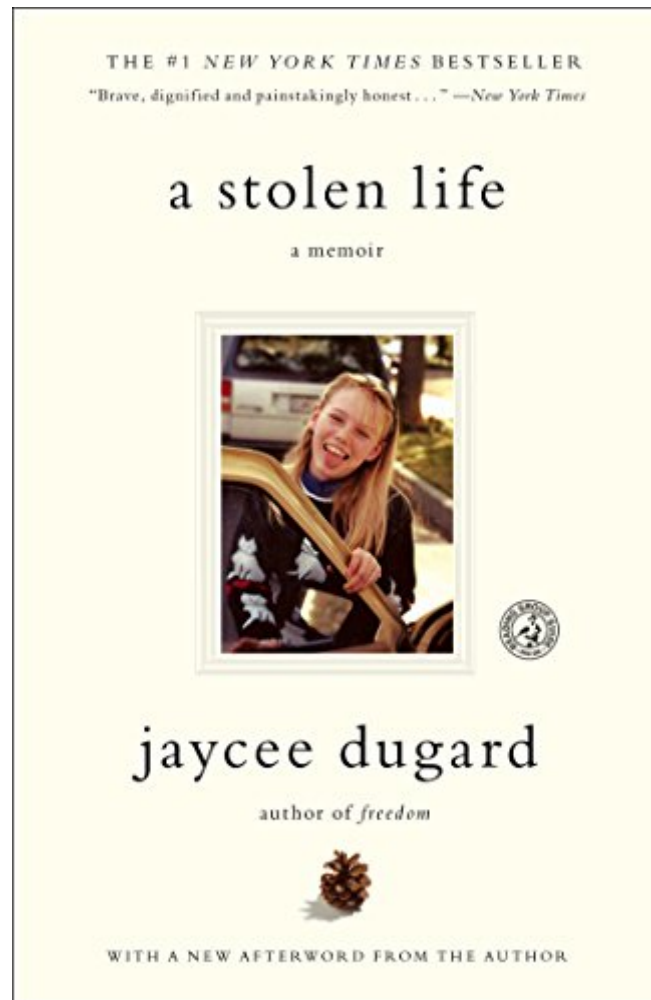




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A Stolen Life: A Memoir



Synopsis

In the summer of 1991 I was a normal kid. I did normal things. I had friends and a mother who loved me. I was just like you. Until the day my life was stolen. For eighteen years I was a prisoner. I was an object for someone to use and abuse. For eighteen years I was not allowed to speak my own name. I became a mother and was forced to be a sister. For eighteen years I survived an impossible situation. On August 26, 2009, I took my name back. My name is Jaycee Lee Dugard. I don't think of myself as a victim. I survived. A Stolen Life is my story—in my own words, in my own way, exactly as I remember it.---The pine cone is a symbol that represents the seed of a new beginning for me. To help facilitate new beginnings, with the support of animal-assisted therapy, the J A Y C Foundation provides support and services for the timely treatment of families recovering from abduction and the aftermath of traumatic experiences—families like my own who need to learn how to heal. In addition, the J A Y C Foundation hopes to facilitate awareness in schools about the important need to care for one another. Our motto is “Just Ask Yourself to . . . Care!” A portion of my proceeds from this memoir will be donated to The J A Y C Foundation Inc.

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Customer Reviews

The last week or so I've been on a kick of reading either true crime novels about girls that have been kidnapped or in the case of, this book, when the victims themselves have written their own story in the form of memoirs or a book. I find that I prefer the accounts that are written by the survivors of the kidnappings; they seem more honest and you know what your reading actually happened to the author. Sometimes true crime novels just feel like they are listing all the facts they can find to include in their books. While I do value accuracy reading the same thing three times throughout the book and knowing its the same fact just worded differently gets really frustrating and boring to be honest. This book follows the life of Jaycee Dugard starting around the time she was first taken from her parents. And follows her throughout the next 18 years as Philip and his wife Nancy make her change her name, as well as Philip raping her every two to three days. They tell her that they took her so that Philip can use her for his pedophilic urges and in this way he won't have to kill or rape someone else to fulfill his twisted needs. He (Philip) also gets Jaycee pregnant twice both times she has girls and when she becomes a Mother it strengthens something in her because now she has two little lives depending on her to protect them and keep them safe. It also really struck me how the abductor's wife Nancy was so involved in taking Jaycee who was only eleven at the time; I mean what kind of female would do that to another woman much less a pre-teen girl; I cannot even imagine being that evil. This story kept me enthralled and interested for the entire book; it does have some graphic details so if that would bother you or if bringing up unwanted abuse from your own past then although its a good book I would not recommend you read it. Jaycee definitely has her own style of writing; she even hints in the beginning of the book that her writing style is vastly different from the norm. I love that she has her own voice and she deserves so much more than what that evil couple did to her. I gave the book four stars instead of five because at places it was really jumpy, and things got repeated a lot...other than that I really enjoyed the book. (Maybe enjoyment isn't the right word;) I'll just say I respect that Jaycee had the courage to write it, and to continue to try to live a normal happy life with her girls. If you like true crime novels or are just looking for a change of pace; and something that will really rock you to your core then I would definitely recommend this book.

Wow!! Thanks to Kindle, I was able to download the book at about one in the morning, and it's now seven in the morning. I have not read a book in one sitting, or in one night for years! People who saw

the ABC interview with Diane Sawyer saw how warm and lovely this young lady is, and her book is like the interview but a hundred times warmer and more personal. Jaycee's story is refreshing in that it's written by her, and not from a co-author. Much of the book are pages and pages taken from the actual journal entries she wrote while in her backyard prison. You can tell that her journal entries read in much same way as the rest of the book, so in a sense, the entire book is a continuation of her journaling and her ongoing mission in life to help others. For example, it's hard to tell when you're reading from her old journal entries from her more current writings of when she's authoring this book. It's really all one voice, and you definitely get a feel for how her voice resonates through. Some readers on comment sections of news sites have mentioned they don't want to read the book due to graphic scenes being portrayed. Yes, these scenes are there, but written in a very mature way that I think people should really read. The book doesn't focus on these scenes, as rather the book focuses on simply sharing her story and conveying her sense of hope that's still beaming today. But the sexual abuse scenes are important to all of America as they describe horrifying sexual acts that often go by generic terms like 'rape' and 'molestation.' But what do those mean? Jaycee paints a much clearer picture, and in doing so, acts as the voice for all the victims of sexual abuse that can't share their story. In America, sexual abuse is something that gets pushed under the rug, or punished. It's like there's no in between. Jaycee didn't know what the word rape meant while the act was being done to her, and I remember when I was 11 (I was also born in 1980 like Jaycee), I didn't know what the word rape meant either. I don't think I learned what the word meant until I was 13 or 14. Perhaps if more people learn about sexual abuse, and what it actually entails, then more can be done to protect innocent victims. And more importantly, when people realize what goes on behind closed doors of rapists, perhaps there won't be parole after just a few years for somebody who had already raped a woman for eight hours straight in a warehouse. Jaycee does an excellent job showing how her captor is a repeat offender, one that therapy cannot solve. Jaycee goes on to describe the failure of the therapists that her captor visited, and how they enabled him more than anything by allowing him to make excuses rather than be accountable for his behavior. With all this being said, this book is probably not for young teenagers to read by themselves, as Jaycee shares vivid accounts of sexual abuses that happened to her; abuses she didn't even know the names for at the time. Cautiously I note, the entire book would be a great one for a parent and teenager to read and discuss together, with parental guidance on parts of the book that are tough to read or perhaps need proper perspective put into place. (Parents, you must read the book first, as you're the one to judge if the book is appropriate or not for your teenager). In my opinion, I think it's a subject that needs to be talked about more, even if it's difficult to read, but of

course, that's up to parental discretion. The only part I found that was hard to read in the book were the journal entries that talk about her thoughts and reactions to her captor's ongoing talk about Angels and how her captor believed the Angels control people. I don't know how many pages in the regular book, but it was a few pages on the Kindle. While it's tough to read, it illuminates just how unimaginably tougher it would be to live in that kind of manipulative situation on a daily basis. What's also tough but enlightening to read is how much compassion she has for all the animals she cared for. Through all the events taking place upon her rescue, she even asks a couple officers if they can check on her animals and make sure they're okay, at which time the officers made sure to find them and get them temporary foster homes. The irony that develops through her selfless caring often mirrored her own reality: For example, Jaycee starts feeling really badly about one of her cats being locked up with her all the time, and feeling guilty for wanting the cat's company, she shares how a shed is no place for a cat. Yet she never shows any kind of self-pity on her own situation...all you see is your strength and courage. I just can't believe these things happened to an 11 year old girl. You really get a sense into the manipulation of the captors (I refuse to say their names) and how through the horror of everything, Jaycee completely shines light throughout her memoir. It's like there's not even a 'hate' bone in her body -- she's an inspiration to us all; that love and hope conquers no matter. And the best thing is that the entire memoir is written so warmly, it's like Jaycee is sharing her story with you directly at the dinner table. And she goes on to share, now that she and her family are free, something very important to her: The simple daily act of cooking great foods and eating at the dinner table. One last thing, in her journal entries she mentions her goals and plans for her future once she becomes free -- so many of them she's actually doing!

Jaycee could have been anyone's daughter. We still have a missing child in our area here in Arkansas and do not know of her outcome. I know this mother still has hope and continues to fight that her daughter is alive, but to here the story of how Jaycee not only survived but is turning her life around to help others, very proud of her. She is truly a blessing. Thank God she lived through the horrible situation - I have 3 daughters and always had that fear bringing them up. Jaycee - you are very special and unique. Never forget that. Yes you were robbed of your youth but now you are a voice for those that need your strength and hope. God has a purpose for you and I know that your love for your daughters is such a blessing to you and your family. You are an amazing young woman and as a mother I would be so proud of you as a daughter!!

Excellent book! The only thing that I would wish to change is that none of it happened to her. I feel

so sad for what her kids and her and everyone close to her went through. The parts about the animals ripped me to pieces!! and what really tore me up the most is everything that she went through and for how long she went through it..It really tore my heart out for her. I will continue keeping her in my thoughts and prayers! I learned a lot from her story. I myself also suffered some physical, verbal and sexual abuse in my lifetime ,and a lot of it I still have not come to grips with it .but her book has helped me to understand some things about my own life ,that I didn't understand before, parts of her therapy also helped me to some degree. She is such a strong woman!! and I wish and pray nothing but the best for her and her children always!! Thanks for sharing your story(life) with us. GOD BLESS YOU AND YOUR KIDS ALWAYS!!!

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