

SAMPLE

# DIVIDED WE FELL



**VOLUME 2**

JOANNE BARD

DIVIDED  
WE  
FELL

JOANNE BARD

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# MY FATHER'S SIN

My father's sin is...  
The whole reason  
I feel so empty inside.  
The whole reason I...  
Have so many problems with men.

My father's sin...  
The reason I always  
Pick the men,  
Who are bound to hurt me  
Again, Again.

My father's sin...  
When I think back  
To when I was a child  
I think of how I  
Survived through all  
That was done to me.

How I suffered all that...  
Pain and anguish  
Because of my father's sin

I was always told...  
He did it to show me...  
Just how much he loved me.  
When I think back now  
How was that fatherly love?

I wish I could forgive  
My father for his sin.  
I know in time there will  
Be a day I would  
Have wished to confront him  
For all he has done.

I wish that day would come,  
Where he confused  
For all the pain and anguish  
He has done to me  
And asked for forgiveness.

But I know that day will never come  
For he can't forgive himself for all  
He has done... for it is fatherly sin.

Shannon Schram  
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# CHAPTER ONE

It was a scorching summer evening when the airplane landed in Sault Ste Marie, Ontario. As I walked down the ramp, I saw my father and a gentleman waiting for my arrival. I walked up to my dad, and we made small talk which was not unusual from earlier meetings in the past. Somethings never change. We're on our way to the hospital for me to meet with who would become my new mother. She had just lost a baby named Lucy. We sat and visited for a bit and started our journey to the place I would now call home. As I opened the door to hell, I saw my younger brother Ken standing there. We hugged and said hello. It had been four long years since I had seen him. To my right was this little girl who was introduced as Lily. I now had my first half-sister.



It was a two-bedroom apartment and all of us kids shared the same room. I was asked by my aunt to call when I arrived at my destination. As I explained my living arrangements she was saddened and said these words that still ring in my head, I never should have let you go. I told her everything was okay.

Ken and I would climb out the window to the roof at night to escape the turmoil running through our home like a knife cutting through butter. It was peaceful there, or we would walk down to the sea channel separating the Sault from Buffalo. We would watch the boats going by and just enjoy the little quiet before entering the storm again. Dad and mom both worked but money was always scary. Dad was back to the old ways spending money in the bar entertaining the woman while Rose stayed at home getting angrier by the moment. When dad finally arrived home and entered the bedroom it became a war zone. Rose yelled and my father lost control as always. I ran to

the hallway as I saw my dad raise his hand to hit her. I begged him not to do it and he only looked at me and hit her right in the face. I saw her hit the floor and he was so enraged he just kept punching her repeatedly. I held my hands to my ears muffle the sound of her screaming. Oh, how I remember those sounds and a flash of the past came streaming across my mind. I'm back in the Lion's den.

Life for us seemed to pass slowly each day, it was like walking on eggshells, afraid to speak or do anything that could set him off on a rampage. Mornings would be our only escape from the life of hell, off to school for and great activities. Rose and I didn't have a relationship. She would've preferred I never arrived in her world. She would remind me how much she hated me because I reminded her of my late mom. Sickening knowing, she was an acquaintance of my mother and sat and had drinks with her, while sleeping with my father. That's unforgivable on so many levels. She now has become a part of the fault

in my mom's passing. You are a despicable human being. The feelings I had were mutual nonetheless. She would treat me like a slave. I did all the housework and every weekend while everyone else could go outside to play I was buffing hardwood floors on my hands and knees until they bled. Dusting, vacuuming and washing floors. I would now become the housekeeper instead of the daughter. She became my enemy.

Dad was staying away a lot more and drinking the money away. He would make my brother and I go out and hunt for soda bottles to buy a loaf of bread. Oh, how we hated him for that. It was not long before rent was a few months behind and we were moving. This would also become a part of our lives, two different schools in one year.

We found a larger house that had a huge attic where my brother and I would share. He on one side and me on the other. Dad straightened out for a little while but that wasn't about to remain. The drinking started

again and now we had a new addition to the family. Our half-brother John was born. The beatings began again, and Rose would be sporting a new pair of sunglasses to hide the evidence of the late-night *ronda Vo* with a fist. Even with the hatred she had for me I still felt sorry for what she had endured. I thought we would become friends, but I was dreaming. You don't always get what you want in life and that was one of them.

As time went on, I would become responsible for all the housework and on weekends I would have to spend all my time learning how to curl my hair, which could be a reason I don't today. I hated standing there trying to put these stupid bobby pins in my head. Where is my childhood and why has she stolen it from me? I had no friends, and I would envy the other siblings out there living their life and she took mine. Because she hated me. Such a bitter woman, Guilty Conscience maybe somehow, I doubt it. She had no conscience or class for that matter. My

younger brother on the other hand was the apple of her eye, please, He was intelligent and the abbot reader which was her cup of tea. Pathetic really. The worst part was he knew it and relished in it. He would torment me on a regular basis. He enjoyed it when she was angry with me. It got so bad that one day it was too much. She made the rule one day my brother would prepare our lunch and then I. He would borrow his friend's bicycle to beat me home so he could make the lunch and then complain I was not home in time so she would be angry with me. Two weeks I endured this treatment until one day I saw him with a smirk on his face as he is cooking and I saw red, I ran up and grabbed a knife as he ran into a doorway and as he gripped the wall, I saw the knife going into his back, not deep before I realized what I had done. I dropped the knife to the floor and just shook. I just couldn't believe how much mental anguish he had done to me over an extended period. My next thought was my dad is going

to beat me bad for this one. To my surprise dad wasn't angry, and just simply said that he shouldn't have made me so angry. Wow! Great stabbing let's eat. My brother would continue to pick on me, but never pushed it too extreme again.

I remember one day I came home, and the bathroom was flooding. Our next-door neighbor came over and apparently saved the day. Before the words came out of my mouth, my father gave her my Brownie Outfit I held onto as one of my memories from my last home and now it was gone. It didn't matter what I treasured; it was never respected. If he worked for a living maybe, then I would still have it. He started drinking and rent became in arrears. My siblings and I were sent home from school for passing out in class from a lack of food. Supper would be a mustard sandwich, or as a treat one with ketchup. Our cereal was puffed wheat without milk or sugar. Oh, how we longed for potatoes or meat. To top it all off we're moving again. A

new school, new friends, and hopefully a new beginning. Who was I kidding?

We were moving again, this time to Guelph, Ontario to live with his arch enemy, his deceased wife's mother. The woman whom he despised. The same woman I despised. It didn't take long before we moved into a fourplex home in an enclosed backyard where everyone joined and played baseball. Dad would pull pranks late at night and everyone seemed to get along. We had a man who thought he was Captain America dad would say. Things seemed good until one day someone broke a window. My brothers and I accused the next-door neighbor's child because frankly we didn't like him. Then we found out it was our little sister who did it. Dad called us one by one, and sucker punched us in the face. One time dad brought home a couple of friends from work, and they got into an intense argument. I wasn't feeling well so I was sleeping in my dad's room when I heard screaming and yelling. I ran to the doorway

and asked dad what was happening, and he told me to close the door. As I did, I saw my dad smash this man's face into our stove. It was horrible, blood everywhere. Apparently, he accused my father of coming onto his wife. In all honesty he probably did.

Another incident happened when the woman behind us had her house on fire. My dad was the one who got there on time. He saved the day. It was in the papers, so I took the article to school for current events. I was so proud until I arrived home to find out my younger sister was the cause of the fire. We were forced to clean her place, do the laundry, and feed her family. My sister would endure a belt wrenching time. See she was used to it because she would get beaten every single day for wetting the bed. She would be black and blue and there were days I wished I could do the sheets just to stop her pain. It was gut wrenching to listen to her screams daily. My younger brother and I got caught stealing chocolate bars. Ken got away with it but not



me. I was the oldest. He beat me across my back arms basically whenever it landed. He would yell at me to cry, but I just couldn't bow down and give him the satisfaction. When I think of this all I can say is, what were you thinking? I would look out the corner of my eye and there was the witch of the east with a smile on her face with every swing of the belt.

Then dad was jobless again, nothing unusual in that. We had no food and Rose would make these cookies that were hard as rock and absolutely no flavor. I would through them in my closet and starve before I would eat them. I guess this might explain my next criminal deed. There was a horse across the street in a field and I knew this girl loved horses, so stupid me sold her the horse on weekly payments. I knew it was wrong, but I did it anyway. Then I got caught. She went to my house and told my dad. Suddenly, I heard my name, and I knew the angry voice extremely well. I went into the house and was led to my bedroom where he told me to

remove my shirt and struck me repeatedly with the same words demanding I cry and of course I wouldn't give him that pleasure. It might be the very reason I stayed tough all my life. It was my only defense. Sad but true nonetheless. My punishment was to be locked in my room with a sandwich a day to live on for a week. Serve me right. Plus, I had to pay back every penny to the girl and apologize. Which I did. My parents made me see a psychiatrist after that and do all types of tests. Well at least it got me out of the house for a while.

One day my brother was told to wash down the stairs before they got home. Well Steve picked up the bucket and threw the water down the stairs and said there it is done. Well, that wasn't one of his brightest ideas and he got a punch in the face again. Dad had broken his nose. The boys would be told not to wrestle while they were gone to no avail. See they hated each other as said previously in my book, but it was the perfect

opportunity for me to go from extremely poor to extraordinarily rich by telling them I would keep my mouth shut if they gave me their allowance. Great deal for me, not so much for them because they couldn't keep their paws off each other.

Then one day we were told that George was moving in. George is the son of my mom's mommy's dearest adoptions. She would have that poor boy beaten on a regular basis. He wasn't the smartest, but with what he had to endure his whole life it's no wonder. Little did we know he was a sleepwalker and a violent one at that. He would destroy a room in less than two minutes. One night he went into dad and Roses bedroom jumped on her and started punching her. After that, dad tied him to the bed, and I made him put a lock on my door. I was terrified. I felt so bad for George, it wasn't his fault. The adopted daughter Sarah, her precious daughter, was treated like a queen. Whatever she wanted she got. If she would've been a decent mother and treated

her only daughter like that, she would have been in my life for a long time. Instead of cutting her life short.

There was another time when I had done something wrong, and dad beat me again. This time I ran away. It took several days before he found me at the woman's home he and I detested. The police came and picked me up to take me back home. I begged him not to take me there and showed him the belt welts on my back. The officer said he thought my dad was charming and would not hurt me again. As the officer was walking away, he told my father he better not hurt me again. The door slammed and I was pushed down a flight of stairs for sharing our family business with the police. All I could think about is how to escape this man who treated us like pounding boards instead of his children. What happened to him to turn him into this monster, and would it be enough for us to understand or be a little more understanding? Somehow, I doubt it.

It would always remain a part of our life so the silence of abuse mentally, physically and emotionally would just continue as the sun rose and fell in the evening. There would be no end to this nightmare we were living.

As the sun rose the next morning and as I peered out my window for a brighter and more rewarding day and made my way to the kitchen dad announced we were moving again. Probably behind on rent again. We were now on our way to London, Ontario. Larger than Guelph I believe and quite a distance. With so many moves in our lives long friendships were not a part of our life. Everyone was an acquaintance, no understanding of the word's devoted friends. So many hellos followed by short goodbyes. Non existing, just a part of our reality.

The house we moved into was a two-story old house that needed work. Dad agreed to strip the wallpaper and paint the house for a couple of months of free rent. Rose got a job working in a bank as dad through the

money away on alcohol and ladies, anyone who would be entertained by his dry humor coming home at all hours of the night. One night Rose pushed his buttons, and the beating began. I got tired of saying anything, so I sat silently. Next morning the sunglasses appeared on her face once again. My older brother cracks off about it and dad warned him to shut his mouth, but no he continued vigorously and yelled at him you killed my mother. Without a moment in between, my father punched him square in the face, breaking a front tooth and a broken nose if not mistaken. I thought to myself, bro, what were you thinking? A sucker for punishment, are you insane? Rose would give birth to another half-brother named Charles. He was my favorite. I would take care of him and take him for buggy rides. Things remained tense as usual, and Christmas would come and go and never a present under the tree. We were used to it. One Christmas there was one. I bought it for Rose, my abuser, my enemy. Strange how

that worked. It didn't change anything in our relationship.

Dad finally got a job and for once we thought our life would be back on track, wrong? Dad continued to stay in the bars after work and drink the money away. We would be starving. One night he arrived home at 4 am in the morning with ribs and all the trimmings. He woke us up and made us eat the food. We didn't seem to care, for we didn't know when the next meal would be. One night Dad and Rose went dressed to the nines as they were headed to the Christmas party at dad's workplace. The next morning dad arrived home after spending the night with a co-worker who was flaunting herself in front of him. A married woman, one with no class, a double home wrecker. When I asked where Rose was, he said in a mental facility for going crazy over the whole episode. Dad packed his things and left us all once again. It had only been four years and he was gone again. My brother Steve left with him. Finally,

Rose was released from the facility to come home and find him gone. How does it feel to have what you did to my mother come and do it to you? For me there was gratification. What made you think for a moment you were important to him? So once again we we were moving again, without dad.

Next destination was Kitchener, Ontario, back home where my whole life began and ended in tragedy. Five of us kids we moving on. We had an apartment, small, but Rose did her best. Our relationship worsened. She would make me sit at a table to write to my dad to tell him to get me out of there. Funny part I don't know where she was sending it, it's not like he left her a forwarding address. One day I met this guy named Brian and we started dating. Nothing serious of course. I was only 15 at the time. I said I was going to my friend's place. When I got there, we decided to visit him. Well, my brother was looking for me and said I had best return home at once. I walked in and she started screaming at me for not



being in the apartment I said I was, she told me to go to my room and followed me with such hatred in her voice and eyes. She then hit me in the face, and I fought back punching her, meanwhile her friend was in the kitchen drinking tea. I Rose yelled out that I was a slut like my mother and I ran to the kitchen and grabbed a butcher knife while her words rang over and over in my head that I was a slut just like my mother. I told her you can call me a slut, but don't you ever call my mother one or I will kill you. Her friend ran from the apartment and called the police. It was going to be a long night for me.

When the officer's arrived they asked the woman if they could use the apartment to talk to me. She agreed. They sat me down and asked if I wanted to go back down and sort things out with her. My response was quick and simple with no thought process other than to say. You leave me here; she'll be dead by morning. It was already midnight when I was taken to my new residence. A group

home is where I will be spending the rest of my teenage days. Once again, our siblings are divided and forever fallen. I would only see my younger brother once in four years.

# CHAPTER TWO

**M**y new home had 12 foster children, plus their own twin boys. They all seem to get along well, but I felt there was no place here for me. No abuse, but Strick rules and rules never really agreed with me completely. It was a month in, and I found myself in court alone waiting in a waiting room to hear my fate. My mind wondered if my father would appear, not likely, he was never there for me before. I was scared because I had never been in such a big place. Then I heard my name and was led into the courtroom. The Judge looked up and said hello and went straight to business. The words were hard to listen to as the judge asked if anyone was there to represent me, sadly no, it's just me. Then his mallet hit the desk and these words pounded in my head. You are now a ward

of the courts until you're 21 years old. I was now an unwanted child, no one loved, missed, or wanted me. Oh, how I wanted to be 21 right now and just pass by this whole fiasco. I kept looking at the door praying this wasn't happening and if it is why? I didn't ask to be born, but there I was, in hell.

When I finally arrived back at the foster home there was cake and ice cream to celebrate. Celebrate what I thought? There's no celebration here, pain and suffering are all I felt. My stomach sickened with the uncertainty of my life. I'm living with strangers; my family is now gone. Will I ever see them again? After a few days I began to have nightmares and would wake up screaming. I would have this same dream over and over each night with no relief in sight. Mom would be on the top of a stairway as I watched my dad push her. She landed in a pool of blood at my feet, confusing me and my memories, playing games in my head. They sent me to a psychiatrist to help me sort it out. Eventually they stopped and