

The Fifth Sister: From Victim to Victor -Overcoming Child Abuse

Laura Landgraf



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Laura was ten, crouched outside her parents' bedroom, when she overheard that her father had made her oldest sister pregnant. For the next eight years, she and her four sisters struggled to survive the nightmare of sexual and emotional abuse.

As an adult, she buried memories of her family's dysfunction and tried to build the most perfect life she could imagine. But when she discovered that her father was still an incestuous abuser, she knew she had to face her past to protect her children. Going undercover, she was able to prove a twenty-year history of molestation, which her mother aided and abetted. With that evidence and the help of the Adam Walsh Center, she was able, at last, to legally protect her children.

From Oregon to the wild beauty of Africa's interior and back, Laura renders life as they lived it—the isolation, the fear, the losses, the manipulation and control, the tentative and fragile bonds of sisterhood—with humor and a growing sense of self.

The Fifth Sister explores incest's devastating effects on two continents, over three decades. In this compelling, intimate, and artfully told story, readers will experience the crushing impact of psychological, physical, sexual, and spiritual abuse, the burning desire to transcend the family script, and the gritty determination to succeed. Readers who have experienced incest will find their anguish validated by this book. Those who have not faced this trauma will gain deep understanding of dysfunctional families that have many secrets. But above all, *The Fifth Sister* is a story of hope.

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