

Evil Eyes: A Daughter's Memoir

Cherylann Thomas

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"I have flashbacks of excessively painful memories that never leave me," Cherylann Thomas writes. Thomas' malignant, narcissistic mother destroyed her self-esteem, and Thomas' severe fear of her mother continued in adulthood.

When Thomas' mother and psychopathic father divorced, her mother got custody of Cherylann. The mother's abuse, which was usually verbal, caused Thomas to believe that she was a terrible, worthless person. Her mother said that Thomas had the same evil eyes as her father. Thomas' stepfather sexually abused her. After becoming an adult, Thomas' repeated efforts to gain her mother's love interfered with her ability to develop self-esteem and to cope with life.

Thomas received diagnoses from several psychiatrists. Only one diagnosis made sense: post-traumatic stress disorder. Medication failed to help. After multiple suicide attempts and unable to work, Thomas benefited from a residential program and from the Elizabeth Fry Society's Historical Sexual Assault program.

Thomas' criminology education prepared her to write about psychopaths, sexual predators, and malignant narcissists. Her certification as a Myers-Briggs testing administrator and her training as a lay counselor also indicates she thoroughly understands personality disorders.

Thomas prepares readers in the prologue by describing psychopaths and malignant narcissists: psychopaths purposely hurt people, while malignant narcissists disregard everyone's feelings but their own. The author provides an index, along with thirty pages of photos (mostly captioned), to help readers keep track of and visualize the people she describes.

Readers will notice many errors, such as grammatical mistakes, missing words, and typos. Some sentences are confusing, and many phrases are cliché. Several quotes from the Internet lack a URL, or are missing a website name.

Regardless of errors in the text, Thomas has an important message to deliver: healing from the abuse inflicted by malignant narcissists, sexual predators, and psychopaths is possible—but only by discontinuing contact with them. She reports the setbacks she experienced while her parents were alive, and how she was able to manage her life better after they both died.

Reading about Thomas' life will help anyone better evaluate themselves and the destructive relationships they are in. Thomas shows that regaining destroyed self-esteem is a long, difficult struggle.

NORMA D. KELLAM (February 13, 2012)

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