



"I became convinced I needed to write this book after an experience with a friend... He was struggling with many of the issues that I struggled with in my youth.

I tried to be a mentor and friend to him whenever I found the time. However, one day when he called, I couldn't give him the time that I knew he so desperately needed. Days later, I attempted to return the call, only to learn that he had killed himself."

In that moment an intense feeling of responsibility overtook me... I wish I could have found that young man and helped him to find his strength... What he did not know was that at his very age and for the same reasons, I too had attempted suicide.

I am writing my experiences to help any other person who is struggling with life and who feels as if they have nowhere to turn."

-- Excerpted from the Introduction (page 9)

It's easy, at first blush, to conclude that Karl Allen Griggs was dealt a horrible hand in life. After all, the bullet-ridden body of the father he never really knew was found in a dumpster while Karl was still young.

Later, his widowed mother failed to protect him when she remarried a pedophile preacher. Not only was Karl molested by his new stepdad, but he was also sexually assaulted by the church's assistant pastor.

And things weren't any better for him in grade school in inner-city Detroit when he was routinely

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Written by Kam Williams

teased with epithets like “sissy” and “faggot.” In the 4th grade, he was raped in the boys’ bathroom by a bully a couple of years older. To add insult to injury, the administrator who came upon the crime scene compounded the violation by forcing Karl to fellate him on the spot instead of punishing the perpetrator.

The neverending spiral into depravity culminated years later in Karl’s attempting suicide with sleeping pills when the principal of his high school threatened to divulge all of the above to his mother. Fortunately, he survived the overdose and went on to thrive, thanks in large part to the love and attention lavished on him by his biological grandmothers, Doris and Velva, and by his step-grandmother, Mary.

These doting elders’ sage advice is gratefully recounted in *Shattered Mirrors: Broken in Plain Sight*, an unblinking autobiography graphically describing the host of woes visited upon Karl as a kid. What makes the collection of painful reflections both worthwhile and handy is how the author has highlighted his insightful grannies’ words of wisdom in bold print.

Thus, it is easy to locate their universally-themed proverbs, such as Gramma Velva’s admonition that, “True love will cherish and adore you, and you will know when you have it because they will put your happiness above your own.”

A priceless primer on picking up the pieces of a life shattered practically from birth.

*Shattered Mirrors:
Broken in Plain Sight*
by Karl Allen Griggs
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