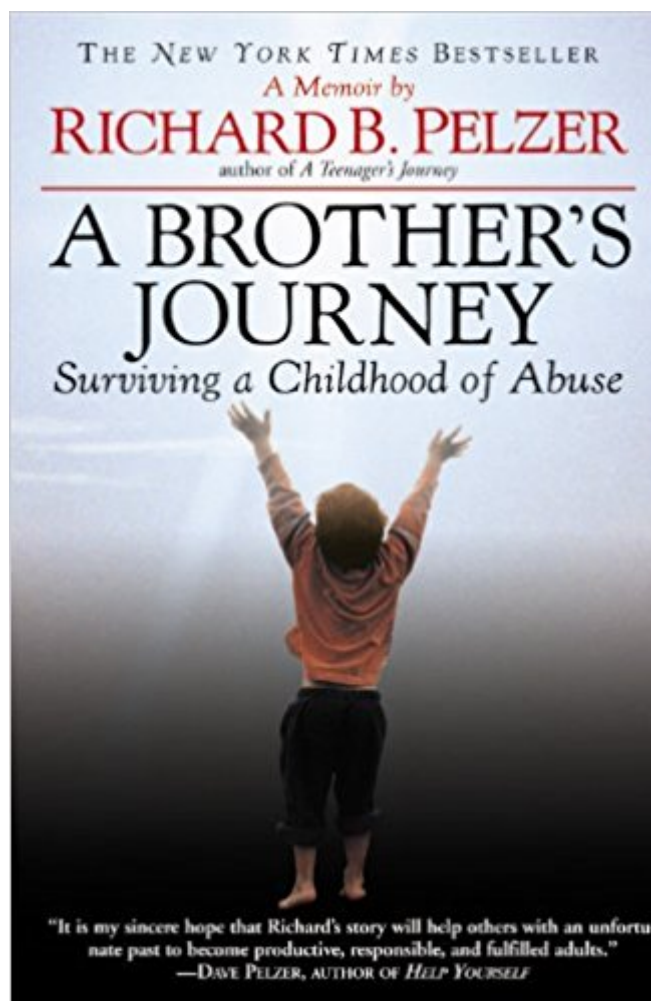


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# A Brother's Journey: Surviving A Childhood Of Abuse



## Synopsis

- A Brother's Journey will appeal to the same audience that made #1 New York Times bestsellers of Dave Pelzer's popular novels: A Child Called "It" (Health Communications, 1995), The Lost Boy (Health Communications, 1997), and A Man Named Dave (E.P. Dutton, 1999), which have sold over six million copies combined. - There is a strong market for memoirs detailing traumatic experiences, as demonstrated by the success of A Million Little Pieces (Nan A. Talese, 4/03) and Running With Scissors (St. Martin's Press, 2002). - Subsidiary rights have already been sold in England and Japan. - Available as a Time Warner AudioBook.

## Book Information

Paperback: 272 pages

Publisher: Grand Central Publishing; Reprint edition (May 12, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0446696331

ISBN-13: 978-0446696333

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.8 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 181 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #107,654 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #34 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Addiction & Recovery > Adult Children of Alcoholics #35 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Sociology > Abuse #54 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Regional U.S. > West

## Customer Reviews

In this gripping, deeply troubling memoir, a follow-up to his brother David's bestselling A Child Called It, Pelzer reveals the unyielding suffering he says he experienced at the hands of his depraved mother growing up in the 1970s. Once David, the elder of the two, was removed from the household, the author, by this account, became the target of their mother's alcohol-induced rage. As Pelzer details his outward struggle to survive "learning to fall asleep with his eyes open, for example" and his internal efforts to understand and rise above his circumstances, he assaults readers with the graphic facts, told in surprisingly matter-of-fact language, about being beaten bloody for falling asleep when he was supposed to be awake, and being forbidden to bathe and forced to eat scraps from a dog bowl. Family members (including Pelzer's father), neighbors and teachers were aware of the abuse but did nothing to help, and Pelzer credits outsiders, especially his friend Ben, with finally "allowing" him to see himself more clearly. By looking back at "and then

releasing the image of the skinny, red-haired boy who wanted nothing more than his mother's love, Pelzer discovers his true spirit, which he shares courageously and selflessly here in the hope of healing himself, as well as raising awareness of and preventing child abuse. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Is Pelzer piggybacking on the success of his older brother Dave's story of being abused, *A Child Called It* (1995)? Maybe, but Richard certainly has his own tragic tale. Most of his grim recollections are from the time after Dave was removed from the household by social services, leaving Richard, then 8, as the focus for their alcoholic mother's rage. He remained so until, at age 15, he took his first tentative steps toward breaking his mother's psychological hold. Pelzer spares no detail here, and though he certainly takes his mother to task, he writes with an amazing lack of bitterness toward his other brothers, who sometimes participated in his anguish, and toward the social services agency that left him traumatized and alone. As devastating as his story is, it's little more than a catalog of abuse, and the disappointing ending leaves readers in the dark about how he actually turned his life around. But the fact that he did manage to do that, despite the odds, makes his story worth reading, especially by those who know his brother's book. Stephanie Zvirin Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

As most everyone else, I first read "A Child Called It," as well as David Pelzer's other two, and recommend making those a prequel to this one, although this book is certainly special enough to stand on its own! The abuse that both boys endured is heart breaking. It is a miracle that they both lived to share their stories. It is interesting that in the end, neither David nor Richard gave up on God, although both boys felt at times that God (unsure if there was one) had forsaken them. I do not agree with the criticism that David's books were better written than Richard's. "A Brother's Journey" is excellent in content as well as structure. I even liked the ending. Having said that, I am hoping that Richard finds it in him to write another.

A very sad story. The abuse did not stop when David was taken away nor did anyone come to the rescue of the remaining children. This book proves that the neighbors knew what was happening and the school, but again no one came to the rescue. The physical abuse was one thing but the mental abuse was what kept her in control. Richard, by the end of the story finally realized he was old

enough and physically big enough that he didn't have to take the beatings. When his mother left him all alone when she went house hunting a whole new world opened to him. One of the reviews I read prior to purchasing the book said the book ended abruptly and a sequel must be in the works. This may be so, but at this point the mother had lost her mental lock on Richard. He now had friends, new clothes and a taste of freedom. His world had expanded and there was hope. I read his brother's books and will read a sequel to this one.

For those of you who have been directed here after reading some of Dave Pelzer's books, (as I have been) you will be pleased with the quality and story of Dave's younger brother (and little tormentor). Richard picks up the story of what occurs in the Pelzer home after Dave is rescued by social services, leaving their Mom with no outlet for her drinking. The abuse he has to go through (though no where close to that of David's) will make you wonder how it's possible to survive a childhood as miserable as his and nonetheless turn out to be a productive, emotionally stable individual. The story has it's moments of inspiration and times when we all root for Richard and are thankful for his small encounters of happiness, but for the most it has helped me understand some of what abused children go through day-to-day and the resilience the human spirit/soul contains. Reading this memoir has made me focus on counting my many blessings. I hope it will do the same to you.

This is a very well written account of a second victim in the Pelzer family. The tragedy of this family is better understood after reading Richard Pelzer's book - it's like the other side of the same coin. I've read Dave Pelzer's books, which are also very well written, and this one by Richard explains so much of what is not known about the family dynamics in Dave's books. He explains why he intentionally antagonized Dave's situation and how it felt to become the replacement. He also helped us to see what drove his mother and how Dave must have felt when he was the victim and still in the home. I went from having no empathy whatsoever for Richard to truly understanding the horrific life he also endured. His abuse was different from Dave's in some respects, but it was also increasingly severe as it progressed and was also horrific. That either of these boys survived to become men able to tell their story is truly amazing. To read about the specifics of abuse from the victim(s) and the feelings and thoughts they had at the time is truly eye opening. It helps us all to realize that these things really are happening, that they are probably worse than what we suspect, and why the victim isn't able to help themselves or even tell anyone what is happening to them. These men both have a horrible life story to share, and if just the act of writing their story is healing for

them, something has been accomplished. I wish both of them peace and freedom from their past.

Richard wasn't able to pull up to the high bar that Dave set with his series, but he still managed to put out a very interesting read. It was nice to see a different perspective. I enjoyed getting a fuller picture of the family and hearing Richard's story. The only downside is that Dave didn't use real names in his book, so it was hard to remember which brother was which when reading this book.

This book is excellent as it confirms the horror that went on in this home. Every one of those boys were victims but Dave and Richard were singled out in a more severe and sick way. As a victim of child abuse I'm amazed at how Dave has moved forward in his life, how he has healed. I wonder how Richard and the others are doing. In my struggle to be free of the demons that haunt me...I'm always looking for others who have been abused as children to hear their story. Although it's always sad to hear of yet another it's also helpful to know you're not alone and to learn how they have survived. This families story is by far the closest I've ever come in my 58 years to how life was in my home as a child. All I need to do is change the names to fit with my brothers and sisters.

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