

A Stolen Life: A Memoir Study Guide

A Stolen Life: A Memoir by Jaycee Dugard

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Plot Summary

A Stolen Life is the autobiographical memoir of Jaycee Dugard. Dugard was kidnapped in June of 1991 near her home by Phillip and Nancy Garrido. For eighteen years, she was a captive of the couple and forced to endure repeated sexual abuse and false imprisonment.

Dugard was a typical eleven-year-old girl growing up in Lake Tahoe, California. While on the way to school, a van pulled alongside her. Phillip Garrido tazed her and then forced her into the van, putting a blanket over her. She was driven many miles away to Antioch, California. She was handcuffed and left in the music studio Dugard had built in the backyard of his home. Phillip's wife, Nancy, was an accomplice to this captivity.

Dugard was forced to perform sexual acts on Garrido, and she was often raped. During the worst moments of sexual abuse, Phillip would go on a "run," a days-long binge on "crank" or crystal meth. In his drug-induced stupor, he would force Dugard to act out his depraved sexual fantasies. Dugard had deep psychotic problems, including pedophilia and aural hallucinations. He claimed to communicate with angels, and he tried to establish a church based upon his perceived ability to telepathically communicate with like-minded people.

Dugard, frozen with fear, paralyzed with sadness and boredom, endured year after year of being confined to a couple of music studio rooms in the backyard. She eventually earned more freedoms, but for many years she was never allowed to travel anywhere. Phillip's constant sexual and verbal abuse gave Dugard a skewed view of the world, but she held on to the hope that she would see her mother and her baby sister again.

Phillip impregnated Dugard twice, once when she was fourteen and another time when she was seventeen. They delivered the baby themselves as they could not risk taking her to a hospital for fear of being discovered. The children, two girls, grew up with Dugard and she grew to love them dearly. The children came to know Dugard as a sister named Allissa rather than their mother.

In August of 2009, a full eighteen years after her abduction, Dugard was finally freed. Phillip's mind had deteriorated to the point he went to a local FBI office to convince them he had special mental powers. Parole officers questioned Dugard separately and the truth was finally uncovered when Phillip confessed to the kidnapping.

Dugard had a teary and joyous reunion with her mother as well as her aunt and younger sister. In the time after her release, Dugard had seen a therapist and was slowly undoing the abuse. She also formed an organization called the JAYC foundation to help victims of abuse recover.



Introduction, Pages 1 through 28

Introduction, Pages 1 through 28 Summary and Analysis

Introduction: Author Dugard provides the overall details of her ordeal. In June of 1991, she was kidnapped at age eleven by Phillip and Nancy Garrido. She was kept in a backyard and help captive for eighteen years until released at age twenty-nine.

Dugard has decided to write the book for two reasons. One, she wishes to uncover the evil of Phillip Garrido, and to expose what he did. Two, she hopes she will inspire other people and families who have endured trauma. She wishes to encourage other young people to speak out if they feel something is wrong. She wishes to stress that someone who went through what she went through can not only survive, but "be okay even on the inside." Dugard stresses that, whereas before each day was filled with fear and boredom, each day in her new freedom is filled with excitement and opportunity. She encourages everyone to live each day to its fullest.

The Taking: The morning of June 10th, 1991, began as any other for Jaycee Dugard. Dugard lived in Tahoe. She heard her mom leave for work, and was disappointed she didn't get a goodbye kiss. She dressed for school. She picked out a special ring to wear, a birthday gift for her seventh birthday. At this time, she was really hoping for a dog, and she was bugging her mother for one. Dugard peeked in on her infant sister and was proud of her.

Dugard had a difficult relationship with her stepfather, Carl, and didn't want to be around him much because he always criticized her. He scolded her for her eating habits constantly, for one example. Dugard loved her cat named Monkey, and was less enthusiastic about the family's pet rabbit, Buggy, because she had to clean out his cage. Dugard couldn't wait for summer, when she planned to join her friend Shawnee and work on a dude ranch with horses. Dugard describes her eleven-year-old self as a shy girl who had trouble making friends and who felt like her life was controlled by others.

Dugard walked to school. On the way, a car pulled alongside her. The driver (Phillip Garrido) started to ask for directions but then attacked Dugard with a tazer. Dugard felt paralyzed and struggled to back away into bushes. She grabbed a pinecone, which she later associated with her last taste of freedom in her mind. She was tazed again - to the point she peed her pants - and smuggled into the car. Phillip's wife Nancy is with him. They drive off with Dugard in the back under a blanket. Dugard is terrified.

Stolen: Phillip forced Dugard (covered in a blanket) to walk into his house. He threatened her with his aggressive dogs and with the tazer and told her to sit on a sofa and not move. Dugard felt he looked like an ordinary man, but no ordinary man would do what he's doing.



The Secret Backyard: Phillip took Dugard into a shower and ordered her to remove her clothes. She refused, so he took her clothes off. He then took his own clothes off. Dugard was forced to look at Phillip's penis and then hold it in her hand. They showered together. Dugard felt horrified and had a feeling that none of this was real, that it was a nightmare. Phillip then took Dugard through the backyard (full of rough pebbles and sticks that hurt her feet) to a makeshift shed. She was handcuffed and told to go to sleep on the blankets on the floor.

Alone in a Strange Place: Dugard awoke to find herself in a strange room. It turned out to be a recording studio in Phillip's backyard, with recording equipment and everything carpeted to make the room soundproof. She wondered whether her parents were worried about her, whether Carl saw her being taken, etc.



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Pages 29 through 58 Summary and Analysis

The First Time: Days later, Dugard is still handcuffed in the soundproof room. She wanted to try to remember how many days ago she had been taken, but she didn't remember. Phillip came in once every couple of days to feed her, afterward removing all the trash. She managed to look out the small window and saw only weeds and a tree she nicknamed hangman's tree. Dugard was very bored and there was nothing to do. She'd tell stories to herself and cry herself to sleep every night.

One day, Phillip came in, took off all his clothes, forced himself on top of Dugard, and raped her. She doesn't know what happened to her, only that it was horrible and that she had to drive it from her mind. She began "bleeding down there," and wondered if she was dying. This was the first of many sexual encounters. Dugard learned to "go away" in her mind until he was finished; this was the only way she could deal with it. However, in classic Stockholm syndrome fashion, she came to enjoy Phillip's company when he wasn't using her for sex, and she came to depend on him for almost everything, including food.

First Kitty: Phillip promised Dugard a kitty, and she desperately wanted one to stave off boredom. Phillip allowed her eventually to go without handcuffs, but to never venture outside the room. She bathed using a bucket of water he left for her, and wasn't able to brush her teeth. She found her situation ironic, as her stepfather Carl relentlessly reminded her to always brush after every meal.

Dugard eventually dared to enter the adjoining room. It was full of drums and instruments, along with recording equipment. Phillip told her he was an aspiring musician and that it was only a matter of time before he became famous. Phillip finally bought her a kitten, which she named Tigger. Phillip also revealed the other person with him during the abduction was Nancy, his wife. Dugard hopes to meet her, as she is so lonely. Phillip revealed more about why he took Dugard; he had a "problem" with his sexual impulses, and he took Dugard so she could "help him out" and so he wouldn't have to hurt anyone else. At the end of the chapter, Phillip took away Tigger because the cat peed everywhere, probably as a result of being cooped up.

Father's Day, 2010: Dugard states this section was a very painful and difficult one to write. She wrote about Father's Day 2010, one year after she was freed from the Garridos, when her biological father, Ken, asked to see her and soon, because he was dying of cancer. Dugard felt very conflicted; she felt if Ken really loved her, he would have made an effort to see her during her first eleven years prior to captivity. She had a lot to sort out, and she didn't need another father figure giving her orders. So she chose not to see Ken. Dugard realized that there are many positive and loving fathers out there, and that not all men are like the men she knew, including the absent Ken, the unloving Carl, and the evil Phillip.



The First "Run": One night, Phillip woke up Dugard and brought her to another building very close to her "home." The room is large and has thick doors and iron bars on the windows. Phillip instructed Dugard that he was going to go on a "run" and he needed her help. This "run" will involve Phillip staying up for days at a time snorting what he calls crank, or crystal meth. The drug will allow him to stay alert. During this time, Phillip forced Dugard to act out sexual fantasies and perform sexual acts on him while Dugard was dressed in a pink jumpsuit. Phillip used scrapbooks filled with child porn to aid him in his arousal during this time. At the end, Phillip raped Dugard. Naturally, Dugard felt these runs (and there would be more) were the most disgusting and lowest point of her life, and adult Dugard had much difficulty in writing about it.



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Pages 59 through 96 Summary and Analysis

Nancy: After the first "run," Phillip allowed Dugard to stay in the larger room, which they called "next door." Dugard was grateful for being able to live in a larger space and watch color TV. At this time, Dugard was introduced to Nancy for the first time, who brought her meals. Dugard was desperate for company, but Nancy was largely silent and standoffish; Phillip attributed this to Nancy being jealous of Dugard. Over time, Dugard came to know Nancy. Nancy was a worker at an old folks' home. Phillip hinted that he wanted Nancy to engage in a threesome with them, and Dugard is sickened.

Dugard celebrated her twelfth birthday. Her "present" was Nancy getting highlights in her hair, and Dugard was greatly disappointed. Dugard remembered with great sadness her mother and Aunt Tina. To waste away the time, Dugard played with Barbie dolls and made furniture for the dolls with arts and crafts materials. Over the months, Nancy and Phillip would do more "regular" things with Dugard, such as watching movies. Dugard enjoyed science fiction films like Star Trek as they allowed her to escape from her dreary existence.

Easter - Phillip on an Island: On Easter of 1993, when Dugard was thirteen, Nancy came to Dugard and gave her a rare home-cooked meal (usually it was fast food). Nancy said that Phillip would be staying with a rich friend on an island for one month and wouldn't be back until then. Dugard was overjoyed at the thought of having no sex for a month, but knew that the absence would probably only increase Phillip's sexual appetite when he did finally come back. The strange relationship between Dugard and Nancy continued to develop. Nancy was guilt-ridden about taking Dugard, unlike Phillip, and sometimes couldn't bear to be around Dugard due to that guilt. She cried often. Dugard felt she had to please Nancy, and so was often upbeat and people-pleasing while around her.

At the end of the month, Phillip returned and revealed that he hadn't stayed on a rich friend's island; he had been in prison because the police found Nancy's "crank pipe" in their home. He returned with an ankle bracelet so he would be monitored. Dugard came to enjoy Phillip's jokes and easy manner - as much as a captive person could - unlike Nancy who was distant and hard to read.

Christmas: Christmas 1993 marked 907 days of captivity. Dugard struggled with utter loneliness, and did not feel comforted when Phillip hugged her, the only person to give her any human contact at all. Phillip had "improved" by this time with his sexual perversions and drug use; he was taking fewer drugs, and his "runs" were getting shorter and less frequent. Sex was a rarity rather than a constant now. However, Phillip would hear voices and would sometimes listen through walls for voices for hours. He also had very strange and strong feelings about the Bible and religion.



The Garridos got Dugard a cat named Snowy, but he interfered with Phillip's "runs" so they got rid of him. Eventually, Dugard received another cat she named Eclipse. Dugard kept a journal about caring for Eclipse, and Phillip made her remove the byline, "this is written by Jaycee Dugard." Phillip said it was dangerous for her to write or even say her own name ever again. He was afraid of being caught.

Eclipse's Journal: These pages contain scanned images of the actual journal Dugard kept when she was about thirteen. It's written on lined paper with crude printed handwriting and has numerous spelling errors as can be expected from a child. The journal reveals a very love-starved girl who put all her affection into her cat. Eclipse meant more to her than life, she writes. She measured him often and charted his growth, and also listed favorite foods and his behaviors and what kind of tricks he could do. Before too long, however, Phillip took Eclipse away for some unknowable paranoid reason, and Dugard never saw the cat again.



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Learning I Was Pregnant: On Easter Sunday 1994, Phillip and Nancy surprised Dugard with an Easter basket full of candy and a nice meal. They also confronted her with the fact that she has put on weight and has been waddling instead of walking. They informed her she was probably pregnant. Dugard was scared, as she didn't have any idea about where babies come from and what pregnancy was exactly. She also didn't know how Phillip felt about the baby, and whether he would force her to give it up.

In the months of her pregnancy, Dugard was comforted by a cocker spaniel named China. Apparently China was owned by Phillip's mom, Pat, and Phillip often brought her over. Dugard grew to love and cherish the baby she could feel kicking inside of her, and did not want to give it up. She wanted to give it the love she lacked. Phillip finally said that Dugard should have the baby and that he approved.

Driving to a Trailer: The day before Dugard gave birth, Phillip came to her and said there was a possible police raid on the house that was going to happen, and he needed to smuggle Dugard away in the van. Dugard was forced to squeeze her very pregnant frame under the backseat, where she hid under a blanket. They drove for what seemed like forever, and they arrived at a trailer home to hide out for a while. Dugard got to use an actual working toilet, which she marveled at, along with explore some of the rooms of the house. It was an amazing experience after so long in captivity. By this time, Dugard didn't contemplate trying to run, being so pregnant and also because she had bonded with her captors via Stockholm Syndrome.

After a day, they all traveled back in the van to the Garrido residence. Apparently, any danger of police was over. Phillip mentioned wanting to find a way to get the trailer to fit in their backyard someday, and Dugard obsessed over how good she would have it if she was able to live in the trailer.

Waiting for Baby: In anticipation of the birth - and undoubtedly as part of his sexual perversion - Phillip forced Dugard to watch many birthing videos with him. He could not take her to a hospital for fear of discovery, so he would delivering the baby himself.

Dugard went into labor - and didn't know what was happening - paralyzed by sharp pains. Nancy and Phillip helped her to deliver the baby. She had experienced no greater pain in her life. She thought she urinated on herself when the water broke, and that the worst of the pain was over, but it was just the beginning. The birth was complicated by the fact that the umbilical cord was caught around the baby's neck. The date of the birth was August 18, 1994, when Dugard was fourteen. It was a girl. Given Phillip's religious delusions, he chose the name Angel for the baby. Dugard accepted the name, but only because angels represent all that is good and pure in the universe.



Taking Care of a Baby: Dugard took care of "A," as she is referred to in the text. Nancy and Phillip provided all kinds of baby gear, and Dugard was never left wanting for anything. Phillip hadn't had sex with Dugard since the baby, and the husband and wife were with Dugard a lot more. Dugard got the sense that Nancy dreamed that Angel was her baby, and that she was jealous of Dugard. Despite the baby, Dugard was still very lonely. She thought of her best friend Jessie and her family. But she figured she had to stay with Phillip and Nancy; who would want her now, a teenager with a child?

Sarge: Flashforward to 1996. Angel was three at that point. Phillip had made renovations on the "next door" building and it became Dugard's permanent residence. Nancy brought a bird in a cage to keep Dugard company. It was a neglected bird and so was aggressive and violent, always trying to bite. Nancy warned Dugard never to touch it. But Dugard disobeyed her and let it out of its cage, convinced all it needed was kindness. And indeed, over the next weeks the bird calmed down and became an ideal pet. It sang and marched around, causing Dugard to call it Sarge. But one day, Nancy took Sarge away and didn't return for a day or two. When Nancy did return with the cage, Sarge was cold and dead. Dugard blamed Nancy for his death, though she wasn't quite sure how he died.



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Second Baby: At seventeen, Dugard was pregnant once again. Now six years into her captivity, things had "normalized" and become more stable. Phillip barely had his "runs" anymore, and was regularly employed at a tree nursery. Phillip swore never to touch Angel sexually, and so far he had kept his promise. Dugard's room now had a mini-fridge and working sink and toilet. She was given a red bunk bed as a present so she and Angel each had a place to sleep.

In one particularly amazing event, Phillip finally finished a tall fence he had been constructing for years. For the first time in a half dozen years, Nancy could go outside and soak up the sun. Phillip seemed happy about the second baby coming. Along with the outdoor area, Phillip and Nancy presented Dugard with a guinea pig pet she named Happy. All this time, Dugard noted that Nancy remained aloof and usually unfriendly, despite Dugard's best efforts to befriend and please her. In some ways, Nancy was somewhat of a captive of Phillip's as well, doing drugs with him and being forced to go to school playgrounds and videotape little girls doing the splits for Phillip's perverse amusement.

The Starting of Printing for Less: Phillip rented a computer and bought a printer. He wanted to start a printing and graphic design business. He quit his job at the nursery. Dugard loved the new computer and played Sesame Street educational games on it with her child. Phillip made business cards for a client, but Dugard noticed the cards could be cut better. So she took the time to cut them. Soon, Dugard was helping out on all of Phillip's jobs, which helped to battle her boredom.

Birth of Second Baby: Dugard felt great pains that woke her on the evening of November 12, 1997. Labor pains. She woke up Phillip and Nancy and they helped her to deliver the baby. After many hours of painful labor, Dugard's second daughter was born on the morning of November 13, 1997. Continuing the celestial theme, Phillip named her Starlite. Phillip was still conflicted with the Bible and religion; at some points he embraced God, at other points he cursed God.

Raising the Girls in the Backyard: Dugard stayed in the studio with Phillip and Nancy while raising the newborn. Angel was three years old and still breastfeeding (Dugard didn't know any better), and Dugard vowed to ween her off. Starlite was born with a growth under her eyebrow, perhaps a cyst, and Dugard badly wanted to see a doctor about it, but of course she was not allowed to.

Phillip started spending more and more time outside the home, presumably to rustle up printing jobs to expand the printing business. He wanted Nancy to quit her job so she could help take care of the babies. He wanted a "big happy family." Phillip communicated with Nancy and Dugard using a CB radio. His handle (nickname) was



Sky Walker, while Dugard's was Data, her favorite character from Star Trek: The Next Generation TV series. Angel reminded Dugard more and more of her own mother, and she was sad.

Dugard next flash-forwards and talks of her children's first day of school (post captivity). Phillip always had paranoid feelings about public education and felt homeschooling was the best option. He felt public school was a bad influence. But Dugard knew the kids had to have some kind of education, so she printed out workbooks and exercises from the Internet and held home school for four hours a day.

In the last part of the chapter, Dugard discusses her mixed feelings about her abduction. She doubts she will ever be able to forgive Phillip for what he did. And she has come to realize that all Phillip did was bent toward manipulating her and playing his sick game of control. She is afraid for her daughters in this brave new world of freedom, but she knows freedom is better than living in the prison-like atmosphere she endured for eighteen years.



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Nancy Becomes Mom: Nancy quit her job to take care of the kids full time. Phillip was prescribed medication for Attention Deficit Disorder as well as manic depression, and it seemed to help control his urges. Dugard expresses her suspicions about Phillip's therapists. Phillip saw therapists constantly both before and after her abduction; why didn't they know that much more was wrong with him and that he was a danger to himself and others?

Phillip told Dugard that Nancy was having a hard time when Angel and Starlite called Dugard "Mom," and that Nancy should become the "Mom" of the household. Dugard accepted this only with great difficulty, but eventually Dugard became known to her own children as their "sister" and Nancy became Mom. For this transition, Dugard got to pick out a new name, and she named herself Allissa, after Alyssa Milano from TV's *Who's the Boss?*

Pretending to Be a Family: On a Fourth of July night, the "family" headed to the roof of the barn on the property to watch fireworks. This was when Angel was four and Starlite was one. Dugard watched the moon and became nostalgic about her mother, as they used to sing a moon-related nursery rhyme together. The baby became restless, so the family headed down from the barn roof.

Soon after, Phillip organized a family trip to the beach. Dugard is very nervous, as she hadn't been out in public for so long, but Phillip assured her if they played it cool everything would be okay. They indeed have a good time at the beach, and Dugard is so glad the girls had this experience.

Another tense moment for Dugard came when Nancy and she went out to get a manicure. She used her fake name and pretended everything was okay. She felt like a nobody, and like nobody cared about her. Her hand visibly shook at certain parts, but no one paid attention. Dugard felt lost and rudderless.

Dugard gives two reasons for why she never told anyone about her captivity on her outings. First, she thought the world had passed her by and that no one would want her. Second, her main goal was protecting her children, and she thought if she raised any alarm that Phillip would harm the children or that they would be taken away from her.

Cats: After the initial couple of cats Dugard had briefly (and which Phillip took away), several more cats came into Dugard's life. They were important companions and they gave Dugard a sense of love and friendship she lacked in her captivity. At first there was a stray called Blackjack, and later more strays called Tucker (which Dugard raised from a kitten on) and Lucky. On one devastating day, two dogs managed to get into the yard

through a poorly-mended fence, and they bit and killed the two cats. Dugard was so devastated that she cried for days and could not be consoled.

Later on, in 2006, Nancy brought two kittens home for the girls named Princess and Misty. Dugard further found a litter of kittens in the barn that she took care of. The animals on the property became a huge focus of Dugard and of the family, and Dugard expresses her thanks to a policewoman named Officer Beth for her work in making sure the cats on the property had good homes after the police raided the estate.



Pages 165 through 196

Pages 165 through 196 Summary and Analysis

Journal Entries: Without Phillip knowing, Dugard wrote a series of journal entries, sporadically, from the middle of 1998 to the middle of 2007. She felt she had to get her feelings out somewhere, and she had no other outlet. She struggled with whether or not to include the actual entries at all, but in the end decided she should and had to.

The entries are somewhat repetitive and center around a few central themes. Chief among these themes is Dugard's real mother. Dugard longed for her mother constantly. She wondered if she would ever see her again, and she made reuniting with her mother a chief goal of her life. She came to understand the attachment a mother has to her child through having her own children, so she knew it must hurt her mother, and still hurt her mother, to not know what happened to her. Dugard wondered whether souls can be kindred and can seek each other out, and she hoped this was the case with her mother and herself.

A second theme that emerges has to do with Dugard's perception of her self and her body. She felt like a nobody, (rightly) trapped and restricted, and so she searched for some sense of self-identity. In times of hopelessness, she felt no one cared about her or how she looked. But at other times, she scolded herself for being overweight and she promised she would control her eating and exercise. But given her extreme sedentary lifestyle, this was very difficult.

Another fixation of Dugard's was her future plans. She maintained hope that she would eventually be freed from Phillip. She made lists of what places in the world she would go and what activities she would do. She wanted to live in a cottage near the ocean, as she loved the beach.

Related to that was Dugard's love of animals. Aside from her children, Dugard loved the many strays or orphaned kittens and dogs that came into her life over the years more than anything. She wanted to establish a horse ranch and invite homeless people to the ranch as employees, so they could feel a sense of self-worth and love by taking care of horses and other animals.

Dugard also considers her toxic relationship with Phillip. During some darker times, she blames herself for being a coward and not having the courage to yell out or try to run away when she has the chance. But, she reasons, her first responsibility is the children, so running away would not help them. Wherever she goes, her children must too go. She had an innate fear of the outside world and feels most comfortable (for better or worse) in her tent in the backyard. She had panic attacks when she went out, and her hands would shake uncontrollably. She felt she had to turn a "switch" on in order to appear normal in public. She wouldn't look at anybody's face and tried to disappear into the crowd. Dugard also hated herself for not having the courage to look her mother up

on the Internet, which she had limited access to. Her life was controlled by fear, and by the manipulation of Phillip Garrido.



Pages 197 through 220

Pages 197 through 220 Summary and Analysis

Surviving: Pat, Phillip's mother who stayed on the property and who Dugard had hardly ever seen, had become severely ill. She was diagnosed with both Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's disease, so both her body and mind were being ravaged. She began to need constant care, and she was attended to by Nancy and Dugard.

Pat's decline paralleled a similar decline in the house and the family. A new law required that parole officers visit Phillip more frequently. Phillip became enraged at these intrusions, and eventually stopped hiding Dugard and the children out of frustration and because the officers would visit at unannounced times. One parole officer saw Dugard's oldest child, but didn't ask questions.

As far as the house, the sink would back up with filth and it had to be siphoned with a tube several times a day. The pipes underneath the house were rotting. The washer and dryer stopped working. And the printing business was in decline. Phillip also became edgier, lazier, and angrier.

Discovery and Reunion: On August 24th, 2009, Phillip visited an FBI office in San Francisco, accompanied with Dugard's two girls. At this point, it's safe to say he mentally declined considerably and was basically insane. He shared with the FBI the news of his special gift about being able to telepathically communicate with people. He wished to establish his own church, and he was certain God was speaking through him. Phillip was happy coming from the meeting, telling Dugard that the FBI was very interested in his story. In reality, of course, the FBI felt he was insane and dangerous and wanted to check up on him.

The next day, August 25th, Dugard heard the news at around 5pm from a distraught Nancy that Phillip had been arrested. Dugard's Stockholm syndrome was on full display as she panicked at the news and wanted to do everything she could to bring Phillip back. That night, a parole officer brought Phillip to the house in handcuffs, released him, and told him to report in to the parole office the next morning. Dugard was angry - angry at Phillip for being so irresponsible, and more deeply angry at the parole officer for letting Phillip off the hook once more.

Fed up with the authorities, the next morning Phillip brought the entire family to the parole office, to show that everything was okay in his life. Phillip was completely confident he was on a path from God and that he was above the law, and Dugard sort of believed that too.

At the parole office, Dugard was questioned separately and told the agreed-upon lie that her name was Allissa and that she was staying with Dugard with her kids. After letting her go down to the car, the parole officers again questioned her, accusing her of lying



because her story and Phillip's story didn't add up. Dugard was in panic mode and, afraid she would be taken away from her kids, told lie after lie, anything but the truth of the kidnapping. Phillip (in handcuffs) was brought to Dugard, and Dugard asked him what she should do or say. He told her to get a lawyer. The officers then told her Phillip had confessed to her kidnapping. The female officer had Dugard write her real name for the first time in eighteen years, and it was like "breaking an evil spell."

Dugard and her children were taken to a hotel room. The next day, she had the first phone contact with her mother. Dugard could not even remember what was said, her emotions were so overwhelming. Next, a physical meeting was arranged by the police. Dugard hardly slept the night before and her mind was full of questions and uncertainty. But she recognized her mother instantly when she was let into the room, and she was greeted with open arms and lots of happy crying.

Firsts for Me: This chapter was written about one year after Dugard's freedom. She was doing all the normal things free people do, like driving and raising her family without fear. She had numerous positive sessions with a therapist who was helping to undo the damage caused by Phillip and Nancy. Dugard was still having trouble making decisions and being timid, and she felt like every decision she made was a bad one, so she was still working through some issues.



Pages 221 through 242

Pages 221 through 242 Summary and Analysis

Milestones: Dugard never got to experience the usual milestones of a child, like a high school prom or birthday parties. The only real event she shared with the world was hearing the news on 9/11/01 about the World Trade Center being destroyed. Other than that, she was deprived of world experience, and in her freedom she wanted to make up for lost time.

One of the happiest moments Dugard had was meeting her sister, Shayna, who was only a baby when Dugard was taken. Dugard describes a process of discomfort and feeling each other out, but she knew that their mutual love would eventually result in a warm relationship. Ironically, Shayna was the one who taught Dugard how to drive, as Dugard was always discouraged from driving or too scared to try. Dugard is now a slow and careful driver, and she loves the freedom she has.

The Difficult Parts of Life: In this chapter, Dugard expresses her frustration with constant paparazzi attention after her release. She wanted to protect her children from photographers and publicity, and so she found herself not doing things or avoiding places. For Dugard, it was another sort of captivity, like history repeating itself.

Finding Old Friends: Two of the policemen who rescued Dugard, Todd and Beth, became good friends of hers and they helped her acclimate to the real world. Todd rescued hermit crab pets from the Garrido estate and brought them to Dugard. And Beth found foster homes for all of the animals on the property.

Dugard, through the police, got in touch with her two best friends prior to captivity, Jessie and Shawnee. Like her mother, Dugard was very nervous to contact them, but they were easy to talk to and they had teary, happy reunions. That Christmas, Shawnee's workplace pooled money together to buy Dugard many essentials for her new life, and she was extremely grateful.

Therapeutic Healing: Dugard got in touch with a therapist who specialized in reunification after abduction cases. Dugard was distrustful of all therapists, seeing that Phillip had seen many therapists over the years and they never helped him. But through the therapist, Dugard was able to undo some of Phillip's brainwashing. For one example, Dugard was uncertain as to whether Phillip could truly communicate with angels, and therapy helped her understand that Phillip's belief was the product of a diseased mind.



Pages 243 through 268

Pages 243 through 268 Summary and Analysis

Meeting with Nancy: Through the police, Dugard exercised the chance to see and speak with Nancy, who was incarcerated along with her husband. Dugard mainly did this to obtain closure, and to let Nancy know what she and Phillip did was wrong. Dugard realized she and Nancy never had anything resembling a normal relationship; it was fake, like a house of cards that would blow over at any moment.

At the meeting, Nancy insisted on calling Dugard "Allissa," and Dugard corrected her. Dugard tried to get Nancy to see how wrong Phillip was, and what bad things he did, but Nancy said she still loved him. Dugard said she did not hate Nancy, but at the same time, she never wanted to have anything to do with her, and they would never see each other again.

Therapeutic Healing with a Twist: As the book closes, Dugard has continued to heal with her unconventional therapist named Rebecca. Rebecca owned a horse farm, and she used horses and the outdoors as part of her therapy sessions with Dugard and her girls. For example, Dugard and the girls had to halter horses, and this taught her about her attitude toward life, because a shy, timid person cannot halter a horse. Also, Rebecca used an analogy of buckets and grain to show Dugard a lesson about the paparazzi. Like the paparazzi, the horses will seek out grain (a story) at all costs. If Dugard has all the grain (the story, the information), she will be overwhelmed. But if she shares a little of the grain with her family - that is, she lets her family talk to the media - the pressure won't be so bad.

At the end of the book, Dugard had established an organization called the JAYC foundation. She intended it as a victim advocacy group, such that she could use her knowledge to help other victims of kidnapping or sexual abuse. The symbol of the organization is a pine cone, the thing Dugard associated with freedom as it was the last thing she clung to prior to being kidnapped. For Dugard, the pine cone was a symbol of hope and the chance to live a new life.



Characters

Jaycee Dugard

Dugard was eleven years old when she was abducted by Phillip and Nancy Garrido and forced to live in a studio room in their backyard. For eighteen years, she was held captive by the couple.

Dugard was desperately alone and terrified during the initial months of her captivity. She was raped repeatedly by Phillip and forced to perform sexual acts on him when he took drugs. For the first years of her captivity, terror of sexual assault was balanced by having nothing to do, and she fought boredom and sadness constantly.

As the years went on, Dugard missed out on many normal milestones, continuing to live a sheltered existence in the backyard. She became pregnant at fourteen, and gave birth to baby girl Angel. Three years later, she had a second child, Starlite. She raised her daughters as best as she could, though the Garridos also confined the children to the backyard for the most part.

Throughout her captivity, Dugard yearned badly for her mother, and dreamed of being reunited with her as well as her younger sister, who was only one year of age when Dugard was captured. To help understand her feelings, she kept a sporadic journal. Dugard also poured her passion and love into a series of stray cats that she cared for.

In 2009, parole officers discovered Phillip's crime and forced him to confess. Dugard shared a teary reunion with her family and started down the long road to recovery with her daughters.

In the book, Dugard stresses that she does not wish to be viewed as a pitiable victim, but only as a strong person who did what she had to to survive.

Phillip Garrido

Phillip Garrido was the psychologically disturbed man who kidnapped Jaycee Dugard and kept her in his backyard from June of 1991 to August of 2009. He forced Dugard to perform depraved sexual acts, and he raped her repeatedly during the first years of her captivity. He kept her confined to music studio rooms in the backyard of his home.

Phillip was a serial sexual abuser who had gone to prison at one point for sexual assault on another young girl. He was also a drug abuser, with the drug of choice being "crank" or crystal meth. During "runs" he would snort meth for days at a time and force Dugard to act out sexual fantasies.

Phillip was domineering, aggressive, argumentative, and pathologically insane. He wore Dugard down with years of verbal abuse, to the point that Dugard didn't try to escape



anymore. He wished for all of them (including the children he fathered with Dugard) to become a family, and they pretended to be a family up until the police's discovery of his crime.

Phillip perverted religion as part of his psychosis. He felt that angels communicated with him. Sometimes these angels had good intentions, but more often than not they were evil spirits and they tried to confuse people. He blamed all of his bad behavior on the influence of angels. During the later years of the captivity, Phillip tried to establish a church in order to spread his religious theories.

Nancy Garrido

Nancy was Phillip's wife, and was an accomplice to Dugard's kidnapping and subsequent captivity. Nancy was jealous of the "affection" Phillip showed Dugard, and her relationship with Dugard was usually awkward and disingenuous. Nancy was later jealous of Dugard's children, and so Phillip decided Dugard's children should call Nancy "mom," with Dugard becoming the big sister. While Dugard hints that Nancy also fell under Phillip's evil influence, there is no doubt Dugard felt that Nancy was responsible for her actions and that a lifetime prison term was an appropriate punishment.

Carl

Carl was Dugard's stepfather prior to her captivity. Dugard felt Carl did not love her because she was not his, and he constantly scolded her. Upon her freedom, Dugard was very relieved to learn that Carl and her mother had divorced several years prior. She did not care to see him.

Jaycee Dugard's Mother

Dugard kept the image of her mother in her mind constantly throughout most of her captivity, and she wrote about needing her mother extensively in her journal. Upon her freedom, Dugard enjoyed a joyous reunion with her mother, who welcomed her with open arms.

Starlite and Angel

Starlite and Angel were Dugard's two daughters, fathered by Phillip. Phillip gave them celestial names, given his obsession with heaven and religion. It is unclear whether Dugard renamed them after their captivity.



Jessie

Jessie was one of Dugard's oldest and best friends prior to her captivity. Upon her release, Dugard enjoyed a teary and happy reunion with the adult Jessie.

Nancy Seltzer

Nancy was Dugard's public relations manager. Dugard thanked her profusely for keeping the paparazzi out of her life as much as was possible following her release.

Officer Todd

Todd was a kindly policeman who was with Dugard shortly after her release from captivity. He became friends with Dugard and helped her to adjust to her new life.

Rebecca

Rebecca was a therapist who specialist in sexual abuse cases. She used unconventional techniques involving the horse farm she owned. Dugard healed psychologically while under Rebecca's care.



Objects/Places

South Lake Tahoe, California

Jaycee Dugard was stolen from near her home in South Lake Tahoe, California.

Antioch, California

Antioch was where Dugard was taken to after she was kidnapped. It was the location of the Garrido residence.

Next Door

Dugard referred to the larger music studio in the Garrido backyard as "next door," as it was very close to the smaller studio she lived in. In the early years, Dugard dreaded next door, as it was the place where Phillip took her during his "runs."

Runs

Phillip called his days-long binges on crystal meth "runs." Dugard learned to dread these horrible episodes, in which a drugged out Phillip would force Dugard to act out sexual fantasies.

Printing for Less

This was the name of the printing and graphic design company Phillip started. Dugard was able to help him run the business, which was a respite from her boredom.

Angel Theory

Dugard stated that Phillip operated according to the Angel Theory. He felt that angels exercised an undue influence on him, and that all of his drug abuse and sexual deviancy was the result of the influence of angels.

Blackjack

Blackjack was the name of one of many cats Dugard raised during her captivity. His death was particularly devastating for her. She became very attached to all of her animals.



Stockholm Syndrome

Stockholm syndrome refers to the phenomenon wherein captives develop affection or regard for their captors. Though Dugard never mentions this by name, it is clear she developed the syndrome after her many years of staying with Phillip. After a time, she no longer tried to escape from the Garridos, and she came to appreciate Dugard's sense of humor and his attempts to provide for the "family."

Star Trek: The Next Generation

Television was very important to Dugard, as it gave her a semblance of the human contact she so severely lacked. She loved science fiction, as it allowed her to escape from her reality. She used the CB nickname "Data" after her favorite character from the television series Star Trek: The Next Generation.

Crank

Crank is the street term for the drug crystal methamphetamine in powder form. Phillip would snort this substance to sustain his habit.



Themes

A Stolen Life

Dugard makes it clear that Phillip and Nancy Garrido stole a good portion of her life from her. She was not allowed to grow up in any kind of normal way. She had to learn about puberty and sexual education not from her mother, but from a depraved pedophile who raped her. She didn't even know what 'rape' was until later in her life. When Dugard became pregnant, she didn't even know why she was gaining weight and having pains.

With respect to education, Dugard never experienced even a high school education (though she states she hoped to get her GED diploma at some point). Her writing during the time of her captivity reveals that lack of education. She had to scrounge around for knowledge from books, television, and eventually the Internet. When it came time for her children to have an education, Dugard made sure she did all she could to homeschool them effectively. Dugard's own education and view of the world was skewed by her contact with Phillip and his insane rants about how religion and government worked.

But perhaps the most devastating element of Dugard's "stolen life" was her inability to move freely, to have friends or boyfriends or a real family, to participate in the community in any meaningful way. Dugard places the blame for all of this squarely on Phillip Garrido, and also on Nancy Garrido for enabling Phillip and never doing anything to stop his abuse. Dugard makes it clear that the Garridos are nothing to her now. She only wished to communicate to them that what they did was wrong and evil, and apart from that she desired no further contact with them.

What Was Necessary to Survive

Dugard takes pains to present herself not as a victim that the reader should pity, but a survivor who was strong enough to take the necessary actions to protect herself and her family from a violent psychopath. She does not wish to dwell on the path but to embrace the present (where she can make up for lost time) and plan for a limitless future.

Throughout Dugard's captivity, even when she was terrified of what Phillip would do when on drugs, she kept hope alive that she would eventually be freed from her situation, and that she would be reunited with the world and with her mother and sister. It was perhaps this unflagging hope for the future that kept Dugard away from a life of true despair.

As for any critics charging that Dugard should have fought more while in captivity, or should have escaped or alerted the authorities years later when she was allowed to go to the store and elsewhere, Dugard would say that such critics have no idea what it's like to be in her shoes. When trapped in such a traumatic situation as an eleven-year-old, no one could accurately predict what they would do or should do. Dugard lived



moment by moment while in her captivity; she felt that she needed to please Phillip and Nancy in order to stay free from harm or perhaps decrease her number of rapes, so she did so. Later, she became convinced (in part due to Phillip's constant influence) that no one would want her as a single mother with two children, and that she had no place else to go but to stay with the Garridos.

In the end, Dugard shared her story only to expose the evils of the Garridos and to close that chapter of her own life. In the final few sections, she expresses a desire to shrug off the past and embrace her new found freedom.

Importance of Animal Companions

Trapped in a relatively small backyard as she was, and surrounded only by her abuser and his enabling wife, Dugard had no friends and almost no human contact. Animals became a crucial outlet for Dugard's love and affection, and by the end of the book she still very much relates to animals. Dugard details a long list of furry companions, mostly stray cats or cats brought in from the local shelter. She gave each of them names and did her utmost to care for them. She poured into them all the love that she had no place else to go with, being deprived of romantic attachments or a family.

At times, Phillip would take the cats away because he became tired of them or because they interfered with his drug-fueled "runs," and this would greatly sadden Dugard. For much of her early years in captivity, Dugard was without a feline companion, and she fought sheer boredom and inactivity. She dreamed of owning a farm or ranch full of horses and animals. In later years, she kept journals about her animals and loved them like her own children.

As evidence of the love Dugard had for her pets, her chief concern when free was what would happen to all the animals at the Garrido residence. Officer Beth took it upon herself to find foster homes for all the animals, for which Dugard was grateful. And at the conclusion of the book, Dugard is able to psychologically heal due to unconventional therapy involving a horse ranch. Dugard at first was not amenable to therapy, but the inclusion of horses changed her mind, and it's clear animals were a huge help to her as she struggled past her issues.



Style

Perspective

Perspective is important in autobiography, and particularly important in this case, when the perspective is so unusual. Dugard was kidnapped at age eleven and she spent her next eighteen years in captivity, living in a backyard in Antioch, California. *A Stolen Life* chronicles Dugard's time in captivity and then her fight to regain some sense of normalcy after her freedom.

Dugard takes pains to tell the story as she experienced it at the time, and only rarely does she include "Reflection" sections to step out of that younger self to provide commentary as an adult. Her childlike ignorance made the initial years of her captivity all the more frightening. She didn't know about sex and was only introduced to it by rape. She didn't know about pregnancy until she was herself pregnant. She didn't know about what drugs can do to a person until she witnessed Phillip first hand, stoned out of his mind on crystal meth. Crucially, she wasn't mature enough to realize Phillip was completely depraved and insane, and so she fought feelings of guilt and lack of self-worth. She came to partially believe in Phillip's "special powers" and the influence that angels supposedly had on his conduct. She simply didn't know any better.

The book switches perspectives often. As mentioned, mostly Dugard is writing from the perspective of the frightened little girl, and later the ignorant teen mother. In certain sections, Dugard reprints journal entries that she wrote at the time, so perspective at that time is precisely the little girl. But at the end of several chapters, Dugard will speak from an adult point of view to provide further insight on certain events or feelings.

Tone

Because of the switch in perspectives mentioned, tone varies in *A Stolen Life*. Dugard performs a balancing act, going back and forth between objectively describing difficult events and relaying her terrified or sad thoughts when she was experiencing the events.

In particular, with some of the sexual acts described, Dugard detaches and writes with vague or clinical descriptions of what Dugard forced her to do. Dugard does not wish her sexual descriptions to be salacious or erotic, of course, and so she attempts to describe them without a lack of passion. However, as for her emotions, Dugard inhabits the mind of her younger, terrified self in order to communicate what she was feeling. So these passages can be quite intense and subjective. For these sections, Dugard wishes to convince the reader of the horror of the situation so the reader can better understand what Dugard went through.

Overall, tone is formal rather than conversational. This is a record of a serious and traumatic period, and as such it is treated with seriousness. Dugard admits that many sections of the book were difficult to write because they were so personal and traumatic,



but whether it's through heavy editing or her own discipline, the narrative comes across as factual and almost journalistic. Dugard wishes above all to reveal the truth in "tell all" fashion, not to spew venom at Phillip and Nancy Garrido, and the tone helps to fulfill this wish.

Structure

The book is divided into numerous small chapters. After an introduction that establishes the overall premise of the book - how Jaycee Dugard was kidnapped and held captive for eighteen years - the book proceeds in mostly chronological order. *A Stolen Life* starts with Dugard's childhood in Tahoe before her capture, and ends with her life as of the writing of the book, when Dugard was attending therapy at a horse farm and putting her life slowly back together.

However, throughout this overall chronological structure, Dugard gives herself the freedom to flash back and flash forward. At the end of many chapters, there is a section labeled "Reflection" which is Dugard's chance to reflect upon the events just described as the adult writer. In these sections, Dugard might reveal new information about her present life, or she might communicate a later incident that relates in some way to the content of the chapter.

Chapters often deal with specific and concrete events. "Easter: Phillip on an Island" talks about the time Phillip went away for a month when he was put in prison, and "Birth of Second Baby" is self-explanatory.

Dugard has also chosen to include material that was written by herself during the time of the captivity. This includes a journal about caring for her cat, and also numerous journal entries touching upon loneliness, her need for her mother, her love for animals, and her search for identity.

Quotes

"Let's get one thing straight! My name is Jaycee Lee Dugard. I was kidnapped by a stranger at age eleven. For eighteen years I was kept in a backyard and not allowed to say my own name. What follows will be my personal story of how one fateful day in June of 1991 changed my life forever." (Introduction, page ix)

"I start to shiver. I am so cold. I try to stop the tears. I tell myself I must be brave. It feels like my life is not my own anymore. My whole body feels heavy and I just want to collapse. This cannot be real, I tell myself. It's only a dream." ("The Secret Backyard," page 19)

"I had to stay in the same place I'd just been raped in. I didn't know at the time that is what it was called: the word 'rape' was not in my vocabulary. Today that makes me feel terrible for that little naïve girl. She is still a part of me and at times she comes out and makes me feel small and helpless once again." ("The First Time," page 33)

"I miss my mom. My mom used to make me Barbie clothes. She had just made me some new outfits right before I went away. I wonder what she is doing right now. Does she miss me as much as I miss her? I try really hard not to think of things that make me sad." ("Nancy," page 63)

"[Phillip] thinks he hears voices from the TV even when it's muted. He asks me if I can hear it, too, and I say I don't hear anything, but sometimes I'm afraid to disagree with him. He bought this device called Bionic Ears and he puts it up to the wall and puts on headphones and listens to the wall for hours." ("Christmas," page 74)

"The connection I feel for this baby inside of me every time I feel it move is an incredible feeling. I talk to my belly and tell it stories. Every time I feel the baby kick, I feel less and less alone in this world." ("Learning I Was Pregnant," page 99)

"I am in another kind of prison now. Free to roam the backyard but still prisoner nonetheless. I feel I am bound to these people - my captors - by invisible bonds instead of constant handcuffs. No one seems to care that I am there." ("Birth of Second Baby," page 130)

"One outing melted into the next. I learned to not look people in the eye. I felt if I did, they would ask me questions I couldn't possibly answer. [...] In time going out became easier and we even brought the girls shopping with us. But I could never shake the feeling that one day someone would say, 'Hey, aren't you that missing girl?' but nobody ever did. I was nobody. Nobody saw me." ("Pretending to Be a Family," page 158)

"Sometimes I want to run away from everything. I would live in my own world. I would have super powers. Like the power to heal people and animals. I would also be able to hear the thoughts of animals and people, too. I would be able to understand animals. I



would travel around my world on a horse the color of fire with a mane of snow. I would be a heroine in my world." ("Journal Entries," pages 171-72)

"She asked for my name again. I said I couldn't say it. I wasn't trying to be difficult. I told her I haven't said it in eighteen years. I told her I would write it down. And that's what I did. Writing shakily on that small paper, the letters of my name: JAYCEE LEE DUGARD. It was like breaking an evil spell. In that moment, I felt free but also exhausted and completely alive all at the same time." ("Discovery and Reunion," page 209)

"Phillip Garrido took many things from me, and watching my sister grow up was one of them. I have loved my sister since the day she was born and dreamed about one day being her best friend." ("Milestones," pages 223-24)

"When I imagine that future, I see myself helping families heal after traumatic situations. Families are like snowflakes: they come in many shapes and sizes and no two are the same. And like a snowflake, they are very delicate and must be protected and guarded from elements that threaten to destroy their precarious balance. When two or more snowflakes merge, they strengthen their chances of surviving in an ever-changing world." ("Therapeutic Healing with a Twist," pages 266-67)

Topics for Discussion

Explain the Stockholm syndrome, and how this phenomenon might apply to Jaycee Dugard.

What importance did animals have in Dugard's life?

How did Dugard characterize her relationship with Nancy? Discuss a few examples of their interactions, and how these examples were indicative of their relationship.

Why do you think Dugard did not eventually call for help or try to run away when she had the chance years after her abduction? What reasons did Dugard give?

How did time at the horse farm help Dugard to heal? What kind of therapies was she involved in?

Explain the "angel theory" and how it impacted Phillip Garrido's psyche.

Does Dugard's story reveal any failings of law enforcement or the justice system? What might be improved to lessen the chances of another Jaycee Dugard-type kidnapping?