

Prisoner Within

Jenny Ford

Prisoner Within 3rd Edition

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I would love to know your thoughts and comments about this book

You can leave your feedback via the retailer you purchased from or on my website.

Thanking you with gratitude.

Jenny xxx

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About the Author



Jenny Ford, an award-winning and multi-genre author has a narrative style that takes the reader on a journey through the eyes, ears and emotions of the main character of each book. Jenny inspires and empowers her readers by impacting their lives; making a difference with the written words in her books.

A very successful beauty therapist with her own business, Jenny's life and career was turned upside down when she was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. Jenny had no idea that she would end up becoming an author and says, "No one was more surprised than me when I wrote my first book. I had no interest in writing at all, not even as a child. I literally just fell into it and it has now become my passion. I guess you could say I was Divinely Guided!"

The main focus of Jenny's writing is positivity - she loves writing stories that make people smile and says, "I am continually inspired and gain motivation by the different people that I meet every day, which drives me to be the best that I can."

Jenny goes on to say, "I am a strong believer that everything happens for a reason and truly believe that without the knocks and challenges, I certainly wouldn't be where I am today!"

Foreword

I've known Jenny Ford now for just one year and have grown to appreciate not just what a great writer she is but also a very wonderful and compassionate loving human being! Her generosity of spirit and genuine love and care for others shines through in her story-telling. *Prisoner Within* is a great example of Jenny's beautiful writing; nominated for a Prestigious Global Award by the Author Elite Awards in 2018, the book has just been revised and edited and I am honoured to have been asked by Jenny to write a foreword.

Prisoner Within tells a powerfully moving story which follows the main character Amy on her journey of heartache and pain leaving her with nightmares that she is unable to let go of. Can she forgive the one person who caused this and find the inner peace and freedom that she is so desperately searching for? Losing the people that she cared for the most leaves Amy living in a foster home. Feeling scared and alone Amy struggles to settle into her new surroundings. How will she cope with living with strangers? Will Amy ever be happy again? Becoming a prisoner within her own mind Amy finds it difficult to let anyone in pushing away those that care for her except for Tara. Tara is Amy's best friend and rock, over the years she has seen Amy go through the highs and lows and wants to help her friend get through the nightmares so that she can be free to live a life of peace and happiness.

In these times of Covid, so many of us have lost someone dear to us or know someone who has.....will the pain ever go away? Will we become 'Prisoner's Within'? There is hope and there is light at the end of the tunnel and Jenny Ford's story telling in this wonderfully written and compassionate book is sure to offer hope.

Claire Harris – Book Talk Radio Club

<https://www.booktalkradio.info/>

Prologue

The house was dark, and it had gone quiet. Amy lifted the covers from over her head, slowly got out of bed and walked towards the door. Nervously turning the door handle, a shiver went down her spine. Inch by inch, Amy opened the door, drew in a deep breath, and continued. She had a feeling that something was very wrong. Step by step, Amy made her way down the stairs. She stopped for a moment before stepping onto the last step. When Amy entered through the kitchen door, she felt something sharp under her foot. Amy bent down to see what it was; a fragment of glass had cut her. Amy wiped away the blood with her hand, and feeling scared, she walked further into the kitchen. Amy gasped as she put her hands to her mouth, unable to scream. She stood there for a moment in a complete daze before she picked up the phone and called the police.

Chapter 1

“Amy, Amy, wake up sleepy head you will be late for school.”

“Mum, it is too early, just five more minutes.”

“Amy, get up now!” scolded Mum.

Amy dragged herself out of bed and went down into the kitchen. Josh, Amy’s older brother, was sitting at the table eating his breakfast. “Morning squirt, you’re looking tired, didn’t you sleep well?”

“No, Mum and Dad’s arguing kept me awake. Will this ever end Josh?” sighed Amy.

“Amy, if I have to work several jobs to save enough money and get you and Mum away from him, then that is what I will do. I promise,” Josh responded, with a serious look in his eye.

Amy adored Josh. He was her best friend, and she looked up to her big brother. She always felt safe knowing Josh was around to look out for her. Dad was an alcoholic and a gambling man. Mum was the loveliest person, trying to keep everything together. There would always be tension in the house when Dad was home. On rare occasions, there were days when it would be peaceful and calm, but those days were few and far apart.

“Amy, have some breakfast.” Mum put a bowl of cereal on the table.

“I’m not hungry,” Amy replied grumpily.

“Amy, you must eat before school, it is the most important meal of the day. You need to keep your strength up!” Josh smiled at Amy.

After breakfast, Amy went to her room to get ready. Josh left for work. Dad had already gone.

Amy enjoyed being at secondary school. She was very creative and loved it. Her art teacher was always complementing Amy on her work. "Amy, you are so natural when it comes to sketching, and you use colour very well." Amy liked it when her teachers praised her work. This was a happy place for Amy to be, but unfortunately, the stress of her home life was always on her mind.

That evening after dinner, Dad came home drunk... and in a foul mood. He had been gambling again and, by all accounts, had lost a lot of money. Mum would get really cross with him, as they were tight with money as it was.

"Why do you do this all the time? We do not have enough money. How am I supposed to pay the bills and put food on the table?"

"Shut it, woman!" he would shout. "Just go and get my dinner!"

"Get it yourself!" Mum would shout back at him.

Well, that was it; again, the arguing started. Dad called Mum lots of nasty names and sometimes even hit her. Josh and Amy would take themselves to their rooms to avoid hearing it all. It was horrible and made Amy feel so frightened for Mum. Amy got on with her homework, and as soon as things had quietened down, she fell asleep.

"Morning everyone," came this quiet voice, as Dad walked into the room.

"Morning, Dad," said Amy and Josh.

"Children, go and get your coats," Mum would say.

"What is the rush? It would be good to sit and talk to my children occasionally," snarled Dad.

"Amy, Josh, go and wait outside. I will be there in a minute," said Mum sharply. She then turned her attention to Dad. "Talk with your

children? I am surprised if you can make sense of anything after the state you always come home in. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, letting the children see you like that all the time.”

Dad walked out, muttering under his breath.

This is what Dad did every time Mum mentioned his behaviour. He would walk out as if nothing had happened.

It was a few days away until Amy’s Thirteenth birthday. Mum wanted to do something special for her.

“Amy, how would you like to invite a few of your friends over for your birthday? A small party?” asked Mum.

Amy laughed. “Mum, you call them gatherings, not parties.”

Mum chuckled in response.

“Do you think that it is a good idea though? You know what Dad can be like...” Amy asked.

“You leave your father to me. I will have a word with him.” Mum gave Amy a nervous smile.

It was the weekend and Amy’s birthday had arrived. Things had been a bit more peaceful at home since Dad’s last outburst.

“Happy birthday Amy!” Mum and Josh pulled out some party poppers and sang a lovely birthday song to her.

“So, squirt, you are now officially a teenager. How does it feel?” Josh teased Amy.

“I shall let you know later. It has only been a few hours, Josh.” Amy smiled.

“What time are your friends coming to your gathering?” Mum chuckled.

“Around six o’clock, it will only be for a few hours. It makes me nervous about Dad being here,” said Amy anxiously.

“Dad will not be back,” Mum reassured Amy. “Now go on, it is time to open the presents.”

Josh gave Amy a small box wrapped in pink paper. Amy unwrapped the paper excitedly and opened the box. Inside was a stunning bracelet. Josh had a message engraved on it: *Happy birthday Amy, love you.*

“Oh, Josh, it is amazing. I love you too. Thank you.” Amy gave Josh a big hug.

“Your turn Mum,” said Josh. Mum also gave Amy a small box wrapped in purple paper.

“I wonder what this is?” smiled Amy.

Amy unwrapped the paper and opened the box. “Mum, it is gorgeous!” It was a lovely sparkling necklace with the words: *The most precious daughter a mother can have.* Amy looked at Mum and started to cry.

“Why are you crying?” asked Mum.

“Because this is the best birthday ever.”

Mum held Amy in her arms and stroked her hair.

“Dry those tears, and go and do something with Josh, so I can start on the food,” said Mum, as she walked back into the kitchen.

Amy and Josh went to Amy’s room, laughing along the way. Mum smiled and wiped a tear from her cheek. She had not seen Amy this happy in a long time.

“Who is coming to this gathering of yours?” Josh asked Amy.

“There are four girls in my class at school.”

“What are their names?”

“Polly, Alice, Michelle, and Sandra. Will you be staying with us Josh?”

“I am going to see Toby, but I will come to the end of it,” Josh promised.

“Josh, I am worried about Dad, in case he turns up whilst my friends are still here. I don’t want him to spoil it for me,” said Amy worriedly.

“Hopefully he will stay away. You just concentrate on having a good time, you are only thirteen once,” exclaimed Josh.

Mum laid the table with all the food, and Josh put the music on. As Amy came into the kitchen, Mum and Josh gasped in surprise. Amy looked so stunning wearing a blue and red dress, matching shoes and the bracelet and necklace that mum and Josh gave to her. “Amy, you look like a princess!” Mum smiled with pride.

“Thank you, Mum,” Amy beamed.

Amy’s friends soon arrived bringing cards and gifts for her. “Thank you everyone, I will open them later.”

As the night went on, Amy and her friends were having a really good time singing, dancing, and catching up on all the latest school gossip.

There had not been that much fun and laughter in the house for a long time.

The gathering continued longer than expected. They were all having so much fun messing around. By this time, Josh had returned home from seeing Todd, just in time to light the birthday

cake. Mum lit a number thirteen candle, and they all sang happy birthday to Amy at the top of their voices. Amy smiled from ear to ear. “Open your presents Amy,” one of the girls urged. In excitement, Amy ripped the paper off. Amy was delighted with her gift of a new journal and pen, a pink and grey top, a pair of fluffy slippers, some sketching pencils and a book.

“Thank you all so very much, I love them!” Amy exclaimed.

Mum and Josh watched Amy enjoying herself. “Amy seems to be having a good time,” Josh noted.

“Just relaxing for a while without any dramas feels refreshing,” Mum said.

“It will be just the three of us one day Mum, in our own little house,” Josh promised.

“You are a good boy, Josh,” said Mum, with a loving expression.

“There is one thing I do not understand though. Why have you stayed with Dad for so long? He has behaved so badly towards us.”

“Josh, it is hard to try and put into words. I have always hoped that your father would change his ways, but over the years, his drinking and gambling have just gotten worse and that is when all the arguments started. I just keep hoping things will change,” exclaimed Mum.

“So, why stay? It has been horrible, not just for you, but for us too.”

“I’m not sure,” said Mum sadly. “Maybe I still love him.”

“But Mum, he hits you, and there are no excuses for that,” Josh said with a dark expression on his face.

“Please try to understand Josh, that someday, you and Amy will leave. I do not want to be on my own...”

“But Mum, you will not be on your own. I will always take care of you, and so will Amy,” Josh said exhaustedly.

Just then, the kitchen door flew open. Dad had arrived home, drunk. Thankfully, Amy’s gathering was coming to an end.

“Amy, your friend’s parents are waiting outside to take them home,” Mum said nervously.

“Thank you for coming, and for my amazing presents. It has been a lovely birthday,” Amy smiled.

“Wherr’ has everyone gone? The party has jusss’ started...” slurred Dad. “Come dance with me!” he said as he grabbed Mum by the arm. She shrugged away from him. “I said ddance with me!” Dad shouted, starting to get irritated by Mums lack of enthusiasm.

Josh took Amy upstairs, knowing there would be an argument.

“You just had to, today on Amy’s thirteenth birthday. This is a special day for her, and you turn up drunk, when I asked you specifically not to!” Mum said, as her blood started to boil.

“Do not go on at me woman, I have only had a couple of drinks.”

“It’s your daughter’s birthday! Show some respect,” Mum said, raising her voice even louder.

“I am not drrrunk!” Dad retorted, unsteadily reaching for a can of beer from his bag.

“Oh no you do NOT!” Mum said as she snatched the beer from him. Just then, his fist came up and punched her in the face, splitting her lip as a trickle of blood started dripping down her chin.

“Leave before I call the police!” screamed Mum. Dad left the room, laughing on his way out.

Mum stood there crying. Amy and Josh ran downstairs to the

kitchen, to check Mum was okay. “Are you alright, Mum?” Josh asked, passing her a cloth.

“I am fine, my darling,” said Mum, as she tried to smile. “I am so sorry that Dad spoiled your special day Amy.”

Amy held on to her Mum tightly. “It will be OK Mum; we’ll look after you.”

From that day on, things just got worse. Dad’s drinking and gambling were getting uncontrollable, but Mum still lived in the hope that things would change. They never did.

Josh worked hard so that he could build up enough funds to pay for a small, rented house for the three of them to live in.

Amy dreamt of the day until they could leave and take Mum away to be safe and free from Dad.

It was a cold winter evening and Mum had just finished cooking dinner. They were all gathered around the table, when Dad rolled in, drunk as usual and in a worse mood than normal. He announced that he had lost his job. By all accounts, he had been drinking at work.

“What are we supposed to do now?” Mum shouted. “How can you do this to our family? We have lost everything because of your drinking and gambling!”

Amy and Josh quickly got up from the kitchen table and left to go to their rooms. Dad had never been this angry before, and it scared them.

“Why do you think I do it?” Dad shouted back. “So I can drown out the sound of your moaning voice! That’s why!”

“There you go, not facing up to your addictions, and blaming everyone else. And now look at what has happened,” Mum cried, pacing around the room anxiously.

Amy and Josh could hear the arguing from their rooms. Josh went to be with Amy so that he could try to reassure her that it was all going to be okay. The next thing, all they could hear was Mum’s screams. “Josh, please help Mum!” cried Amy.

“Wait here Amy,” Josh replied hurriedly, as he ran downstairs.

The screams continued and Amy hid under the covers to drown them out.

When Josh got into the kitchen, he was horrified to see the blood and cuts all over Mum’s face, and broken glass spread around the kitchen floor. It was an awful sight. Anger started to rise in Josh, as he looked at Mums distraught state. Dad had hit Mum in the past, but nothing as bad as this. He was going to kill her if he didn’t do something.

“I am going to get help Mum. I’m calling the police.”

“Go back to your room unless you want the same, my boy,” Dad snarled, with an evil look in his eye. He was so drunk and blinded by anger, he was acting purely off of impulse.

Dad was about to give Mum another punch to the face, but Josh ran at him screaming, “Leave her alone! Get off my Mum!”

“I told you to go boy!” Dad screamed, and pushed him as hard as he could across the room. As Josh landed, his head caught on something sharp. Blood started pouring from his head, and he fell unconscious.

“Josh!” screamed Mum. “What have you done to my baby?”

The anger and panic Mum felt was unlike any she had ever known. Mum picked up a knife from the kitchen side and went for

Dad. There was a big struggle, and in the chaos the knife plunged into Dad's chest. He lunged forward at her and collapsed. Mum attempted to move out of the way as he landed on top of her, but as they tumbled backwards, she fell onto a large piece of broken glass that went straight through her. Mum died instantly. Dad was already dead.

Shocked and scared, Amy waited for the police to arrive. When all went quiet, she ran downstairs to find both her parents dead on the floor. The sight of all the blood made Amy feel sick. She heard a slight wincing noise coming from the corner of the kitchen. "Josh...?"

As she bent down to him, Amy saw the blood pouring from his head. Amy picked up a cloth and tried to soak up the blood, but there was far too much. "Hang on Josh, help is on the way." Josh slightly opened his eyes, looked at Amy, whispered *Sorry*, then passed away in her arms.

After a while, the police arrived. There were flashing lights and the sound of sirens everywhere... People going in and out of the house taking photos. Was this real, or was it just an awful nightmare that she would soon wake up from?