

What people are saying about
Only Son... Only Child:

"It has been 10 years since the events described in this book happened. That is not enough time for Raine to heal from the trauma of losing her son to a serious brain injury, getting him back as if by a miracle, then losing him again to a world of drug dealing. Her distance from those events comes from writing about someone else through the main events of the book, a mythical "Raine" who went through hell until "she" returns to herself as if also coming out of a coma.

The result is high literary art. The book flows through the thoughts of its characters, like James Joyce, but understandable, clear as an ambulance siren or a punch to the stomach.

The book is not "based on a true story". It is the true story, wrenching and painful, real and unvarnished.

Whatever your faith, whatever you believe, you can appreciate the raw emotion conveyed by this story. But if you believe or are open to the influence of other forces in the world, you will come away with a new appreciation for the mysteries that confound but support us all."

David Gray

"*Only Son... Only Child* was at times a real eye opener for me. I never realized the struggles I put my poor mother through. Nor the sacrifices and the dedication she committed to not only raise me, but to keep me alive. This book is a "bares all" memoir of a courageous woman who goes to all efforts to keep her son, me, alive. It exemplifies the power of love between a mother and her son, which I am sure, many mothers can relate to. It addresses the ignorance in all of us, and helps to remind us that not everything is as it seems. We must do our best to remain compassionate and understanding, not only when we are unsure, but even when we think we are sure of the circumstances of other people. *Only Son... Only Child* is a must read for people everywhere to help reinforce in humanity the power of love."

Ryan Pohle

"Moving and inspired. Raine easily conveys her thoughts and action walking you through her ordeal at a pace that flows well. *Only Son... Only Child* has the power to change lives for the better. We are all one, as deserving as the next where miracles are concerned. I cannot recommend it enough. My heart wept and my soul sang."

Ms Briar Pashko
Reiki Master

Only Son...
Only Child

*a journey
through love*

Raine Turner

Turner, Raine

ONLY SON... ONLY CHILD
a journey through love

Copyright © 2015 Raine Turner

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without written permission of the author and publisher.

Published by: Raine Turner, Edmonton, Canada

OnlySonOnlyChild.com

ISBN: 978-1-988048-11-6

This book is based on my true story; some names have been changed to protect privacy. Creative license used when describing the thoughts of others.

Publication assistance and
digital printing in Canada by



PageMaster is a complete Canadian publishing service
championing life, diversity and hope.

Thank you to

The Stollery Hospital

The Glenrose Hospital

Alberta Health Care System

Northern Alberta Brain Injury Society (NABIS) – for giving me a part-time temporary job when I needed it the most and was too full of pride to ask for help

The many incredible personnel who made this all possible with their life work

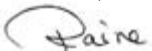
My mother, who stepped up to the plate

My son for his bravery and strength

“God”, “the All Knowing”, “Spirit”, “the Source”...

Whatever you prefer to call your higher power

Thanks,

Paine

Preface

This book has taken me ten years to write, it is not a book I really wanted to send out to the universe. Reliving the pain, the personal tough times goes against my deep seated desire for privacy and protection of my son. However, I knew while he was in the hospital, this is a story I needed to share with others going through a life altering illness or accident. It is also a gift to ‘God, The Universe, Spirit’, to thank them for their support. ‘They’ wanted me to tell my story to share in ‘Their’ existence, offer evidence ‘They’ exist, and not only for the so-called “pure” among us.

My fear is many people may misinterpret the true meaning of this story. Miracles do happen, but they occur rarely, that is why they are called miracles.

I understand the horror involved with the decision to remove our loved ones from medically supplied life support; however, if a person is indeed brain dead, or in a state they will not live a life respectful to their soul, we, as the loving family, should honour their life and allow them to pass. Please do not use my personal story as a reason to ‘suspend’ life, to ignore expert medical opinion. If it were not for the highly qualified doctors attending my son, he would not have had the opportunity to be blessed by the ‘Higher Energy’ around us.

Just because we cannot see something doesn’t mean it does not exist.

Contents

Day 0 Wednesday, August 13th 2003.....	1
Day 2 – Thursday.....	31
Day 3 – Friday	54
Day 4 – Saturday	66
Day 5 – Sunday.....	69
Day 6 – Monday	74
Day 7 – Tuesday.....	83
Day 8 – Wednesday.....	96
Day 9 – Thursday.....	112
Day 10 – Friday.....	116
Day 11 – Saturday 23	134
Day 12 – Sunday, August 24	151
Back in my body.....	175
August 27.....	177
September	178
September 15th	199
October	204
November	215
December 2003	217
January 2004.....	225
February	226
March 18th	230
April.....	233
May 11 2003	236
July	238
August 13th.....	247
September	249
October 2004.....	252
December 2004	258
January 14, 2005	260
Epilogue.....	266

Who Has Seen The Wind?

Who has seen the wind?

Neither I nor you;

But when the leaves hang trembling

The wind is passing thro'.

Who has seen the wind?

Neither you nor I;

But when the trees bow down their heads

The wind is passing by.

- by Christina Rossetti

Day 0

Wednesday, August 13th 2003

Day 1 and a half

*We never know when life can
change in a New York minute*

*Suddenly we count our life in minutes...
then days and finally months*

He was her husband but she preferred to call him the ‘The
H.L. Dragon.’ One does not always make the wisest choices
when they marry...

He finally came home flush with the blush of many beers,
his long legs stretched out on the old sofa. Sure she tried –
she covered the old piece of furniture with a simple white cot-
ton slipcover, thinking it practical and stylish, plus easy to be
washed off from the dirt and oil he carried in. Gripping a small
silver metal can in one of his large callused hands he continued
in his slow Eastern accented way, “We can leave, go to Thailand.
Have a life.”

Sitting across from him her legs crossed in front of her,
leaning against the armrest, watching his mouth move, his
words echoing in her head. Minutes slipped away while the

waves of thoughts roared in her mind, ‘I served him with divorce papers, he threw them in the fire-pit... then he needed a place to stay and I needed money so I let him move back in. What was I thinking?’

“Leave here. I’ve been a fool. We need to get away. Start a new life. Ryan doesn’t need you anymore,” He said.

She called him The Dragon in the privacy of her mind, the one place he could never truly reach her.

Watching glistening cans raised one after the other, time and time again to his lips, the bubbles escaping down his chin into the dark beard, his words slid past her.

Run away with him? No chance. Her son did need her, would need her for a long time, he was simply going through a phase. Sell her house? What did he just say? Sell her house and move away with him? Crazy talk, again, crazy talk... When will he leave again? Please God make it soon.

“Beer me baby, beer me.” Holding up yet another can.

Another empty beer can waved at her, “Beer me, baby.”

The Dragon waved his arm at her, grinning, exposing a large friendly looking mouth, perfect even white teeth and somewhat full lips considering you could only see parts of them from under the rough moustache and raggedy beard he sported this season. Long slim legs clad in well worn, oil stained Levi jeans led to wool work socks, worn summer and winter for their comfort and moisture absorbing properties – wool socks were good in steel-toed work boots.

He asked her to darn his socks, like his mother back home in Nova Scotia suggested she do, but no, his ol’ lady would go and buy new ones rather than sit and darn his socks like a good woman. These fancy city girls were pretty to look at but really did not know their place like the girls back home in the small town back East where he grew up. A man here needed to teach

these women their place then keep an iron fist on them to ensure they stayed there.

Looking at her, he knew she was slipping from his grasp. He would not allow that. She was his wife and would be his wife until the day she died.

He told her and he meant it. She would remain his wife until the day she died. He was back, back in this house and he was staying here.

“Sure.”

Returning from the kitchen empty handed, tension gathered on her face, “Sorry, you’re all out. Guess its bedtime, after all there is work tomorrow. Sorry”

“Fuck! They never make a damn 18-pack big enough! Yeah, guess it’s time. Let’s go”

He always insisted she come to bed with him, otherwise she would stay up and he would have to go to sleep alone; that was not acceptable. Another one of these strange habits women out here had along with some idea they did not need to be home when ‘their man’ came home. What was with that? Men work hard all day, sometimes late into the night; the damn woman can show enough respect to at least be home when they get home.

Another strange habit he had to break her of was early in their marriage his ol lady had the gall to ask him to pick up things on his way home from work. Damn! He just called to let her know he was coming and to have dinner ready. Why should he have to pick up bread, eggs, milk or even his beer? She should handle those chores, they were her job.

He took care of that problem. It took some old fashioned ‘conditioning’ but he did it. She was getting better.

He did finally relax the rule of dinner on the table at 5 o’clock sharp, she was right on that one. Often he did not get

home until later and his dinner was not fit for the dog! He knew it was not fit for the dog after he threw his plate against the wall one night. The stupid German Shepherd-cross bitch ran out of the kitchen afraid and hid in the hall closet peeing all over his work boots. So now he called when he was coming home so dinner would be ready and fit to eat. Damn bitch dog and it was him that brought the damn thing home, damn stupid bitch dog!

After getting him settled into what once was their martial bed Raine quietly explained she would be back after a load of laundry was put in, some towels folded, neatly put away and a few dishes hand washed. Comforting him by ensuring she would be very quiet and return as soon as her chores were completed.

Satisfied, he let her go.

She really did not understand this strange situation. She wore her flannel jammies, they did not touch, she hugged the edge of the mattress – they did not ‘sleep’ together. So why was he so hell bent on sleeping in the same bed when he did show up? He slept with enough other women – why this game?

Walking down the long hall she crept into a bed in a far bedroom.

On the walls hung photographs of a young boy lovingly framed. They highlighted a boy’s love of baseball. In one he was very young, simply holding a baseball bat. In another, a few years older, he crouched in full catcher’s gear. Another held a series of three professional photos showing the boy standing on a baseball mound his arm extended holding the holy globe getting ready to release the ball. Alongside a built-in desk hung two smaller paintings – simple kindergarten handmade art –

hands of a small child coated with paint and pressed into the paper. These, like the photographs, were professionally framed.

The first piece showed only one small blue handprint, framed in a matching blue metal frame, under the innocent little painted palm where the words:

*Sometimes you get discouraged
Because I am so very small,
And always leave my fingerprints
On furniture and walls.
But every day I am growing,
I'll be grown up someday,
And all these tiny handprints
Will simply fade away.
So here's a final handprint
Just so you can recall,
Exactly how my fingers looked
When I was very small.
Mommy
I love you!*

On the opposite wall of the small built-in desk area hung another painting of the same style; this one with a red metal frame. Under two red handprints read:

*My little finger to remind you
I was a baby
My ring finger to remind you
Of my link to your life
My middle finger to remind you
Of your guidance I'll need to balance my life
My pointer finger to remind you
Not to point at me in scorn
But to beckon me with love
My thumb to remind you*

*I need the thumbs up sign of approval
 My hand to remind you
 Of the precarious year ahead
 But if we never let go we will make it together
 Mommy I love you!
 Your little Bear, Ryan*

Safe! She felt safe in the shadows of her child's life.

Gently raising from the queen sized bed, sliding a refurbished depression era hutch, now used as a dresser, close to the doorway. Quietly closing the door she moved the hutch behind the door blocking the entrance. Safe!

She would be safe now. She crawled back into the huge reproduction antique steel bed. The thick white flannel sheets felt safe – the sheets her young boy loved so much regardless of the season.

At her feet lay a huge stuffed Gund Bear, the size of a five-year-old child, on the pillow beside her sat a Steiff bear, dressed in a fur trimmed woollen sweater. Snuggling in this bed her thoughts caught her off guard, 'What if he awakes and finds me here, what if he wakes and I am not there.' He will push this hutch and destroy everything in here to get me out. Considering the crazy consequences of her actions, the hutch slowly slid back to its proper spot, the door opened then she settled back into the soft down bed pulling the much loved sheets around her.

Safe, safe again... for now.

Ring,

Ring...

Could it be?

Strange ringing sounds, again, "ring," the faint sound.

"Ring" a distant sound from the kitchen. Could it be?

The phone was ringing... it came again..., the phone was ringing..... grab it before it woke him. Waking the fire breathing dragon from deep beer infused sleep was not a safe thing.

Red digital numbers glowed from within the stainless steel gas stove 11:07

“Is this Raine?”

“Yes,” staring at the call display on the base of the cordless phone the words ‘U A Hospital’ were illuminated.

“This is the University of Alberta Hospital Emergency calling, do you have a son, Ryan?”

More confused she could only answer a weak, “Yes”.

“He has been in a slight accident and wants you to come and see him. Not to worry, not to rush, just a little skateboarding acci.....”

More words, confusing words, she did not truly hear the rest of the words, or so she thought as she hung up the phone... No more words. Quietly, not to wake the man sleeping in ‘her’ bed in ‘her’ bedroom, she slipped into old ragged track pants pulled from the large wicker basket inside the walk-in closet. She pulled her long dark hair through a worn black ponytail elastic...

“Hey, watcha doin?” The drunken slurred words of the previously sleeping Dragon shocked Raine.

“Hospital called, Ryan had an accident. I have to go.”

“Uh, uh, leave him, he’ll be ‘kay. Why do you always rush ‘round fur ‘im?” The slurred drunken words were not surprising.

“Gotta go.”

Semi darkness of the mid-August evening cuddled her in its warmth and in a strange sense made her feel safe... “it was just a little accident.” The one strange and puzzling comment, “Just a little skateboard accid.....”

My son does not skateboard..... How odd he would take skateboarding up at such a strange time of the night.

Pulling the Land Rover into an entrance illuminated by a large sign she found herself surprisingly relieved by the many spaces available. Stopping the vehicle without regarding parking lines – she did not look for lines, did not think about looking for lines. She did not notice the yellow tape, the construction signs, or even the mud she was walking through – her mind was elsewhere.

“Children’s Emergency? Where?” She shouted at the man standing inside the entrance to the large modern hospital.

“Ma’am, you must move car, no good there. The dark haired man wore a spotless, slightly darker uniform than his own skin, advised her. ‘Security’ crests adorning both sleeves and above the right front chest pocket offered him the suggestion and hope of respect.

Confused as to why the bossiness, but not caring “Oh I don’t care, tow it”. The words carelessly tossed over her shoulder she walked down the hallway the gentleman pointed towards. The words were sharp, quick, abrupt a few decibels higher and louder than necessary.

Through the clear glass doors under a large sign espousing the extravagant donation made by a local benevolent corporate sponsor stood two doctors, their backs towards the door. In front of them they studied two large black and white images hung on a sheet of white plastic illuminated from behind..... X-rays, x-rays... she thought.

A head, followed by a body, rose from behind the receiving desk, “You must be Raine”.

It was not a question but rather a statement. It was not until then she realized the emergency room was empty. ‘What a great thing, no sick kids. Nice... nice to have a quiet emergency

room for children. Yes, an emergency room for children, as the strange voice on the phone explained, Ryan being 16 was still considered a child, so this is why he was in Paediatrics Emergency. He was still a child.

“Ma’am,” One of the white coated doctors refocused her attention on the images on the wall. “Your son has had a rather serious accident. He suffered a blow to the head. He has internal bleeding. As you can see from these CT images. See these dark areas, they are fluid on his brain. This is air,” pointing to another area. “He has a fracture through the right temporal bone and an associated 1.5 suddual hemorrhage.”

Strange words this doctor was saying... strange words.

“Ma’am,”

“Ma’am?” Looking at the woman in front of him watching the face pale, the rocking and slight sway of her body began, the large dark eyes widened and the familiar haze covered them.

“Ma’am, please sit down.’

Slowly her head shook from side to side.

It was then he noticed her clothes appeared far too big for her tiny slender frame. She was not much bigger than many of the teenage girls he saw here, a few inches over 5 feet and seemed she maybe did not even hit the scales at 120 pounds. Her age was hard to figure out, maybe she had been a teenage mom, her face was clear of makeup, she had even-toned skin, no visible wrinkles or marks, healthy looking face... Too thin but healthy looking skin. Her huge confused frozen dark eyes gave the impression of vulnerability, naivety – fragile almost.

“Ma’am, we have called a doctor, a neurosurgeon. We need to operate. Can you please sign a few forms giving us permission?”

Confused eyes once again stared at him quizzically, her head nodding slowly.

“Raine, is there somebody we can call for you? Someone you would like with you?”

Her mind drew a blank. She had no one to call.

Who would be helpful to her? Not her mother. Not her ‘husband’, her best friend died two years ago, her son’s father was no good in situations like this.

“Yes, please.” She decided to call Derrick. She had been seeing him secretly for about seven months.

The familiar deep voice answered her after the second ring, “Hello.”

“Sorry to wake you. Hoping you can help me. Ryan has had an accident and the hospital is asking if anyone can come to help me – I picked you. Sorry.”

“Yeah, no problem. What hospital?” He listened to the voice, calm, controlled yet somehow full of fear. “Okay, be there as soon as I can.”

Relief, someone to help her, comfort was coming.

A large industrial no nonsense clock at the nurses’ station showed 12:34.

“Ma’am, come I will take you to your son.”

As though on a conveyer belt empty emergency rooms silently slid past her. The conveyer belt stopped at the third room on her left while the nurse holding her left arm smoothly slid her into place along the right side of the boy’s bed.

“Mom, sorry, I asked them call Dad first, but I guess he was drunk. Sorry to bug you. Just a little fall, I’ll be okay.

Slowly her eyes began to focus, wordlessly examining the right side of her child’s head. Short brown hair cut just like his hero, Derek Jeeter. A tiny scratch, tiny amount of already dried blood, confused, ‘this cannot be, it makes no sense’.

“Mom, what you doing?” growled the boy.

“Just checking,” looking into his eyes she noticed them

growing strangely angry... Those eyes she knew so well, she knew these eyes long before he was born. The navy-blue black rim around the irises, the walnut coloured centres, splashed with shots of liquid gold; large almond eyes, yes she had known those eyes for years, as they were exactly the same as her own, and her mother's and her grandmother's.

His perfect Roman nose, high cheekbones, strong jaw and chin. The long chin she hated, she called hers a pointy chin but on her son it was perfect. It was not pointy; it was perfectly U shaped, well-proportioned missing only a cleft in it – for a man. He was perfect.

Quickly running her eyes down over his exposed naked torso, checking her son like we do once we see a crack in an egg – are there more cracks? Her eyes did not need to travel far, a large palm sized arrangement of black ink, still surrounded by tinges of red angry flesh exposed itself on his left shoulder. A scorpion? The wall behind moved forward, gently offering its support while she slid down the vertical side. The linoleum floor gave itself to her body as a final resting place.

One of the boys standing invisibly against a wall in the small cubicle pulled a chair over to the slumped woman, reaching out gently, sliding his arms around her limp body he pulled her up and gently rested Raine in a chair.

“Hi, I'm Adam. Sorry to meet you like this. We were with Ryan. We were skateboarding. He fell. He hit his head. He was knocked out. We thought we should take him to the hospital. He woke up. We brought him anyway.”

Slowly raising her head to look at this strange new boy, she saw another boy standing beside him hunched over with a blank look in his eyes. She did not know either boy. No thoughts of them entered her mind, no questions, nothing.

The tattoo?

‘Does he not know a tattoo will stay with him forever? Mark him forever, tell his story forever.’ Breathing deeply for the first time since arriving in this horrid place, ‘I will have it removed, I will pay the best plastic surgeon to remove this thing, have it and this lifestyle erased from his life.’

“Ryan, what did you do?” Taking a shallow breath she continued, “What is that? “ Confused, “Why did you do this?”

“It is my family, it’s something you would not understand” The boy slowly drolled.

A tattoo? A tattoo? Staring at the black ink splat on his shoulder anger swelled in her, anger for doing such a thing to his perfect young body, anger for choosing a ‘family’ other than her.

“Mom, shut the fuck up! It’s my body. I do whatever I want with it. Shit, it’s just a fucking tattoo!”

“Ryan!”

“Leave me alone you fucking bitch,” his eyes growing wild. “Leave me alone you bitch!”

“Ryan!”

“Not you mom! The fucking nurse, she’s hurting me! Fuck off” He was trying to escape a nurse firmly holding his right arm while she inserted a long needle connected to a plastic tube held up on a metal pole.

“It’s okay. They get like this.” Calmness emanated from the 30ish nurse. Her teddy bear printed scrub top a reminder this was a children’s ward.

Did kids really feel any better with medical staff wearing juvenile prints? Without using her eyes for guidance the nurse’s left hand located a red button behind her and pressed it. A whirling sound was released from somewhere in the ceiling, a red light rotated outside the cubicle.

“Mom,” closing his eyes “I love you.” His eyes closed.

Want to keep reading?

You can buy this book at **PageMasterPublishing.ca/Shop**

To find more books by Canadian authors or inquire about publishing your own book, contact PageMaster at:

PageMaster Publication Services Inc.

11340 - 120 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T5G 0W5

books@pagemaster.ca

780-425-9303