

# HELPLESSNESS

NICK "KEEPER" CATRAN-WHITNEY



# KEEPER'S STORY



Nick, 11-years old, at Venice Beach. One year before the molestations began. 1970

Overwhelming guilt, shame, and betrayal. Keeper's story immerses you in the dark places a brother goes when he finds out his sisters have been molested or raped by a parent, or parent figure.

performing together, but they spend as much time as possible relaxing and having fun together. And when it's anyone's birthday in the family, it's a very special day, indeed!

It was birthday time for the father, and everybody wanted to surprise him with a very unusual birthday happening! So what did they come up with? A Skate Party! Well, it sure beat sitting somewhere in a stuffy restaurant. The idea was a great one, and a definite surprise to the birthday man, "Baby".

Although nobody had been on skates in awhile, most of The Whitneys managed to groove pretty good. But after a few spills to the floor, the entire family thought it best to hang the skating up for a bit, and dig into the birthday cake! All in all, it was a great day at the roller rink, and probably one of the nicest birthdays a father could have!





## FROM THE BOOK

Brenda screamed, "James! Nicky! Aaron! Darrell! You, boys, come downstairs; we need to talk to you. Family meeting. Right now!"

I thought, "Great! We'll finally learn when we get to sign the Mo-town contract."

Ten minutes later, four emotional earthquakes tore down our house. Ten minutes later, my family was broken forever. Ten minutes later, I was tossed headfirst into the void.

In those ten minutes, I learned four things:

1. My stepfather had been sexually abusing my two oldest sisters for years.
2. Not only did my mother know, but she also enabled him.
3. A brother begged the molester to stay.
4. My oldest sister locked us four boys out emotionally when she screamed, "It didn't happen to you boys. It only happened to us girls. You four boys can't talk about it. EVER!"

But the truth is it did happen to us boys. The molestations happened to the entire family. After those ten minutes, we were eight kids afraid, scared, alone. And I was now a brother separated and isolated.

This is the story of the pain, guilt, and shame brothers carry in

silence when the people we need to speak to the most lock us out of the most important conversation in our life simply because we are...brothers. What happens to brothers when we learn our parents have sexually abused our sisters? How do we handle the knowledge that there was a coverup by our mother to keep us in the dark? What happens when those outside the family who could have helped us refuse to step in and save us because we are on the doorstep of fame and fortune? What happens to brothers when our sisters recoil from us because even though we did not know, they hate our guts? How do brothers survive our trauma knowing there is no one there for us, no one for us to talk to, there is no support system to bring us back from the void? How do brothers stay strong for sisters who want nothing to do with us? How do we carry a load of guilt, shame, and betrayal and save ourselves?

This is the story of my forty-five-year journey weighed down by my guilt, shame, and betrayal. This is the story of my continuing effort to put myself back together.

This is a story for brothers who carry the same pain I once carried. Who walk in silence, in the shadows. Who believe their shame, guilt, and pain may, at times, be too much to endure. Who is looking for that one voice to shoutout, "I know how you feel. I once felt as you do now. Use my voice. Let it be your voice, for my voice is a brother's voice. It is our voice. It is your voice."

My name is Keeper Catran-Whitney, and this is my story.





# WHITNEY!

By Flo Jenkins



"Right On" Magazine 10/1973

And the name of Whitney is ready to add their name to that list of talented and successful entertainers. One very obvious thing you notice when you first check out this family is that they have a ball doing what they do!

Another thing you notice right off the bat is that the entire family is so gorgeous! But more important than all these things is the fact that Whitney! is very together!

When they appear onstage at the clubs around Los Angeles they manage to do something that many groups find it hard to do ... they have a *magic* about them that captivates an audience! At the end of a show one finds that they have a

cludes an 8-year old set of the cutest twins you'll ever see by the name of Louanda and Louise. When they appear onstage to sing the audience is automatically captivated by their pretty faces, but when they start to open their mouths, they blow everybody's mind!

## Cookie . . . Soulful "Little Mama!"

Nine-year old Cozette is the soulful "little mama" of the group! They call her "Cookie" because she's so sweet and is constantly giggling. When "Cookie" comes out to do her thing you'd think she was twenty-one! When she lays on the audience

es such as "Steam Roller," it's hard to believe the little lady's only around this world just nine years! And when she really gets into songs, she stops her giggling, and the audience hypnotized into believing that she knows exactly what she's singing about! And when it's all over, the audience is in stitches! ... Laughing ... and amazed how a little girl could take their minds and do with it what "Cookie" does. She's too much!

Ray-Ray is the youngest boy in the family, and he's an Aries. At ten years old, you'd expect him to be outside most of the time playing with his friends rather than concentrating on a singing career! Sure he gets a chance to play his favorite game of "Mafia" with his buddies in the neighborhood, but he gets an even bigger kick out of turning people on with his singing!

When he slides out onstage doing



# Q&A

I admit openly and freely that I am terrified to write this book. I am afraid to take this journey.

## HOW DID YOU DECIDE TO WRITE A BOOK?

Around 2013 I was being emotionally drawn into the possibility of writing a book. About our story, about what happened to us. My fear was their reaction, my sisters. That put me off for quite a while.

Me and my brothers, we were so afraid to speak to our sisters about this for decades.

## WAS THERE AN EVENT THAT TRIGGERED YOU TO ACT?

2013, I was heavy into direct selling and network marketing, I was creating a media company, and I was looking to write a second book on the youth and urban market in network marketing. There was an event put on by Lisa Nichols down in San Diego, "Speak and Write." I went to a panel, "How to write a book in 20 minutes," and the facilitator called on different people, I put my hand up. I was being overlooked. As I'm sitting there, waiting my turn, I'm thinking about writing this book on network marketing, but the whole time, the thing that kept coming to the forefront of my mind was something else entirely.

The facilitator called on me and I was ready to talk about the network marketing book, but that's not what came out. What came out was the description of the book, "Helplessness."



The Leary kids aka The Whitney Family at Centinela Park

1968

## TELL US ABOUT THE MOTOWN CONTRACT

In 1977, right when all this broke, we were negotiating opting out of our contract with A&M records because Motown had come to us, and they wanted us to come to them. They had put together this package which, at the time, was the largest recording contract they had offered to any group, ever.

At the time they had the



The Whitney Family at the Imperial West Night Club, Los Angeles

1973



Four Tops on their roster, The Jackson Five, and Diana Ross and the Supremes. And they were coming to our family, The Whitney Family Band. We were very popular in LA. We had done a lot of traveling around the world, tv shows, magazines, etc.

On this particular day we were called to a family meeting. I thought it was to discuss when the signing date was going to be. My 3 brothers thought the same thing. Well, that's not what the meeting was about.

### WHAT WAS IT LIKE GROWING UP IN PORTLAND, OREGON?

It was great, it was a lot of fun. My father was married before he met my mom, he had 3 kids. When my father left his previous wife for my mother, we got a number of half-brothers and half-sisters. My grandparents both lived there, I've got aunts, I've got uncles, I've got a ton of cousins, they're just all there. So, Portland, on the one hand, has spectacular memories. But on the other hand, it's where I first saw my father beating my mother. Sometimes, almost near death.

In 1969, early 70's, my mom had had enough. She packed all eight of us into my aunt's purple car, and just drove down to LA without telling my dad.

### WHO ARE YOU WRITING THIS BOOK FOR?

From my experience, as a brother, we are left out of the conversation when our sisters have been sexually abused. Sisters don't want to hear anything from their brothers because they think we aren't impacted. Certainly, we aren't impacted to the degree that they are but the impact on brothers can be absolutely devastating.

When I was writing the book it occurred to me, there aren't any books out there about brothers talking about their experience. There are books about men's experiences being molested, or raped, but none from a brother's perspective of what it's like once he learns his sisters have been molested or raped. And so, as I was writing the book, in the 6+ years it took to write it, I spoke to a number of men whose sisters had been molested. A lot of them

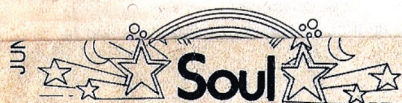
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# Billboard's Top Album Picks

Billboard SPECIAL SURVEY For Week Ending 6/11/77

Number of LPs reviewed this week **69** Last week **48**

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**AL GREEN**—*Al Green's Greatest Hits Volume II*, Hi SHL32105 (London). This LP is a compilation of previously recorded hits from Green's foot stompin', hand clapping, high energy tunes to the easy, mellow ballads. Instruments on this album, although some selections date back a few years, are very much in keeping with the singer's current sound. This LP was produced by Willie Mitchell and Green.

**Best cuts:** "Love & Happiness," "Take Me To The River," "For The Good Times," "Livin' For You," "Full Of Fire."

**Dealers:** This singer captures both the pop and r&b audiences.

**FUNKADELIC**—*The Best Of The Early Years Volume One*, Westbound WB303 (Atlantic). This LP offers Funkadelic fans a chance to compare their early material with its current sound. Instruments and vocals are as energetic as today's sound although the group seems to have matured both instrumentally and vocally. The material on this LP was recorded prior to the group becoming Parliament/Funkadelic. The earlier sound was not quite as clear and identifiable as their present sound. As usual with this group, some cuts are not geared to AM air play.

**Best cuts:** "Cosmic Slop," "Sexy Ways," "Can't Stand The

engaging performers. The pace of this offering is slow compared to what usually clicks, but Jarrett's jazz is so classical it works. Eleven movements, four sides of music that can be felt as well as heard. He's never flamboyant, always clear-headed.

**Best cuts:** Your choice.

**Dealers:** Appeal to rock, jazz and classical listeners.

## First Time Around

**THE WHITNEY FAMILY**—*Airways*, United Artists LA734G. As a unit singing harmony this multivoiced ensemble is excellent. As individual soloists they are equally impressive. But there's an obvious lack of coordination when several members are featured on one cut. This group excels when singing ballads and with the different members leading, the LP takes on several dimensions. Instruments are mellow and few at times but easily transfers into a large orchestra.

**Best cuts:** "Whatcha Gonna Do If I Give It To You," "Take Love," "Let Me Be Your Woman," "Love Is Where You Find It."

**Dealers:** For best results display with r&b vocal groups.

**GONZALEZ**—*Our Only Weapon Is Our Music*, EMI ST11644.

## Spotlight

along with Linda. Recorded on 4-track equipment to recapture the simplicity of the Holly era, the album has a certain rough charm, but is lacking in the bouncy energy that sparked the original renditions. **Best cuts:** "It's So Easy/Listen To Me," "Heartbeat," "Moondreams."

**TROOPER**—*Knock 'Em Dead Kid*, MCA2275. There's very little authenticity here although members of this rock group are obviously talented. Different members are spotlighted and excel at this point. Instruments are also spotlighted as highly visible electronic productions. This LP was well produced by Randy Bachman. **Best cuts:** "Knock 'Em Dead Kid," "Most Of The Country," "We're Here For A Good Time," "(It's Been A) Long Time."

**GRAEME EDGE BAND FEATURING ADRIAN GURVITZ**—*Paradise Ballroom*, London PS686. Jazz flavored instruments coupled with rock vocals makes for an interesting blend. The jazz guitar is the outstanding instrument here. Strong vocals by lead singer are good. Much of this LP is mellow and as much instrumental as vocal. **Best cuts:** "Paradise Ballroom," "Human," "Caroline," "All Is Fair."

**SAMMY JOHNS**—*The Van/Original Motion Picture Soundtrack*, Warner Bros. BS3063. Johns' delivery of 10 selections from "The Van" reflects an air of relaxation and carefree cruising down the highway heard in his easygoing vocals and the smooth backing tracks of the instrumental arrangements. Laced in a country/gospel style, the performance for the most part is soft and reflective dealing exclusively on the sub-

**THE DICTATORS**—*Manifest Destiny*, and...  
only turned out an LP a year so fans  
"Glider," "Crackers."

**RUSTY WIER**—*Stacked Deck*, Columbia...  
photos of the blond and bearded Wier...  
Masterson/Maverick-style setting. Wier...  
guises his vocals as those of a red-bl...  
**Best cuts:** "Sundown Sally," "Black"

**THE NEW MARKETTS**—*Step On It*, K...  
group reformed has come up with a li...  
probably be more popular during...  
months. There is no real creativity on...  
but musicians are good maintaining...  
throughout. **Best cuts:** "Soul Coaxing...  
"Pinada."

**CHUNKY, NOVI & ERNIE**, Warner Bro...  
mellow, pop offerings by a trio of tw...  
the LP is dominated by Chunky (aka I)...  
vocalist and compos of all of the sele...  
cals are laidback, at times overly so...  
ear-pleasing. **Best cuts:** "Can't Get...  
land," "Lovelight."

soul

SIMPLY CAESAR First Lady Roadsh



came to me, once they found out what I was writing. They started telling me their stories.

#### **WHAT OTHER PLATFORMS DO YOU SPEAK ON?**

I did a 16-part series podcast called "Behind The Book. This is for the Brothers." I spoke with a number of people in the podcast, some radio people, in particular Gene Braunstein. I spoke with a good friend of mine, George Kennedy. I spoke to Dr. Yvonne Merrill, who is a Doctor of Literature at the University of Arizona for about 40 years; she read the manuscript and said it was one of the most powerful things that has ever crossed her desk.

I spoke to my son, on what it was like for him, once I told him what happened, and the impact. He and I had a very intense interview because he asked me questions that no one had ever asked.

I also did an interview with my wife, on what it was like to watch me going through all of these emotional challenges, as I became closed off, didn't want to talk about it. She is actually the one who brought it to my attention - that I was a victim. For all of these years I didn't look at myself as a victim. She looked at me and said, "you are a victim. How can you not be a victim?"

I imagine most men and brothers are going to say, "I'm not a victim, it was just my sisters." Well, you are a victim. The entire family has been

victimized. I had this discussion with my son, and my brother. My older brother handles it vastly different. The most important episode, a 2 hour episode, is with my brother and sister.

We are currently working on the website to support the book.

#### **ARE THERE ANY REVELATIONS THAT YOU HAD WHILE WRITING THE BOOK?**

Too many. And they continue to come. The first, major revelation; for the first, maybe 45-50 years, I thought that HP had only gotten to my 2 oldest sisters, and that my 2 youngest sisters, were never in the cross hairs. One day, I'm writing this paragraph to close out a chapter and it hit me.

I thought that I had protected them, because of the confrontation that he and I had in 1986. But I write this piece in the book and it hit me, it hit me hard. And I just spiraled down. I was emotionally going downhill, because it occurred to me, he beat me. He got to them. And it is just, it was just... I started to go to such a dark place. Luckily for me, just out of coincidence, my second oldest sister called, and she was able to pull me back out. That's one of the big ones.

Another revelation was my son; I didn't know how it had impacted him until we did the podcast. No idea.

# THE WHITNEYS!

## "JOIN OUR FAMILY SKATING PARTY!"



# WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

"Rarely are authors able to imbue their stories with as much heart, pain, and passion as Keeper. Audiences are not ready for the depths that this work chronicles."  
- TaleFlick

TaleFlick is a curation and library service for authors, specializing in adapting books to movies and tv shows. Clients include major Hollywood studios, producers, directors, and writers.

"This book SHOULD be used as an educational tool, therapy tool, self-help tool, and all the other tools I failed to mention."  
- Jill, L.

"It is one of the most absorbing, educating, and humbling morality roller coasters I have ever read. I called my sisters after I finished, and we talked for two hours about how your book impacted me."  
- Richard G.

"My husband can't stop talking about Keeper's book, and he's only a third of the way through it."  
- Jean, S.

"Holy shit, Keeper! The way you write, it was like I was watching a movie. It was like I was in the room where it happened."  
- David, K.

"Helplessness is riveting! It made me feel such admiration you and your siblings. This book can be an inspiration to many. It offers a message that regardless of your past and what life holds, it is possible to survive. It is an important reminder that our past experiences mold who we are today. That it's okay to feel those emotions...that it's okay to cry...that it's okay to feel despair and hiding the past doesn't make it go away."  
- Amy, B.

"I can't imagine living and surviving the way this family had to. I think this book will become a critically acclaimed piece of work."  
- Naomi, B.

"That chapter called The Parent/Child Contract shook me to my core."  
- Joe, G.



One Of The Most Talented New Singing Families Around Is The Whitneys! Not Only Do They Have A Ball Working Together, But Playing Together Is A Groovy Thing, Too!



Members of the talented Whitney family ham it up for *Right On!* photographers!

The Whitney family happens to be one of the hottest family singing aggregations around Los Angeles, and soon the entire world will be hip to them! Included are eight beautiful youngsters and their youthful and energetic parents. Seventeen-yr. old Glynn (an Aquarian); Nick, a 16-yr. old Capricorn; Tracey, age 15 is Scorpio; Phillip, 14-yr. old Sagittarian; 12-yr. old Ray-Ray . . . Aric Cozette ("Cook-



Keeper Catran Whitney

2022

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Keeper Catran-Whitney. Father, Husband, Brother, and Son. CEO and founder of DirectSellingLive.com, owner of MLMBLackWoman.com and a number of other media and communications properties in the industry of direct selling. Co-author of New York Time's Best Seller, Build It Big. Creator of the podcast, This is For The Brothers and author of the book series, From Helplessness, to Hopefulness, to Happiness. Keeper lives and works out of his home in Southern California and spends much of his time going to Disneyland and watching movies with his family.

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Keeper is available for speaking engagements, television appearances and interviews.

