



When Katie Wakes

Connie May Fowler

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Connie May Fowler is known to the world as the author of bestselling novels and powerful essays—but no one knew that for years she was the victim of brutal abuse and relentless humiliation. Now in this harrowing, spellbinding memoir, Fowler finally tells her own story.

The daughter and grand-daughter of battered women, Fowler found herself irresistibly drawn to a man who was bent on destroying her, physically and emotionally. Despite her youth, spirit, education, and wonderful talent, she was trapped in a cycle of violence and despair with no way out. Until the day she adopted an incredible puppy she named Kateland.

With stunning candor, Connie May Fowler reveals how the unconditional love and loyalty of this dog helped her turn the corner, find a safe place, and reclaim her own life. A work of extraordinary passion and courage, *When Katie Wakes* holds out hope and inspiration to anyone who has ever dreamed of starting over.

When Katie Wakes Details

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Author : Connie May Fowler

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From Reader Review When Katie Wakes for online ebook

Kim says

I couldn't finish it. It made me angry that she was so dysfunctional and co-dependent. I couldn't stand that she brought a dog into her awful situation.

Louise says

Anytime you read a memoir about abuse, it is a sad, heartbreaking and deeply emotionally charged study of the pain and anguish another person has suffered. Connie May Fowler is a courageous survivor of alcoholism and domestic violence just as her own mother and grandmother before her experienced. Despite her intelligence, education and experiences from the past, she seemingly became involved with a man who was physically and mentally abusive toward her.

Trapped in a vicious, controlling, cruel, and brutal relationship Ms. Fowler manages to rise up out of the muck and mire of the violence and maltreatment she endured, after adopting a dog she names Kateland. Together, Connie and Kateland forge a bond of trust, unconditional love and loyalty which allows her to rise above her fear and regain her life.

What we can learn from this beautifully written memoir is that it's never too late to start-over, there is always hope and optimism. And finally, the old adage that: "Dogs are a man's best friend" speaks volumes to the truthfulness of this very wise saying!

At only 271 pages, I was able to read this in a few hours after sitting up all night with insomnia! But believe me once you begin reading you'll be forcing yourself into a sleepless state as you won't want to stop until you've turned the last page.

Jenny says

This is a very sad book, but it has a happy ending. It is about the author, Connie May Fowler, and what happened to her as a child as she was abused by her mother and then how she went into an abusive relationship with a man that turned out to be very much like her mother was. Both were alcoholics, both very mean in their abuse both physical and verbal.

The book is also about Katie, Connie's black Lab, who helps her to survive her abuse from the boyfriend.

The happy ending is where Connie does finally get out of the relationship she's been under for many years, and has found a man that loves her. They eventually marry and live happily together with Katie and a number of other dogs.

I cried and at times had to put the book away and not read for a few days it was so intense. But I cheered

Connie on when she was fleeing for her life with Katie, and then when she went back for her belongings with the man she'd fallen in love with.

The book shows how strong you need to be, and how strong Connie was, to get out of this kind of situation and it also showed how a loyal pet, like Katie, could be the rock that Connie needed to get through all of her abuse.

Kelsi Goon says

This book is really touching. I really liked the dog.

Kate says

Connie Fowler is clearly a woman with strength and humility. Real skill and talent are required to produce such a memoir. Due to birth and circumstance Connie has been deeply affected by other people's shortcomings and been marked by both physical and emotional abuse. At times the reading is not pleasant but it is written in such a way that the reader can understand her choices, so it is not hard to turn the page.

A delightful aspect of her story is her relationship with her dog, very touching and believable. Especially if you have a strong bond with a dog yourself it rings true. I had not previously read any of her novels and was unaware of her work but I will most definitely be seeking out her work from now on.

Robin says

I have been a fan of Connie May Fowler since reading *Before Women Had Wings* maybe ten years ago. Blame it on Oprah Winfrey: this was one of the books Oprah mentioned that I decided to read. After reading Ms. Fowler's heart-wrenching book, I was instantly hooked on her writing.

In *When Katie Wakes*, Ms. Fowler tells her amazing story of breaking free from years of abuse with the unconditional love of her dog, Katie. While *Before Women Had Wings* was fiction dealing with domestic violence, *When Katie Wakes* is Fowler's memoir. In it, she chronicles the emotional and physical abuse she endured growing up. However, the majority of the book deals with the abusive relationship with a man thirty years her senior and how she managed to escape.

Early on in the book, she adopts Katie, a wonderful dog who, as dogs are known to do, gives unconditional love. It is this love that eventually gives Connie the strength to leave.

Many who read this memoir might be tempted to ask "What did she (Ms. Fowler) do to warrant this abuse?"

Why didn't she just leave?" Both are the wrong questions, no matter who is being abused, the age of the abused and abuser, the gender(s) of those involved, etc. The first question needs to be replaced with "Why did he/she abuse him/her?" The second question has many answers: financial, emotional, family situation, lack of services (including shelters), as well as a number of reasons. Rather than blaming the victim, we should marvel at the courage it takes for the victim to leave.

Courage is what Connie May Fowler eventually shows in this stunning memoir. While Katie's unconditional love helps her gather her courage, Ms. Fowler was also fortunate to have someone who, near the end, gave her hope. Between the two, Ms. Fowler was able to fully gather the strength and courage to escape.

This memoir is a must-read for anyone who wants a reason to cheer someone discovering her bravery.

Dawn says

A hard book to get through due to the topic of physical and emotional abuse, but inspiring. Loved how the dog Katie helped Connie make it through her horrific relationship.

Love says

Did not really get hooked like I did with her first book I read...Before Women Had Wings.

Indra says

The way I feel about this book is akin to the way I feel about Maya Angelou's "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings"--both writers took trauma and transformed their lives for the better by writing about bad experiences beautifully. This one is so good that when I finished it, I read it again immediately in case I had missed something (I tend to be a speed reader). It's hard to read (or grasp) what Connie lived with on a daily basis, but her courage is always there underneath, fighting with her fear, self-hatred, and heart. I think this is a good book for anyone to read who has never experienced domestic violence but knows someone who has and wondered why that person stayed...it's a little peephole into the psyche of someone who has everything in the world going for her and still ended up in that situation. It truly can happen to ANYONE. I am so glad she got out and is happy and successful. I look forward to reading more of her work!

Janet M says

A heartrending, engaging, and brutally honest story of a woman's abuse - both as an adult and as a child.

Painfully illustrates the power of the abuser over their victim and how difficult it is to break away from such a prison. Many women are never able to, or even if they do they are followed and haunted. It was uplifting that Connie was finally able to leave. And before this was able to adopt a dog who brought her much comfort, and I might add, relief from isolation many women in this situation face.

The writing overall was excellent and realistic, although at first I wasn't too sure about using the second person when referring to the brute - after awhile it seemed quite fitting. Although her story did have divisions, I would have preferred the organization of actual chapter breaks.

***3 stars: [I liked it but didn't "love" it.]

Update: *Now I see she is married to a Bill Hinson. Wish I knew what happened to Mika Fowler, the man who (view spoiler) So I guess this story didn't have that much of a happy ending after all. I hope she has found happiness with Mr. Hinson.*

Kim Miller-Davis says

This is an excellent memoir written by the author of *Before Women Had Wings* and a long list of other books I love. In this book, Fowler describes both the horror of living with an abusive partner and the painstaking process of escape.

Because Fowler tells her story in present tense, and with unflinching honesty, the narrative takes on an immediacy that makes it hard to put down. I'm putting it in my top 10 list of books about domestic violence.

Therese says

I feel like a monster, but I didn't like the woman telling this story. I mean, maybe that was the POINT. A woman who stays in a terribly abusive relationship, raised around abusive people, she doesn't like herself, so why would I? I just became so grinding, so quickly. Him treating her horribly and her taking it. Which was likely a very truthful telling of what it's like to have an abusive boyfriend, but that doesn't make it rewarding to read.

A side note, I did some fevered research to identify her unnamed abuser. As best I can tell, his name was John Eastman. This is his obituary.

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/tbo/...>

Vivian says

I am a long time fan of Connie May Fowler's work and remember reading *"Before Women Had Wings"* in the late '90s, and the powerful effect it had on me. Connie grew up with alcoholics who physically and verbally abused her, like her mother and grandmother before her. She continues the cycle of violence when she lets an alcoholic and abusive man into her life. Despite Connie's intelligence and education, she cannot break the cycle until she adopts a dog who eventually gives her the courage to get out.

The story is sad and heart wrenching, Connie is courageous and resilient. This is a wonderful memoir and I

highly recommend it. Next up for me is her novel "The Problem With Murmur Lee".

Kelley says

This was a touching and harrowing story of a young woman in an abusive relationship with a much older man. Her mother, grandmother and great grandmother also lived this way and she knows no other life. To witness her overcome her self hatred and make a better life for herself is inspiring. At the heart of her story is a dog who makes her stand up and protect herself. It is her memoir and I thoroughly enjoyed it.

Anna says

I have not thought of this book in a very long time, but it is such a good memoir. It makes my eyes tear just thinking about it. It is about a woman who is in an incredibly abusive relationship and how her dog saved her life. I love dogs. Love, love, love them. I can see how someone could lean on a dog in a time of extreme pain. They are the most wonderful animals.

Lynlie Cottrell says

Sad and disturbing account of a woman's abusive childhood and relationship. Strong language

Ashley says

What an engrossing read! Once I started, I could hardly put it down. May Fowler's story is absolutely heartbreaking.

Abused first by her mother and then by a man thirty years her senior, May Fowler is trapped but struggling to find her way out. Her father abused her mother, her grandfather abused her grandmother, and on back for several generations. After May Fowler's father dies, her mother turns on her as well as her two siblings. As a mid-20 year old, she finds herself again being abused by a revolting "boyfriend". The abuse she suffered is horrific; that someone could treat another human being that way and live with it... I just can't comprehend it. Nothing terribly graphic was portrayed, and I can't help but wonder if Connie doesn't want to burden her reader or if she simply escaped to her "white space" and honestly doesn't remember it herself.

The fact that the abuse continued from mother to boyfriend is agonizing and the similarities between the two are downright eerie. Connie's saving grace through it all, though, was her dog, Katie. Thankfully, Katie appears to have made it through unscathed. Connie herself finally manages to escape as well though how she can even function normally is a testament to her personal strength. This book is Connie's frank, heart-rending story of the abuses she suffered and why sometimes you can't "just leave already".

Deb says

Really well-written memoir of childhood abuse followed by an abusive relationship. It helped the reader understand why women are so cowed by hurtful words that they feel unable to leave. But with the unconditional love of her beloved lab, Katie, Connie Fowler eventually was able to rebuild her life.

I would love to know what became of her aging abuser, who she financially supported.

Patrick Ross says

This memoir by Vermont College of Fine Arts MFA instructor Fowler is one of the reasons I chose to attend the program. She does a masterful job of helping understand how the narrator can tolerate such a horrifyingly abusive relationship. There are still moments in that book that haunt me, two years after reading it.

Sandra says

I read this book years ago but I never forgot it. Many people do not realize the impact an animal/pet can have on some people. This memoir is an example of how even at someone's lowest a pet can help as the loyal companions they are, that amazing unconditional love they give is sometimes all that is needed to take the first steps towards a "better" life.

In my personal life I have memories that include some pretty special fur babies. My Blackie girl was my rock in my junior high years, as I settled into a new neighborhood, new school; how many of those days include my needing to get home to cuddle with her because that made everything be alright. I was 5 months pregnant when I lost her. Marriage and motherhood kept me busy and so when my husband introduced Capone to our 9, 7 and 3 year old children, I was not happy. I was too busy. But I was outvoted. Little did I know Capone (a rottie) would turn out to be my shadow and protector, watching over my children every instant for 10 years. My children were all teenagers when we said goodbye, still makes me tear up. He was there for some of the most special milestones in our lives, they will always be cherished memories. I know one day I will see my fur babies again.

This book is a great read, especially for animal lovers.
