

Heather Brown's drug addiction journal

Handwritten as therapy while in a drug rehab program, her memoir was transcribed and edited with deletions, no additions, by Mark Mathew Braunstein.

When Heather was just another unknown crack-addicted streetwalker on the streets of New London, she sold its reproduction rights to Mark Mathew Braunstein for \$40, two crisp 20-dollar bills that she promptly used to buy 2 rocks of crack, enough to last her barely an hour.

Heather's account of her life begins with her childhood raised by a struggling single mom, and continues with her teenage years and early twenties as a boozier, shoplifter, pothead, embezzler, coke addict, massage parlor prostitute, streetwalker, pickpocket, check forger, and of course crack addict.

Somewhere amidst all this good stuff and maybe mayhem lurks a child who displayed many commonplace good qualities, and who as a young druggie fresh out of rehab could shine, but Heather's world will remember only the bad in Heather, or better still, will not remember her at all. Her death will pass unnoticed, her name will be forgotten, but if her memoir endures, then her notoriety just might outlive her.

-- Mark Mathew Braunstein
www.MarkBraunstein.Org

2009 newspaper article about this Braunstein's interview with Heather Brown:
www.NorwichBulletin.com/article/20090929/NEWS/309299893

HEATHER writes:

I was conceived on Halloween in a cemetery. When my mother learned of her pregnancy, my father was furious and tried to rape my mother to terminate me. But my mother won me life.

My mother was 19 when she had me. My father left town. Abandoned, a high school dropout, a pothead, and a single parent, my mother was aided through welfare.

I can remember my mom being in many relationships with men. Some of them I never knew, except as the man in bed with my mom the next morning, behind the locked door. I was always locked out of my mom's life.

In the fifth grade, I started to learn about drugs. And I was led to believe that my mom was smoking pot. My aunt would yell at my mom for smoking that "crap" in the house. What I learned in school was that drugs were bad and they killed people. So I took to spying on my mom. One day I popped open the lock on her door, so I could search her room. I saw weed, pipes, papers, seeds -- all the pothead paraphernalia!

It was really hard for me to accept the fact that my mom was a drug addict. She continued to smoke pot and I hated it. I began to threaten her that if she didn't stop, I was going to call the police. But she never stopped.

I was 16 years old and by now had accepted my mother's drug use. My mom told me that if I ever wanted to try pot, to come to her first, instead of doing it with people I don't know. So that's what I did. I grew to like being stoned. An added benefit was that I was finally accepted into my mother's world.

My mom's boyfriend drank a lot and it made me feel uncomfortable. I would sleep on the couch or the floor and it was a small apartment so I could hear them when they had sex and I would often make sounds to make fun of them.

I had started to smoke pot with my friends. I liked that more than drinking. I had also started to masturbate. My cousin used to spy on me when I did it, and he was curious and I don't know how it all started but my cousin and I started to have sex pretty regularly. It was a big secret.

After high school graduation, I hung out with my friends over the summer and I smoked a lot of pot and went to the clubs. In September, I got a job working for the University of Connecticut bookstore. My friend Tania started to write bad checks at the store so we could have weed. One night I took some money from the register, so we could party. If I had money, I had friends, and that was important to me.

During October, I was at a party and I had sex with two guys that were like brothers to me and the condoms broke and I got pregnant! Oh, my God, I'm just like my mother, I thought, and that scared me and I didn't want to ruin my life, so I had an abortion.

I continued to party a lot and I stole jewelry from my aunt to party with, to forget my misery. And then Tania got found out about the checks and she had 10 days to get \$3,000 and she told me that if I didn't help her she was going to tell the cops that it was my idea.

Well we, no, I had gotten a large sum of money together and we went to a mutual friend and gave him the money to go to the casino and double it. We waited at his uncle's house and my friend Tania left and I got raped by my friend's uncle. I called the police and went to the hospital and went through the rape kit which was the most degrading thing I ever went through. The man was arrested and served time, it was not his first rape offense. He had other pending cases. Later I found out that Tania had gotten paid for bringing me there. She pimped me. That hurt more than the rape.

One day I got arrested for shoplifting. I got Accelerated Rehabilitation. I had also found an excellent job working with horses. I got lazy and robbed one of the girls I worked with and I left to stay with some older men. I moved from one deadbeat to the next, using my charm to survive.

Then I met Gary. Gary was 51 and like a father to me. I also had the hots for his son. I stole about \$800 from Gary. I ended up being sexually involved with a woman, and her husband paid me money to watch us. I ended up stealing money from the man and I smoked a lot of crack.

I was arrested for a failure to appear in court. Back when I had my Accelerated Rehabilitation, I was supposed to report back to court, but I never went. This was my first trip to prison and this wouldn't be the last.

Then I got involved with Chris and I lived with him and I started to steal checks from work and I had a fake I.D. and I was cashing them under someone else's name and I was smoking crack. Then I was talking to a friend about being a dancer at a strip club and she introduced me to Craig. I was lured by the money that was promised me through the use of my body.

I started with a few escort jobs, very private. Craig supplied the customers and I performed various sex acts. The money was great and so was the attention.

By this time, I started working at a massage parlor in New London. I was the youngest girl and the most attractive. I was making a lot of money, and I was living with my mom, and Craig was driving me to work in New London, for a small fee. At first I was very nervous and I questioned my morals, but the money made it worthwhile. My mom was questioning where I was working, and I told her a health spa. I couldn't tell her a whorehouse.

I moved to New London and worked at Le Club five days a week, bringing home \$1,000 a night and even more on the weekends. I got everything I thought I needed in life. I began going out with some of the girls and to smoke crack all night long and before I knew it I was working to support my habit. All I did was work and get high. I started to lose weight, which I thought was great, because I was always overweight and this was a quick and enjoyable way to lose.

I started to make a lot of money on Friday nights and I would call in sick for the whole weekend because I had enough money to get high and that's all that I wanted. So I was fired from a whorehouse.

And so was Renee [Renee Pellegrino, Chapter 14 in Mark Mathew Braunstein's *Good Girls on Bad Drugs*], another girl that I used to work with, and she showed me how to hustle the drug dealers with sex. But it wasn't enough so I turned to the streets and I began to see my clients from Le Club on the street, which made even more money. I started to walk the streets alone and I had my fair share of rip-offs and beat-downs and arrests. I returned to jail for 30 days and was released only to return to smoking crack that same day.

I worked the streets day and night. I went from crack house to crack house, to dealer to dealer, running scams, and tricking on the street corner with anyone and everyone. But still I thought I wasn't a prostitute.

I evaded the police for almost a year when I was arrested for forgery. I was stealing checks and cashing them, so I wouldn't have to trick, so I could have all the drugs, all the attention. I wanted to be known as the best hustler and nothing was going to stop me. Well, the cops did, and I went to jail for three months and I was court-ordered to a drug rehab program for 30 days, and I thought I was cured.

It wasn't long before I got high with Kim, this girl I met in jail, and it went downhill from there. The cycle had started all over again and I was back in New London, getting high, running my scams with checks, and tricking. I had no cares at all. I spent a month on the streets of New London before I got arrested and I went back to jail.

And now my life is shit.

[*If only Heather's story could end here ...*]

22 Lives.
One chapter,
one life.
And often,
one death.

"An intriguing account
of the lives of troubled
sex workers...
engaging and tragic."
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