

# Lord, He Hit Me Again

An Insider's Look at Intimate Partner Violence

Smiley Grace



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# Acknowledgement

The Heavenly Father knows how to keep us hidden until it is time to present us center stage. He knows when we are ready and waiting for that perfect moment to shine. In Exodus 40:1-38, we are reminded to enter God's holy presence (The Tabernacle). I must go beyond the veil, leaving my comfort zone. Although I prefer backstage, the curtain has risen, and I cannot hide forever.

Special thanks to Pastor Veronica “Vee” Nicholson for her prophetic words that encouraged me to start working on my book.

I also want to acknowledge Bishop Frank A. White for his inspiring message on *The Power of Possibilities*, which has motivated me to continue drafting my book, *Lord, He Hit Me Again: An Insider's Look at Intimate Partner Violence*.

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To the men who abused me, thank you for providing the essence of this book to empower others to go from victim to victor.

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# Disclaimer

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**Content Warning:** Due to the graphic nature and sensitive topic of intimate partner violence, the information shared may be emotionally or psychologically disturbing and unbearable to some readers.

# Foreword

I am delighted to count Smiley Grace as a daughter since our introduction more than 40 years ago when she was a teenager entirely devoted to God as a faithful member of the same Pentecostal congregation. I saw firsthand her first domestic violence relationship with her spouse (an inspiring minister). Consequently, my immediate family and her members performed an intervention for Smiley Grace to enable her to escape from an abusive boyfriend after a physical assault upon such a beautiful soul. Although experience is a good teacher, being battered is not. I watched her go from a victim (being abused and then homeless after the attack) to a victor. It's been a joy to have known her all these years, and what a blessing she has been in my life. I am so proud of how God has used her through the trials and tests of life to help others along the way.

*Lord, He Hit Me Again: An Insider's Look at Intimate Partner Violence* is a beautiful book and an open door to freedom: heart, mind, and soul. Everything in this book, from the beginning to the end, reveals so much truth that even a blind person can see the snares and traps of an abuser. The book is worth every penny invested as it's an investment in your life. If you seek to be delivered, this book is the answer.

I want to emphasize the vast content of complex dynamics of intimate partner violence relationships, the intricacies of entanglement, and how to heal after escaping is priceless. This informative book contains graphics and extensive research on intimate partner violence. For your life to change, you must admit that you are involved in an abusive relationship, and sometimes you must walk

away. If you read this book, you can change and reclaim your life. With your eyes shut, the truth is known; the person can run away when they know it. This book does an excellent job of explaining how to start again.

Finally, I pray that men, women, boys, and girls receive insight into what I reviewed, the author researched, and invested hours in for all to be delivered. This book, I pray, will be so successful that men will benefit once they pick it up because they also experience relationships. As a former victim of intimate partner violence, I endorse this book, and may God add a blessing to its readership that people say, “Wow, let me check it out.”

Pastor Valerie Collins,

*Co-Pastor-House of David Deliverance & Transforming Ministries,  
Brooklyn, NY, USA*



# Introduction

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*“Has he ever trapped you in a room and not let you out? Has he ever raised a fist as if he were going to hit you? Has he ever thrown an object that hit you or nearly did? Has he ever held you down or grabbed you to restrain you? Has he ever shoved, poked, or grabbed you? Has he ever threatened to hurt you? If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then we can stop wondering whether he’ll ever be violent; he already has been.”*

— Lundy Bancroft

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**L**ORD, HE *Hit Me Again: An Insider’s Look at Intimate Partner Violence* provides extensive research on intimate partner violence (IPV), incorporating personal accounts of traumatic occurrences wherein my abuser was imprisoned and pleaded guilty to third-degree assault. A cycle of intimate partner violence existed within my family dynamic. This memoir’s events are factual. Pseudonyms have been used to protect the identities of the individuals mentioned in this book. The World Health Organization’s (WHO’s) website asserts intimate partner violence as “one of the most common forms of violence against women.” Intimate partner violence permeates all socioeconomic levels, genders, ethnicities,

and racial backgrounds. Likewise, different races, classes, and backgrounds respond to intimate partner violence differently (Anti-racism & Interpersonal Violence).



**Figure 1.** Check out this compelling graphic display that portrays the harrowing reality of domestic violence victims. It's truly eye-opening and a must-see for anyone who wants to understand the gravity of this issue. Source: [Freepik.com](https://www.freepik.com)

Domestic and family violence occurs in all races, ages, and genders with no cultural, socioeconomic, educational, religious, or geographic limitations (Huecker and Smock). In the book *Forensic Psychology*, Matthew T. Huss defined the nature of domestic violence as any act of violence perpetrated within the context of significant interpersonal relationships (Rakovec-Felser, 2014). The effects on the individual who has experienced narcissistic abuse can be fatal or highly debilitating and long-lasting, and individual recovery can be a complex process (Howard, 2019).

Intimate partner violence has various forms: threats of physical or sexual violence, psychological violence/aggression (including

coercive tactics), emotional violence/abuse, and stalking by a current or former intimate partner. Many researchers have found a link between childhood experiences of aggression behind domestic walls and violence and abuse in adulthood (Rakovec-Felser, 2014). Abusers may be manipulative and use humiliation, intimidation, threats, and coercion on their victims, but “dominating you is their main interest (Lambert, 2016).” Utilizing these tools, the intimate partner in this toxic relationship keeps victims from reaching out to others for help and causes them to become dependent on their abusers.

\*\*\*

My story encapsulates and embodies the intimate partner violence experience, highlighting that staying with Maverick was also detrimental to my emotional and psychological well-being. Judge Faith Jenkins, author of *Sis, Don't Settle: How to Stay Smart in Matters of the Heart*, expressed in an interview, “How people treat you is a reflection of their character.” While I was a member of a church in Texas, a Woman of God said to me, “What’s in you will come out of you.”

My intimate partner violence experience included the following:

- A cycle of abuse/toxic relationship
- Psychological abuse. One day in Maverick’s Bronx single-room occupancy housing, he told me, “I know you do not have anywhere to go.” I assume this is the reason he treated me wrongly. I was hopeless and downtrodden.
- Isolation from my support network. I was isolated from family, friends, and neighbors and prohibited from communicating with males (e.g., family members, co-workers, neighbors, friends, Microsoft Office Specialist instructor).
- Barriers to leaving my abuser
- Revictimization

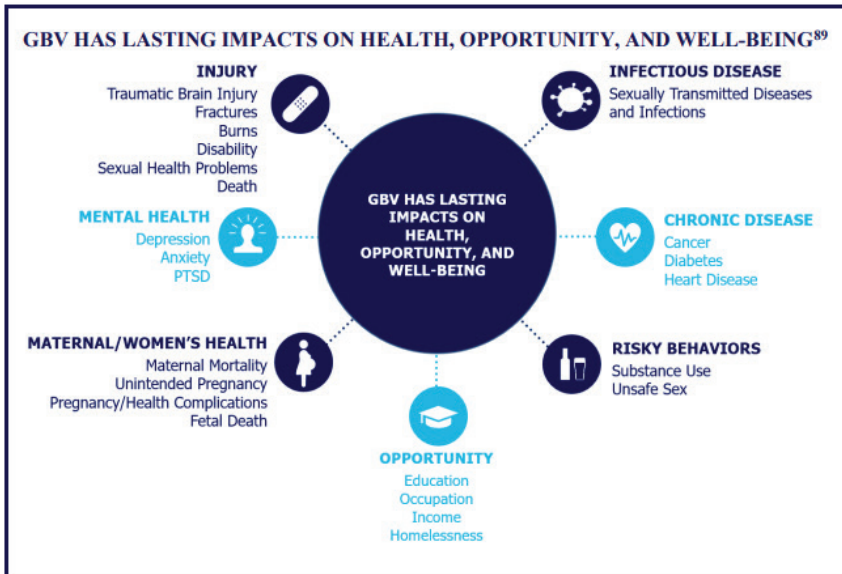
#### 4 LORD, HE HIT ME AGAIN

- Emotional attachment to the abuser
- Mental health issues. I experienced Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), moderate recurrent major depression, psychological care, and medication.
- Law enforcement and court system involvement. Third-degree assault charges were brought against my abuser. Police officers arrested him, a final order of protection was granted, and my abuser pled guilty to the crime.
- I re-established a relationship with my abuser. A criminal court's seven-year order of protection was a deterrent to my abuser's violent physical attacks, and he was frightened at the thought of imprisonment.
- Chronic homelessness: I lived in a domestic violence shelter for a short period. For over two years, I resided in the New York City Department of Homeless Services' in-take shelter, transitional housing until final placement in a permanent housing program. I couch-surfed and lodged at an extended-stay hotel. I slept in New York's 34th Street Penn Station, New York's Grand Central Terminal Station, and New York City's Port Authority. I freshened up at a drop-in center and utilized hotels or restaurants. I relocated to a safe haven in another state to escape my abuser's friend's retaliation at my sibling's advice.

Throughout our on-and-off reconciliation, my abuser's jealous behavior remained. Thankfully, I am no longer in an abusive, intimate partner violence relationship. As Dr. Larry D. Reid asserted in his YouTube video on June 27, 2023, "I am the gift that everyone doesn't deserve."

\*\*\*\*





**Figure 2.** Gender-based Violence has a lasting impact on health, opportunity, and well-being. Source: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/National-Plan-to-End-GBV.pdf>

A Yorkshire Evening Post article dated February 17, 2021, vividly depicts an intimate partner violence incident wherein “[t]he woman had been in a relationship for ten weeks at the time of the incident (Gardner, 2021).”

- **Physical abuse:** The IPV abuser, Thomas Dalby, gouged the victim’s eye with his thumb, kicked her in the face, and bit her arm during the prolonged attack at the property in Armley (England). The attack happened October 24-25, 2021, at Dalby’s home on Armley Grove Place, where he lived with his grandparents. The victim was unable to leave the property and was attacked again the next day when Dalby kicked her in the chin.
- **Jealousy:** Dalby accused her of being unfaithful and shouted, “Why don’t you tell me the truth.” The violently jealous boyfriend kept his partner prisoner in his home.

- **Alcohol and drug abuse:** The defendant appeared drunk and under the influence of drugs when the victim arrived.
- **Emotional abuse/isolation:** Dalby took her phone, snapped the device in two, and said, “You won’t be able to contact anyone now.” The woman went to pack her belongings, but the defendant said, “You are not going anywhere. You are staying here tonight. I am ruining your plans tonight.” Dalby locked the front door and took the victim’s keys from her.
- **Medical treatment:** The IPV victim had an operation to remove part of a dislodged jawbone after the attack and needed dental work costing \$5,603.78 US dollars.
- **Law enforcement:** Judge Penelope Belcher said, “This was a thoroughly horrible incident. You took the alcohol, and you took the drugs. They may have affected your behaviour, but you took them, and you have to live with the consequences, which are appalling. This will live with (the victim) for the rest of her life.” Thomas Dalby pleaded guilty to false imprisonment and inflicting grievous bodily harm. He was jailed for three years (Gardner, 2021).

The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) is an ongoing, nationally representative random-digit-dial (RDD) telephone survey of adults in the United States using a dual frame approach that includes both landline and cell phones (What You Need to Know: The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) 2016/2017 Report on Sexual Violence, 2022). NISVS’ disturbing report findings on sexual offenses are as follows:

### *Sexual coercion*

- Nearly one in four women (23.6% or 29.4 million) in the United States reported sexual coercion victimization at some point in her lifetime. Almost four percent (3.7% or about

4.6 million) reported sexual coercion in the 12 months before taking the survey. About one in nine men (10.9% or 12.8 million) in the United States reported sexual coercion victimization during his lifetime. About 1.9% (or 2.3 million) reported sexual coercion in the 12 months prior to taking the survey.

- During their lifetimes, more than half (58.3%) of female victims of sexual coercion reported that their perpetrator was an intimate partner, followed by two in five (41.8%) by an acquaintance, one in 10 (10.1%) by a person of authority, one in 11 (9.1%) by a family member, one in 21 (4.7%) by a stranger, and one in 22 (4.6%) by a brief encounter. In the previous 12 months, about two-thirds (66.7%) of female victims of sexual coercion reported that their perpetrator was an intimate partner, and about one in three (31.8%) reported an acquaintance. Previous 12-month estimates for the remaining categories of perpetrators were based on numbers too small to produce statistically stable estimates and were not reported.
- In their lifetimes, nearly half (49.1%) of male victims of sexual coercion reported that their perpetrator was an acquaintance or an intimate partner (45.8%), followed by one in 10 (10.0%) who reported a person of authority, one in 15 (6.8%) a brief encounter, one in 19 (5.3%) a family member, and one in 25 (4.2%) a stranger. In the previous 12 months, more than half (55.0%) of male sexual coercion victims reported an intimate partner perpetrator, and 41.2% reported an acquaintance. Twelve (12)-month estimates for the remaining categories of perpetrators were based upon numbers too small to produce statistically stable estimates and were not reported.

### *Sexual assault (rape)*

- In their lifetimes, more than half (56.1%) of female victims were raped by an acquaintance, more than one in three (39.3%) by an intimate partner, about one in six (16.0%) by a family member, about one in eight (12.1%) by a stranger, one in 10 (9.6%) by a brief encounter, and one in 25 (4.0%) by a person of authority. In the 12 months before the survey, almost half of female rape victims were raped by an intimate partner (45.4%) or an acquaintance (48.1%). Previous 12-month estimates for the remaining categories of perpetrators were based on numbers too small to produce statistically stable estimates and were not reported.
- During their lifetimes, more than half of male victims were raped by an acquaintance (57.3%), about one in six (16.0%) by a family member, nearly one in seven (13.7%) by a stranger, one in eight (12.8%) by a brief encounter, one in eight (12.5%) by an intimate partner, and one in 11 (9.2%) by a person of authority. Twelve (12)-month estimates for the type of perpetrator of male rape victims were based upon numbers too small to produce statistically stable estimates and were not reported.

### *Being made to penetrate (men)*

In their lifetimes, more than three in five male victims were made to penetrate by an acquaintance (62.2%) followed by more than one in four (26.3%) by an intimate partner, one in seven (14.3%) by a brief encounter, one in 10 (10.4%) by a stranger, and one in 17 (5.9%) by a person of authority and a family member (5.9%). In the 12 months before the survey, about one in three male victims of being made to penetrate reported an intimate partner perpetrator (29.7%), and more than half of male victims reported an acquaintance perpetrator (55.5%). Twelve (12)-month estimates for

the remaining categories of perpetrators were based upon numbers too small to produce statistically stable estimates and were therefore not reported.

### *Unwanted sexual contact*

- During their lifetimes, more than half (59.9%) of female victims of unwanted sexual contact reported that their perpetrator was an acquaintance, followed by one in five (22.9%) who reported a family member, one in five (22.4%) a stranger, nearly one in six (16.8%) an intimate partner, nearly one in nine (11.7%) a brief encounter, and one in 11 (9.4%) a person of authority. In the 12 months before the survey, more than half (55.1%) of female victims of unwanted sexual contact reported an acquaintance perpetrator, 18.0% an intimate partner, 16.1% a stranger, and 8.4% a brief encounter perpetrator. Twelve (12)-month estimates for the remaining categories of perpetrators were based upon numbers too small to produce statistically stable estimates and were therefore not reported.
- In their lifetimes, more than one in two (62.4%) male victims of unwanted sexual contact reported that their perpetrator was an acquaintance, followed by one in five (21.9%) reporting a stranger, one in nine (11.1%) a brief encounter, one in 11 (9.2%) an intimate partner, one in 12 (8.3%) a family member, and one in 14 (7.2%) a person of authority. In the 12 months before the survey, almost two-thirds (62.9%) of male victims of unwanted sexual contact reported an acquaintance perpetrator, 18.0% an intimate partner, and 11.8% a stranger perpetrator. Twelve (12)-month estimates for the remaining categories of perpetrators were based upon numbers too small to produce statistically stable estimates and were not reported.

\*\*\*\*

Family and domestic violence is a common problem in the United States, affecting an estimated 10 million people yearly; as many as one in four women and one in nine men are victims of domestic violence (Huecker and Smock). Some 47,000 women and girls worldwide were killed by their intimate partners or other family members in 2020 (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime). About 41% of women and 26% of men experienced contact with sexual violence, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner and reported an intimate partner violence-related impact during their lifetime (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention). The link between mental health and intimate partner violence perpetration is well established (Maldonado et al., 2020). A meta-analysis found that men's physical assault perpetration was associated with depression, anxiety, and PTSD (Maldonado et al., 2020).

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*"IPV perpetration in the past year was assessed via 6 items that are a combination of multiple items from the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS), Form R with modified response options [39]. This approach is consistent with other research on IPV that has been published using the NESARC [9,18,26]. Participants who endorsed being in a relationship were asked how frequently in the past year (0 = never to 5 = more than once a month) they: (1) pushed, grabbed, or shoved; (2) slapped, kicked, bit, or hit; (3) threatened with a weapon; (4) cut or bruised; (5) forced sex; and (6) injured their spouse/partner. Participants were categorized as perpetrators (1) or non-perpetrators (0). Twelve participants did not have valid responses to any of the CTS items and were coded as missing. (Maldonado et al., 2020)*

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The intergenerational cycle of violence and trauma can cause a legacy of suffering (Knaul et al.). To that end, multi-country studies

show that boys who witnessed their mother being beaten have more than two to five times the odds of ever perpetrating violence against their partner. The article further asserts that gender-based violence and maltreatment of young people violates fundamental human rights to equality and non-discrimination, life, health, security of the person, privacy, and freedom from torture and cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment. In multivariate analyses examining risk factors for men ever perpetrating physical violence against a partner, witnessing parental violence was the strongest risk factor, reinforcing previous research suggesting the intergenerational transmission of violence (Fleming et al.).

Coupled with the humanitarian side, gender-based violence reduces global gross domestic product by 2% per year, equivalent to an annual loss of more than \$1.6 trillion when considering only direct medical costs and immediate productivity losses per The Lancet Commission (Knaul et al.). Violence against women is a transparent barrier to sustainable development, which has been acknowledged and adopted in the United Nations' Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (Puri). United Nations Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development new Agenda number 20 reveals, "All forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls will be eliminated, including through the engagement of men and boys" (United Nations). Strand and Storey (2019) reported that victims living in rural and remote areas had more vulnerability factors present than victims residing in urban areas, and the severity of violence was higher in rural and remote areas (Petersson & Thunberg, 2021).

Native American women experience higher rates of intimate partner violence than other U.S. racial/ethnic groups (Jock et al., n.d). Nevertheless, previous research has not sufficiently examined the complex determinants shaping their intimate partner violence experiences. The article's authors emphasized that research participants described how intergenerational exposure contributed to normalizing violence. More than four in five American Indian and

Alaska Native men and women (83%) have experienced a form of violence in their lifetime — whether it be physical violence or psychological aggression from an intimate partner, sexual violence, or stalking — according to the National Institute of Justice (NIJ). In addition, more than 1.5 million American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced violence in their lifetime per a NIJ-funded study (PSAs Highlight Domestic Violence Awareness among Native Americans, 2022). This Specialty Institute will introduce the newly created Indigenous Safe Housing Center—STTARS (Safety, Training and Technical Assistance, Resources and Support), offering important and timely presentations designed to address the spectrum of housing issues for Indigenous victims/survivors, showcase promising or best practices related to domestic violence and housing, and provide valuable resources, support, and recommendations (Specialty Institute June 2022: Addressing the Spectrum of Housing for Victim/Survivors for DV, Sexual Violence and Trafficking in Tribal Communities | NIWRC, 2023).

Regression analyses using a nationally representative sample indicated that interracial couples demonstrated a higher level of mutual intimate partner violence than monoracial white couples but a level similar to monoracial Black couples (Martin et al., 2013). Evidence suggests that domestic violence incidents against South Asian women in high-income countries are often unreported and unrecorded, and this demographic represents an intersection of diverse identities and challenges (religion, socio-cultural norms, race, ethnicity, language, migration), which can affect help-seeking amongst those who experience domestic violence (Sultana et al., 2022).

\*\*\*

“Non-intimate partner violence” is violence between individuals who are not intimate partners but have a familial relationship, such as mother/adult son or brother/sister (Domestic Violence Dynamics – What Domestic Abuse What It Does to Family, 2011).



Elderly domestic violence may be financial or physical (Huecker & Smock, 2023). The abuse of older people, also known as elder abuse, is a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person (World Health Organization, 2022). Elder abuse, a heartbreaking crime, is thought to occur in three to 10% of the population of elders (Huecker & Smock, 2023), including physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, exploitation, neglect, and abandonment (National Council on Aging, 2021). I mention this because perpetrators include children, other family members, spouses (associated with an elevated risk of abuse), and staff at nursing homes, assisted living, and other facilities (National Council on Aging, 2021).

According to the National Institute of Justice website, teen dating violence — also called intimate relationship violence or intimate partner violence among adolescents or adolescent relationship abuse — includes:

- Physical, psychological, or sexual abuse.
- Harassment.
- Stalking of any person ages 12 to 18 in the context of a past or present romantic or consensual relationship.

Being a victim, perpetrator, or bystander to such violent behavior can significantly impact teenagers' developmental processes.

The American Psychological Association published a journal article on intimate partner violence victimization in Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, Transgender, and Queer + (LGBTQ+) young adults. The study included an ethnically diverse sample of 172 LGBTQ+ young adults who completed self-report measures of intimate partner violence, sexual behavior, mental health, and substance abuse at two-time points (four and five-year follow-ups) of an ongoing longitudinal study of LGBTQ+ youth. The study showed that participants experienced intimate partner violence nonuniformly across

demographic groups. Specifically, female, male-to-female transgender, and Black/African American young adults were at higher risk than those who identified as male, female-to-male transgender, and other races (APA PsycNet, n.d.). Interventions targeting intimate partner violence in LGBTQ+ young people may benefit from programs tailored to address this community's specific needs, such that individuals with multiple gender, racial, or sexual minority identities may be at even greater risk for intimate partner violence.

Forty-three and eight-tenths percent (43.8%) of lesbian and 61.1% of bisexual women have experienced rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner at some point in their lifetime. Twenty-six percent (26%) of gay men and 37.3% of bisexual men have experienced rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime (LGBTQ: Sexual Assault, Partner Violence, and Stalking, n.d.).

\*\*\*\*

Trauma bonding occurs when an abuser uses manipulation tactics and cycles of abuse to make the victim feel dependent on them for care and validation, causing a solid attachment or bond. Trauma bonding often occurs in romantic narcissistic relationships and families, friendships, or work relationships (The 7 Stages of Trauma Bonding, 2022).

The Cycle of Violence (Abuse) is a tool developed by Dr. Lenore Walker, an educator and forensic psychologist, who explains the complexity and co-existence of abuse with loving behaviors and describes intimate partner violence's cyclical nature and effect on victims. The cycle of violence model helps those who have never experienced domestic violence understand that breaking the violence cycle is much more complicated than just leaving (Blue Cloud Studio).

There are direct and indirect entanglements or risk factors that occur with intimate partner violence relationships: separation