

THE DAY I CHOSE MYSELF

A Memoir of Survival, Courage, and Choosing Life

For a long time, I didn't have a name for what was happening to me. I knew I was afraid. I knew I was exhausted. I knew I was constantly trying to keep the peace. But I didn't yet understand that abuse doesn't always begin with a punch. Sometimes it starts smaller: a boundary ignored, a cruel word followed by an apology, a promise that things will be different next time. Then another incident.

Another apology. Another promise. Slowly, you begin living around someone else's moods. You rearrange your day, your body, and your reactions in the hope of avoiding the next explosion. This book is my attempt to tell the truth about what happened to me—and to reach toward women who may be living through something similar now.

Choosing myself did not mean I stopped caring. It did not erase the years we had spent together, the parts of him that were kind, the moments that were good. It did not turn my heart off. It just stopped asking my heart to come before my safety. It meant I stopped abandoning myself. For so long, when forced to choose between his needs and my safety, I had chosen him. I had left myself behind in hospital waiting rooms, in motel parking lots, behind locked bedroom doors and broken front doors. I had acted as if my life was negotiable and his was not.

None of that was my responsibility. His choices belonged to him. His healing, if he ever chose it, would be his own journey. His pain, no matter how real or deep, did not entitle him to use my body, my home, or my mind as collateral damage. My life belonged to me. Those words sound simple, but for someone who has spent years organizing her every move around someone else's moods, they are revolutionary.

The Day I Chose Myself was not marked by balloons or announcements. It was marked by a decision: no more going back.

Available now. Read the full story of survival, breaking patterns, and choosing life.