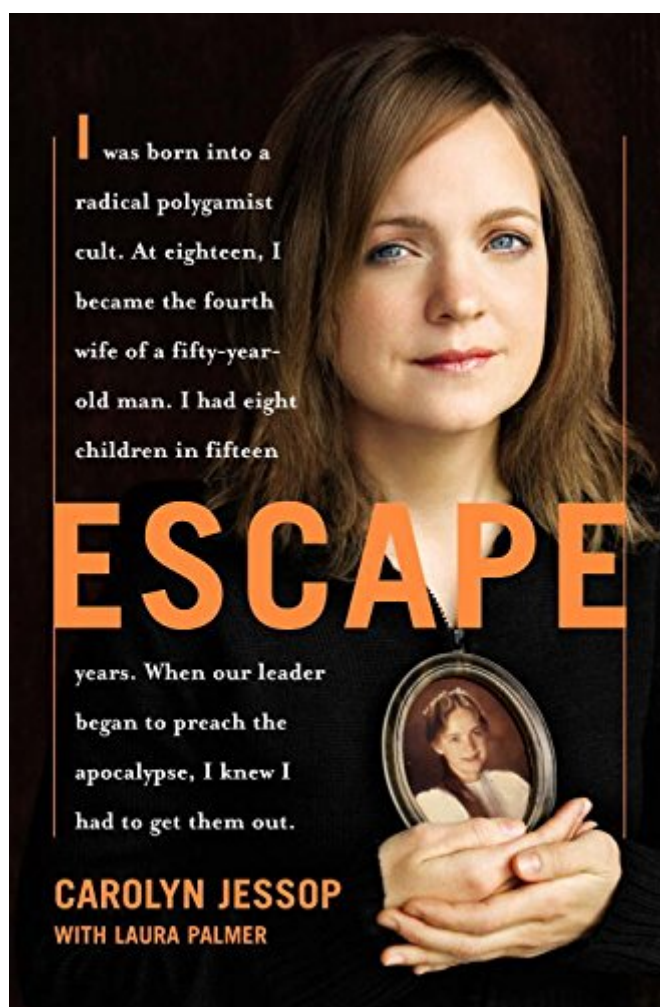


The book was found

Escape



Synopsis

The dramatic first-person account of life inside an ultra-fundamentalist American religious sect, and one woman's courageous flight to freedom with her eight children. When she was eighteen years old, Carolyn Jessop was coerced into an arranged marriage with a total stranger: a man thirty-two years her senior. Merrill Jessop already had three wives. But arranged plural marriages were an integral part of Carolyn's heritage: She was born into and raised in the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (FLDS), the radical offshoot of the Mormon Church that had settled in small communities along the Arizona-Utah border. Over the next fifteen years, Carolyn had eight children and withstood her husband's psychological abuse and the watchful eyes of his other wives who were locked in a constant battle for supremacy. Carolyn's every move was dictated by her husband's whims. He decided where she lived and how her children would be treated. He controlled the money she earned as a school teacher. He chose when they had sex; Carolyn could only refuse "at her peril. For in the FLDS, a wife's compliance with her husband determined how much status both she and her children held in the family. Carolyn was miserable for years and wanted out, but she knew that if she tried to leave and got caught, her children would be taken away from her. No woman in the country had ever escaped from the FLDS and managed to get her children out, too. But in 2003, Carolyn chose freedom over fear and fled her home with her eight children. She had \$20 to her name. Escape exposes a world tantamount to a prison camp, created by religious fanatics who, in the name of God, deprive their followers the right to make choices, force women to be totally subservient to men, and brainwash children in church-run schools. Against this background, Carolyn Jessop's flight takes on an extraordinary, inspiring power. Not only did she manage a daring escape from a brutal environment, she became the first woman ever granted full custody of her children in a contested suit involving the FLDS. And in 2006, her reports to the Utah attorney general on church abuses formed a crucial part of the case that led to the arrest of their notorious leader, Warren Jeffs.

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Customer Reviews

Escape is undoubtedly one of the most bizarre memoirs you are ever likely to read. It is small wonder that it quickly made its mark on the New York Times list of bestsellers. Written by Carolyn Jessop, a woman who was born into the Fundamentalist Latter Day Saints (FLDS), the book describes what it is like to live as part of this cult which is distinctive primarily for its beliefs about polygamy. The FLDS, which emerged in the 1930s as a fundamentalist offshoot of the Mormon church, holds that God has ordained polygamy and not only that, but that it is a requirement for anyone who wishes to attain the highest level of heaven. Most men eventually have at least three wives, with more prominent members of the cult holding far more than that. Some of the leaders are believed to have fifty, sixty, or even one hundred wives. Women are generally placed with husbands at the whim of the cult's leader (who claims to receive divine guidance about which women belong with certain men). There are around 10,000 adherents to this cult living in the United States today. Jessop was born into a family that eventually had two wives but one that, compared to others in the community, seemed almost normal. When she was just eighteen, though, she was assigned to become the fourth wife of a fifty-five year old man. While she was married to him he added two more wives and later went on to add five or six more. Through fifteen years of marriage, Jessop gave birth to eight children. Through her marriage she suffered constant abuse at the hands of her husband, his other wives, and other members of the community.

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