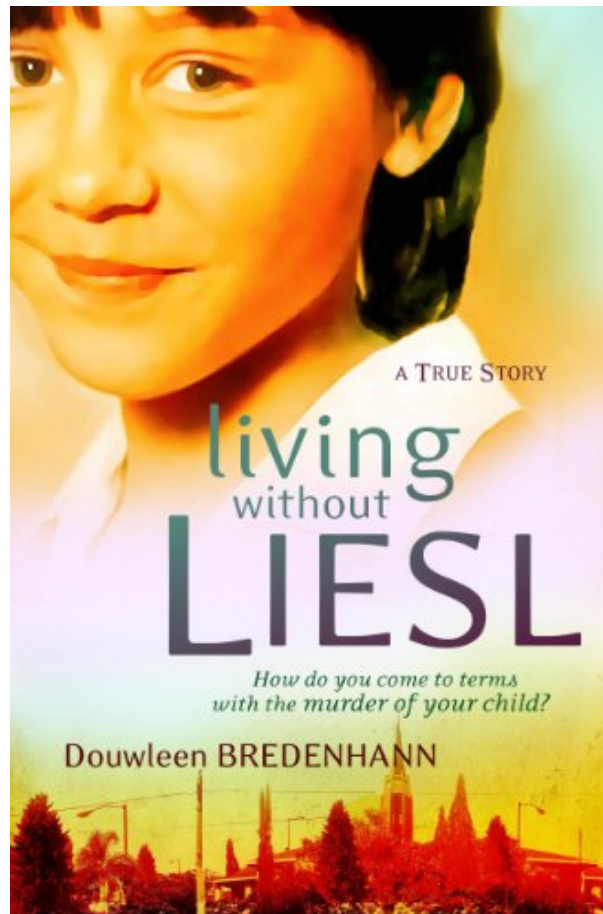
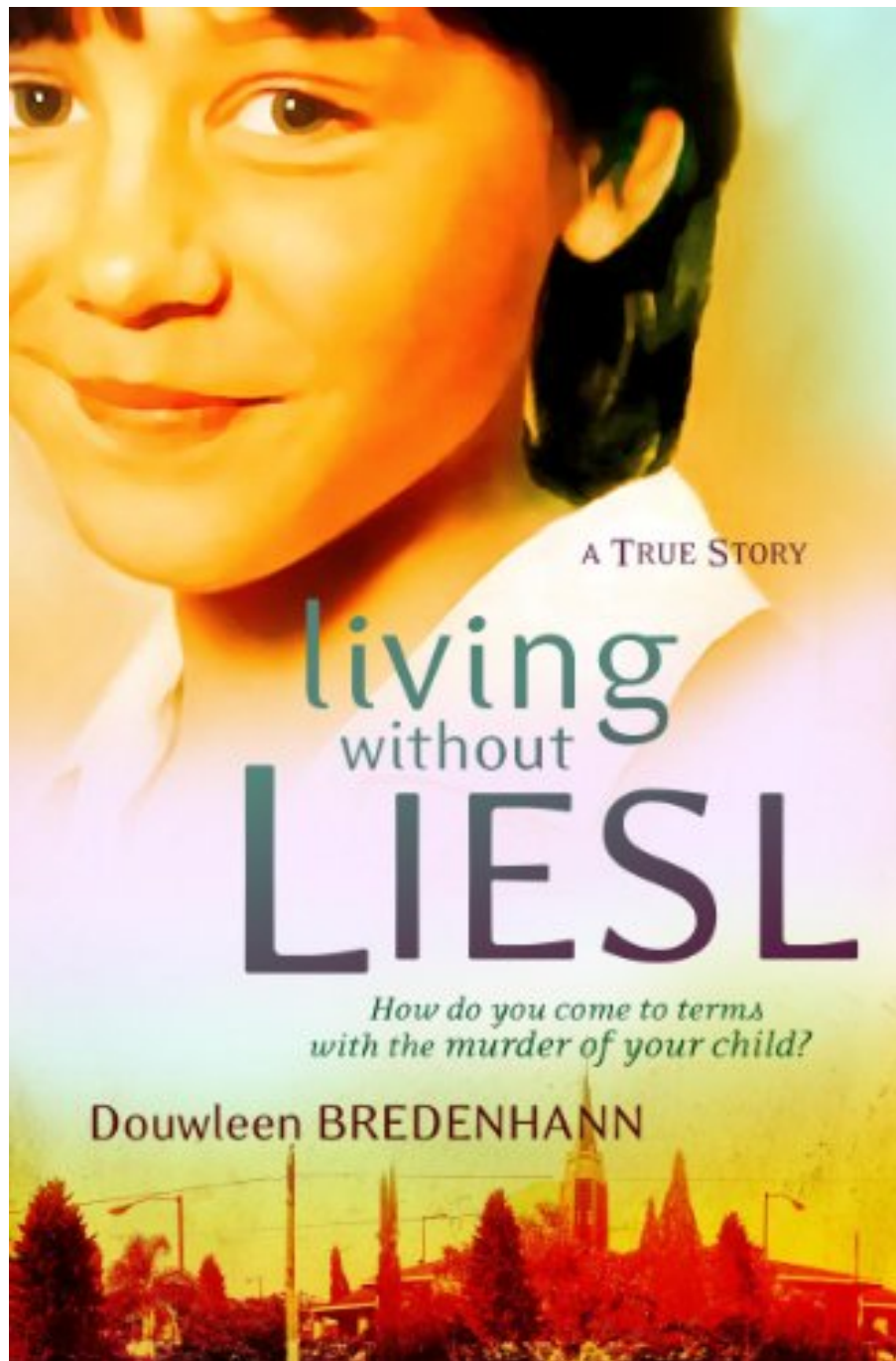


LIVING WITHOUT LIESL: A TRUE STORY BY DOUWLEEN BREDEHANN



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Review

“Real, sober, yet incredibly powerful”

About the Author

DOUWLEEN BREDENHANN was born in Windhoek, Namibia on 19 September 1954. She grew up in Port Elizabeth, Windhoek and the Northern Cape. She studied art in Pretoria for a year and thereafter completed a BA in Political Science and Public Administration at the University of Stellenbosch. She is married to Steph, a civil engineer. After a number of years in the Northern Cape, the family now lives in the Western Cape. Since 1988 the course of her life has been largely shaped by the horrific murder of their eldest daughter at the tender age of eight.

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LIVING WITHOUT LIESL: A TRUE STORY BY DOUWLEEN BREDEHANN PDF

On 26 February 1988, a Friday night, Douwleen Bredenhann fetched her oldest daughter Liesl from ballet class and started preparing the family's favorite supper of thick-crust pizza. Liesl went outside to feed the new puppy. Moments later the family was shattered by the discovery of her body in their previously peaceful, suburban backyard.

This is the true story of how Douwleen and her family began the long, slow process of learning to live with tragedy.

Heartbreaking, searing in its unflinching honesty, this family's story will not let you go.

- Sales Rank: #13446782 in Books
- Published on: 2011-03-15
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: .50" h x 5.30" w x 8.30" l, .39 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 176 pages

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A Starting Point for Grieving Parents

By Judy Croome

A true-life story of a mother's experience of the brutal murder/attempted rape of her 8 year old daughter by a 16 year old neighbour's son.

Clearly written as a much-needed catharsis, *LIVING WITHOUT LIESL* is a harrowing read, translated from the original Afrikaans. While there are moments of deep wisdom, the overall tone of the book is bitter and furious, although in the last twenty pages a tone of quiet acceptance begins to creep in.

Some advice is detailed for other grieving parents and reflects a projection of a smouldering anger onto the unsuspecting folk who don't quite know how to react to the tragic circumstances, or who react clumsily. These (mostly) well-intentioned folk are often berated for being "insensitive" to the grieving parents' needs, or for making "inane" comments. Apparently a common reaction of persons suffering deep grief, this attitude did distract me. The final pages contain a heartrending letter to the murderer of young Liesl.

After reading the book, I was left with a lingering despair at the dark depths to which humanity will sink. The telling of this story raises many questions: where is the justice in a legal system that counts a child's life, given up in final moments of unimaginable terror, worth only twelve years in prison? The youthful murderer 'Piet Strydom' served only five years; he was around twenty-one when he was released, with a lifetime of possibility ahead of him, while his victim lies dead in the ground. Can a mother ever overcome such a fundamental breach of all her hopes and dreams for her beautiful daughter?

A personal story, *LIVING WITHOUT LIESL* offers a starting point for other parents who have suffered as grievously and who may identify with the pain still permeating the lives of Liesl's family.

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