

RELENTLESSLY

A TRUE STORY

NINA GRACE

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WHAT DOES IT COST TO TRULY BECOME FREE?

Nina's life was a masterclass in survival.

At an early age, she learned how to endure. Shaped by abandonment, loss, abuse, betrayal, and generations of unspoken pain, Nina discovered her best currency. What began as a search for stability became a life defined by exploitation, secrecy, and choices she never imagined she would make.

Nina tried to leave it all behind, but every attempt to move forward was met by grief, financial hardship, toxic relationships, and battles she couldn't explain. As her world fell apart, she was forced to confront tough questions that she could no longer avoid: How do you heal when survival is all you've ever known? What if the battles you're fighting didn't begin with you?

From the velvet-lined traps of society's darkest corners to radical transformation. Nina shares her descent into darkness, the painful unraveling of false identities, and the long road towards healing as she lost the world to save her soul.

Relentlessly: A True Story doesn't sanitize sin, trauma, or suffering. It isn't a sugarcoated testimony that makes redemption look easy. Instead, it reveals the cost of obedience and the reality that spiritual transformation is often forged in the wilderness. It bears witness to what remains when everything else is gone, and mercy refuses to let go; proving that the highest cost yields the greatest freedom.

Thank you for picking up this exclusive preview.

Relentlessly: A True Story tells the testimony of how God met me in the middle of my brokenness and began rewriting my story. It took years of pain, healing, writing, editing, and courage to produce.

This preview contains the first three chapters of *Relentlessly* exactly as they appear in the book. They introduce the beginning of a journey that spans years of survival, secrets, brokenness, shame, difficult choices, wounds that I thought would define my life forever, and the relentless pursuit of redemption. It's intended to introduce you to the beginning of the story before the official release.

While these preview chapters offer only a glimpse into my story, they lay the foundation for everything that follows. My hope is that when you read the full novel, you'll see more than my experiences and recognize the faithfulness of God in the middle of impossible circumstances.

Every story begins somewhere. Thank you for giving mine a place in your hands and beginning this journey with me. I'm grateful that you're among the first to experience it.

Sincerely,
Nina Grace

UNSEEN GIRL

Growing up in the early 1990s, I climbed trees until my shoes were scraped and dirty. I balanced on low branches, just high enough to feel a little thrill. Behind abandoned houses, I flipped across old, worn-out mattresses with springs that could have given out at any second. I rode my bike down sloped streets with no hands, letting the wind decide if I reached the bottom safely. Some days, I rolled down grassy hills until the earth and sky blurred together and I couldn't tell which way was up. When I came back inside, my clothes were stained with grass and dirt, stretched at the knees, and showed I'd been playing with my brothers. I never thought it was unusual. That was just how I lived, even if it wasn't what people expected from a little girl.

Saturday mornings belonged to cartoons and cereal. My brothers and I would sprawl out in front of the television, bowls in hand, glued to the screen. I loved Corn Flakes with sliced bananas and sugar sprinkled on top. We watched everything from Tom and Jerry, Looney Tunes to Ninja Turtles, until the pull of the day took over.

After cartoons, we moved on to one of our favorite weekend activities. While Mom worked long shifts at the hospital as a nurse, we turned the house into our playground.

We'd push the living room furniture into a square, then make sure to put everything back before she got home so she wouldn't notice what we'd been up to. We pretended to be WWF wrestlers, back before it was called WWE. We knew all the moves, facial expressions, and catchphrases. Using boxes Mom brought home from Aldi, we made championship belts out of cardboard, glue, and tape, decorating them with crayons and markers. To us, those belts were as real as anything.

I didn't think about how my little brother felt each time I won another belt. Winning felt great, but having my older brothers cheer me on felt even better. When they shouted my name, I stood taller and held the belt higher, trying to make the moment last as long as I could. Their laughter made me feel seen in a way that nothing else did. I didn't know then that my winning streak would soon come to an end.

One day, during a wrestling match, my little brother hit me square in the eye. The room spun and something inside me shifted. My head snapped back so fast it felt like my eye had come loose. My heart pounded in my ears as I stood there, stuck in time, holding my face. I ran to the bathroom and locked the door, gripping the knob tightly like it could keep everything together. I stayed there for hours, pressed against the cold tile on the floor, waiting until Mom got home that night.

I imagined what might happen next. I pictured going back to school with only one eye, wearing an eyepatch, and hearing the other kids laugh at me.

Wearing glasses as a kid was already hard enough; this would have been even worse. My brother had knocked the fight clean out of me. Oh, I learned that day! That moment stole whatever confidence I had about holding my own. I never tried to fight him again.

In the days that followed, fear took over where the pain left off. I moved through the house more carefully, always protecting my face and checking if I felt safe. I didn't know how to talk about it, so I did what I had been learning to do: I found ways to cope.

When I wasn't outside playing rough with my brothers, I disappeared into the house. I would put on *The Little Mermaid* and sit close to the tube-shaped television, so close that the glow from the screen warmed my skin. The movie pulled me in the way a VCR swallowed tape. I didn't just watch the movie; I vanished into it for hours. I would rewind it repeatedly, until the VHS tape ribbon stretched and wore out.

I used to love Ariel. She was beautiful and effortlessly free. She had a voice of her own that people chased after. She was loud in a world that listened. I was quiet in a house that didn't and swallowed the voice I had. For a girl who felt voiceless, the movie became a consolation, empowering me when real life made me feel invisible. It wasn't just entertainment; it was a relief. I learned early on to soothe myself and disappear into characters when reality felt too empty to hold me.

Even with all the memories I made with my brothers and my love for The Little Mermaid, I was fighting a private battle. I never told anyone, not my brothers or even my mom, about feeling like I didn't belong. Besides, I sensed that my feeling of not belonging would have been hard for anyone in my family to believe or accept. Our house was always full of people, whether they lived there or not.

Eventually, I started asking my mother and brothers, "Am I adopted?"

Something in me was different from everyone else. Each time, they answered with an assured no but their certainty only made my doubt stronger. I started telling anyone who would listen that I was adopted and that my real family lived in California, a place I had never been, but it felt as far away as possible.

People laughed and shook their heads. They thought I was joking, never asking why I felt that way. It was easier for them to brush it off than to try to understand. That's when I realized you can be surrounded by people and still feel unknown.

My family thought I was just unhappy because I was the only girl among four brothers but I knew it was deeper than that. Something more meaningful was happening in a way I couldn't yet explain. I had always been sensitive, able to pick up what others felt without them saying a word.

Because of this, I often pulled back and spent time alone when I could. People called me standoffish or antisocial. The truth was, I liked being around others, but felt most at peace when I was by myself.

My childhood home wasn't affectionate, communicative, religious, or spiritual. We didn't openly share our thoughts, feelings, or daily lives. Words weren't personal but practical. Our thoughts and emotions were placed on layaway, stored for us to pick up and pay off as adults. We didn't attend church, pray together, or read the Bible as a family. The most we ever did was say grace before our meals.

Each evening, we sat around the white-tiled kitchen table in natural wood-colored chairs that were worn on the edges. In our usual spots, plates were set as the food cooled. Someone announced it was time to say grace. We bowed our heads, interlocked our fingers, and tucked our elbows in. The words came out the same every night, quick and memorized, like flipping a switch:

"God is great; God is good. Lord, we thank you for our food. In Jesus' name, Amen."

After we finished saying grace, we'd lift our heads, open our eyes, and let go of each other's hands. God existed long enough to bless the food. He was dismissed with an *Amen* and replaced by the scrape of forks against plastic plates.

We shared meals, but not much else. Dinner wasn't filled with conversation. No one asked about your day. Our house wasn't cruel; it was just quiet in the places where love and words should have lived. I didn't know how to talk to God then, but I was already listening, hoping someone beyond our mealtime prayer was out there paying attention.

NO LONGER HIDDEN

On February 23, 1995, I woke up feeling different. It was my birthday, but that wasn't the only thing that made the day special. Something in the air was impossible to ignore. Still, I went through my usual morning routine of brushing my teeth and getting dressed for school, but the heaviness I usually carried was gone. I moved faster and felt more awake than usual. Most mornings, I dragged myself out of bed, already tired just thinking about another long day at school, but this morning I didn't.

I put on my navy-blue V-neck pleated jumper, a white long-sleeve polo shirt, and white tights. Wearing brown penny loafers, I started the five-block walk to school. The cold air cut through my clothes as I stepped outside, and I felt something moving beside me, keeping pace like a shadow with the sun behind it.

"I Am with you." I heard a voice say.

I wasn't the type of child to get startled or caught up in excitement, but what I heard was real. The words didn't just pass through my ears; it seemed like they had been waiting for the right moment. I stopped and looked around. The streets, trees, houses, and sidewalks were all the same, but I wasn't.

“How could I be with me?” I wondered.

The voice didn’t argue or explain. It stayed close to me like the cold air wrapping around my skin. I pulled my shoulders back and lifted my chin as I started walking again. For the rest of the walk, my steps were firmer and my backpack was featherweight. I looked over my shoulders every few steps or so hoping and wondering if I would hear the voice again. The only way I could explain it to my eight-year-old self was that I had met God for the first time. The same God we thanked before meals, spoke to me on my way to school.

I didn’t know why it happened. I just knew I wasn’t alone. My life continued as it was with school, chores, cartoons, and ordinary childhood things that filled my days but that day changed me. I felt marked by Him and His presence stood out against the emptiness that came after.

3 **BURIED HOPE**

Two years later, my mother made my father leave again. He had come back for a short time, just long enough for us to hope he might stay, but within months, he was gone. My brothers and I never really knew how bad things were or what he did to deserve it. We grew up in a time with a generation of parents who didn't explain adult things to their children.

His absence was treated like a sudden storm, something that just happened without warning. Weeks went by, then months. Since this had happened before, we got used to it without asking many questions. Still, this time felt different for my brothers, who knew him better than I had as they spent more time with him and were older than me. I only had bits and pieces, quick images, short moments, more of an idea of him than the real thing. I kept thinking he'd come back. I thought it was only a matter of time before his pastel yellow Cadillac pulled up in the driveway. The seasons changed, and the car never came. I saw other girls get picked up from school by their dads, fathers leaning across the seats, unlocking doors, and calling out their daughters' names. I never heard my name called like that. No father waved me over from the driver's seat, and no one was coming for me.

I was disappointed. If my mother had just told me my father wasn't coming home, maybe I could have found some closure, even if it was small. Instead, I lived with uncertainty, carrying unanswered questions like a loose puzzle piece I didn't know where to place. Having a father around made home feel real to me. His flaws didn't matter. His presence shaped how I first learned about safety, protection, and feeling valued. Deep down, I kept hoping that one day, when distance wasn't in the way, we'd see each other again. I pictured us as softer people, ready to build something we couldn't before. It felt like a promise I made to myself.

One evening when I was fifteen years old, I was lying on my bed watching 106 & Park while AJ and Free counted down music videos. My mother came into my room and called me to the kitchen. She said she had news about my father. My heart jumped. I thought this was the moment I'd been waiting for all those years. I was sure he was coming back. I needed him more than ever. My brothers and cousins were around but they couldn't fill the place of a father.

When I walked into the kitchen, my brothers were sitting at the white-tile table where we always said grace. I sat down, crossed my fingers, and held my breath.

My mother said, *"Your father was murdered."*

Her voice cracked when she said it. Staring at the table as the words left her mouth. No one moved. It was so quiet in the room that the loudest sound was the clock ticking on the wall.

As soon as I heard the news, numbness came over me, and all my hope disappeared. I slumped in my seat, waiting for something inside of me to break open, for tears to come forth, for any sound to escape me, but nothing happened. The change in me was sudden; shock took the place of longing.

As I sat there, feeling like I could just sink into the chair and vanish. My mind filled with questions. Was his killer the last person he saw? Did he know it was the end? Did he think about us? Did he picture giving me away at my wedding? I'd never get those answers. He left without a kiss, a hug, or any last words. He didn't die surrounded by family or in a familiar room at an old age. He was only forty-four years young.

I started to open the jar of emotions I kept bottled up with his name on it. It was filled with hopes and imagined moments that now felt like nothing but broken pieces and what-ifs. A single tear slipped down my cheek before I could stop it. I wiped it away quickly, almost embarrassed by it. That was all I had. There was no sobbing or wailing. I didn't know how to mourn him like people mourn their fathers. How do you grieve for someone you barely knew?

I didn't remember the touch of his hands. I couldn't miss the sound of his voice; I barely heard it. My grief had no memories to lean on, only possibilities.

One of the hardest things I ever faced was realizing that all the daydreams I had for five years, waiting for his car to pull into the driveway and for him to walk back through our front door, would never come true. I would never know what it was like to have a father. No one to check the boys who talked too much or remind me of who I was when the world tried to label me something else. No dad to ask if I was okay and mean it in a way that made me believe I would be. I had to let go of the version of him that I had been waiting for to come back. The father who would steady me when life got hard and catch me when I stumbled.

If someone had told me that the next time I would see my father would be in his casket, I wouldn't have believed it. About a week later, after a four-hour drive, we arrived in Kansas City, Missouri, for the funeral. There was a three-volley rifle salute for my father's service in the United States Army. I knew it was coming, but I still flinched at the first shot. The sound hit me before I could think. Each bullet felt like a hammer nailing something shut inside me. Birds flew from the trees as the shots echoed throughout the cemetery. It was violent and final. The smell of gunpowder stayed in the air, mixing with the scent of dying grass and unanswered questions. I stared at the casket and felt more than a body being lowered into the ground.

After the salute, we gathered in a small circle. I met an uncle for the first time. He talked about remembering my adult brothers as little boys. You could see the pride bounce off his chest.

Then he looked at me and said, *“My brother never told us he had a daughter.”*

The hope I saved for my dad had just been buried.

Thank you for reading this preview. The journey has only begun. It continues through heartbreak, hidden battles, and unexpected grace. The hardest warfare, deepest revelations, costly road to freedom, and greatest moments of redemption are still ahead.

Relentlessly: A True Story Discusses...

- Childhood
- Survival
- Secrets
- Success
- Motherhood
- Brokenness
- Deliverance
- Surrender
- Healing
- Freedom
- And, so much more...

Inside the autobiography, you'll learn about:

- How childhood wounds shaped adult decisions.
- The hidden cost of living in survival mode.
- The search for identity in all the wrong places.
- Why freedom required losing everything.
- What public exposure taught me about private healing.
- The relentless mercy of God through every season.

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Be among the first readers and as a *thank you*, you'll receive exclusive presale pricing for early supporters.



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Nina Grace is a transformational writer, author, and speaker who is called to invite women into a deeper understanding of who they are in Jesus Christ and equip them to reclaim their identity, renew their minds, walk in purity, and live with purpose and power. She is rooted in the belief that no life is too broken for God's love and redemption. Her work empowers women to build a deeper relationship with God, experience true healing, and flourish in the lasting freedom they were created for. Learn more at NinaGraceBrown.com

