

UNMASKING THE TRUTH

Sins, Secrets & Salvation

By Nicole Duncan

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Unmasking the Truth: Sins, Secrets & Salvation
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Book and Cover design by Thomas Aaron (TA Visuals Company)

ISBN: 123456789

First Edition: June 2016

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CHAPTER 2: TO YOU A CHILD IS BORN

Psalms 139:13-16

"For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderfully are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them."

Sylvia dropped out of high school, and she and Justice lived with her parents. The relationship between Sylvia and Lamont fizzled, and she became a single parent before she became an adult. Lamont was simply too young to handle the responsibilities, but Lamont's mother Jacqueline and his

sisters were there. Sylvia appreciated the assistance that she received from Jacqueline, but when it came to doing Justice's hair, that job was for Sylvia. She was very protective of Justice, and the thought of someone kissing her first-born made her skin crawl. When it came to Justice, Sylvia was a piece of work, and everyone knew it.

Even though Sylvia was a High School dropout that did not stop her from finding a way to spoil Justice. When Sylvia began dating again, she made it very clear that spending money on Justice was the fastest way to receive her approval. The more men Sylvia dated, the more things began to change for her. She was getting older, and her innocence was dwindling away. She wore minks, diamond pendant necklaces, and her daughter looked and dressed like a princess. When it came to celebrating Justice's birthday, Sylvia spared no expense. Every celebration was special with an over-the-top theme and Christmas mornings were like walking through Toys-R-Us.

Even though Justice enjoyed the fruits of being treated like a princess, she was very observant. At that tender young age, Justice learned the streets sponsored her lavish lifestyle. Justice spent a lot of time with her grandmother Patricia, while Sylvia partied and traveled back and forth out of town. The "fast life" intrigued her and she interacted with some of the biggest drug dealers in the city. Unfortunately, the "fast life" turned her into a functional addict and every day that passed,

"You better not tell anyone." He threatened. "You hear me? If you do, I will deny it. They will never believe you over me."

"Okay."

He closed the door; Justice flopped onto the floor and cried. *Why is this happening to me?* Fortunately, Justice was not penetrated, but she knew if she did not take a stand, the next time might not end with her cousin's penis in her hand. After minutes of self-pity, Justice stood to her feet, rushed to the bathroom and washed her hands repeatedly. She knew no one would believe her over their favorite nephew, so she was forced to conceal another dark, secret. That was not the last time her relative tried, but Justice found the power in the word, "no." Justice's attacker threatened her and for some odd reason, more childhood friends and family members approached her in a sexual manner. *What did I do to deserve this?* Justice asked herself.

At that extremely young age, Justice yearned to feel wanted, and she didn't care who gave it to her. Her self-esteem was non-existent, and she could not communicate her feelings. Justice was doomed. In second grade, Justice had her first tongue kiss. This particular boy was the cutest boy in the school, and they always found time to have their little "moments." Justice's kiss and grab relationship with this little boy lasted until the fifth grade. She should have been playing with Barbie dolls but at an early age, Justice was looking for

affection. Justice had all the perks of being a hustler's child, but she lacked identity. According to Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when that child is old, he will not depart from it." Justice was clearly not trained nor prepared for the rollercoaster that awaited her.

Every Saturday morning, Justice grandmother pushed her bedroom door open yelling, "Get up! I want your room and that living room cleaned!"

"Are you serious?" Justice thought to herself.

Instead of being obedient, she turned over to get an extra hour of sleep.

"Girl, you better get up, now!"

Justice hated doing chores. There was a perfectly working dryer, but her grandmother insisted that she hang her clothes on the clothesline in the backyard. Justice grandmother was raised on old principles, and she wanted to instill those same values into Justice, but it wasn't easy. Even at this age, Patricia saw Justice going down the same path as her mother and she would not stand for it. Patricia was soft-spoken, but whenever Justice disobeyed her, Patricia's Jamaican accent always restored order.

Every Sunday, Patricia took Justice to church, and they stayed the entire day. Patricia was a firm believer in praise and every Sunday, she mumbled her favorite scripture. "*The Sabbath Day should be set aside for the Lord and kept holy.*" (Exodus 20:8-11) She lived by that scripture, and she made sure Justice was not just in attendance but active. Justice could not sing to save her life, but every Sunday, she stood in front of the congregation and sang her little heart out. If it were up to Justice, she would have been at home relaxing, chatting on the phone or running the streets. Patricia knew that her daughter failed as a mother, and only God could steer Justice in the right direction.

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While Justice sang out of tune to her grandmother's favorite hymn, Sylvia's drug addiction turned for the worse. Men came in and out of Sylvia's life like a revolving door, and Justice had a front row seat. Justice noticed that her mother's company was no longer flashy and draped in jewelry. They were poorly dressed, and their skin was battered. Justice eventually realized that they were not friends, but junkies. She watched her mother violently argue with her so-called friends over drugs, and she accepted that as normal. One man that was a part of that dysfunctional friendship name was Joey. Joey played a vital role in Justice's life, but the company he kept was detrimental to her mother's downfall.

CHAPTER 7: SEARCHING FOR LOVE AND VALIDATION

Galatians 1:10

“For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.”

Summertime arrived, and Justice was an official high school graduate. Even though Roy missed her graduation, Justice made sure she never missed a visit. On July 1st, Justice turned eighteen and no longer needed an escort during her visits. That day was her first visit as an adult, and she was beyond excited. It had been seven months since Cache` seen her father, and her eyes lit up like a Christmas tree. Cache` refused to let him go and that moment solidified the importance of keeping her father in her life. The visit was refreshing, and when it was

time to go Cache` cried, "Da Da". Roy always had a tough persona, but hearing his daughter cry broke down his wall.

One day after visiting Roy, Justice stood at the bus stop when a Honda Accord pulled up in front of her and the window rolled down.

"Don?" Justice asked smiling.

"Where are you going?"

"Home."

Justice was ecstatic. Don was the man that she always wanted, but she felt guilty for flirting while Roy was in jail.

"Do you want me to take you?"

Justice continued to smile. "No, I'm okay."

Don was persistent, but Justice continued to decline. As he pulled off, she hoped that he drove around the corner one more time. Don knew that Justice liked him so the next time they crossed paths, numbers were exchanged. Being alone was weakening Justice's loyalty and her attraction to Don was too strong to deny. The game was easy for Justice, so whenever she visited Roy, she reinforced to him that she would never date

anyone. Whenever she was with Don, she told him the opposite. The game she played was dangerous, but Justice loved the deceitful adrenaline rush. Don was also a player and very mysterious. When two players are in a relationship, it's a match made in hell.

Whenever Justice paged Don, if he didn't answer immediately, she would drive through his neighborhood and cause a scene. Justice did not care if the block was full of people; she was not going to be ignored. Justice was spoiled, and she believed if she were trying to reach you, you'd better make yourself available. Many nights, Justice would disrupt Don's dice games. One night, her pop-up appearance cost Don to lose a lot of money. Don loved the drama, but when Justice's antics started ruining his reputation, their relationship faded. Eventually, Justice removed herself from the game, just a little bit.

When Justice relationship with Don faded, she reconnected with a guy named Hector from high school. She could never give Hector the time in school because of her relationships; first with John, then with Roy. They did a lot of flirting, but Justice would never allow for it to go any further. Hector and Don hung out in the same neighborhood. Each guy that Justice met pulled her away from Roy, and she did not have the heart to tell him that all his accusations of her cheating were coming true.