

When the Silence Starts to Crack

The story was divided to survive. Now the pattern is coming into view.

For most of my life, people tried to break this story up into pieces.

North Fox Island was supposed to be one thing.

Brother Paul's Children's Mission was supposed to be another.

The Oakland County Child Killer case was supposed to be something else.

A few bad men here.

A few hurt kids there.

A few headlines.

A few arrests.

That's how people survive it.

That's also how the truth gets buried.

Because when you separate everything, nobody has to look at the whole pattern.

But I lived through enough of this to know better.

Back in 1976, Marilyn Wright at the Traverse City Record-Eagle was one of the first people willing to write about North Fox Island and the pedophile ring connected to it. That took guts.

Even then, the full shape of what was going on was not being said out loud.

For years, people were trained to think small.

One case.

One scandal.

One victim.

One monster.

But that is not how evil works.

It repeats.

It hides behind power.

It hides behind money.

It hides behind institutions.

It hides behind people who look respectable.

And it counts on the public never comparing notes.

That is what started changing.

Families kept asking questions.

Writers kept digging.

Survivors started speaking.

And once that started, the silence didn't hold the way it used to.

Now more people are seeing the pattern for what it is.

Different names.

Different places.

Same sickness.

I'm not saying every case is the same.

I'm not saying every road leads to the same people.

I'm saying some of us know the pattern because we were inside it before the public even had language for it.

That is why I still have hope.

Not because I think the system is clean.

Not because I think justice moves fast.

And not because I think truth wins easy.

I have hope because silence is not in control the way it used to be.

Too many people are speaking now.

Too many records survived.

Too many lies stayed around too long.

For a long time, they got away with keeping everything separated.

That is getting harder now.

And once people start seeing the full pattern instead of the little pieces, it gets harder for evil to hide behind time, money, titles, and fear.

That's where I am.

Not at closure.

Not at peace.

Not pretending everything is fixed.

Just watching the wall crack.

And after all these years, even a crack is enough to remind me this story is not over.

The record is still alive.

The silence is weaker.

And history is still talking.

— Michael Farquhar