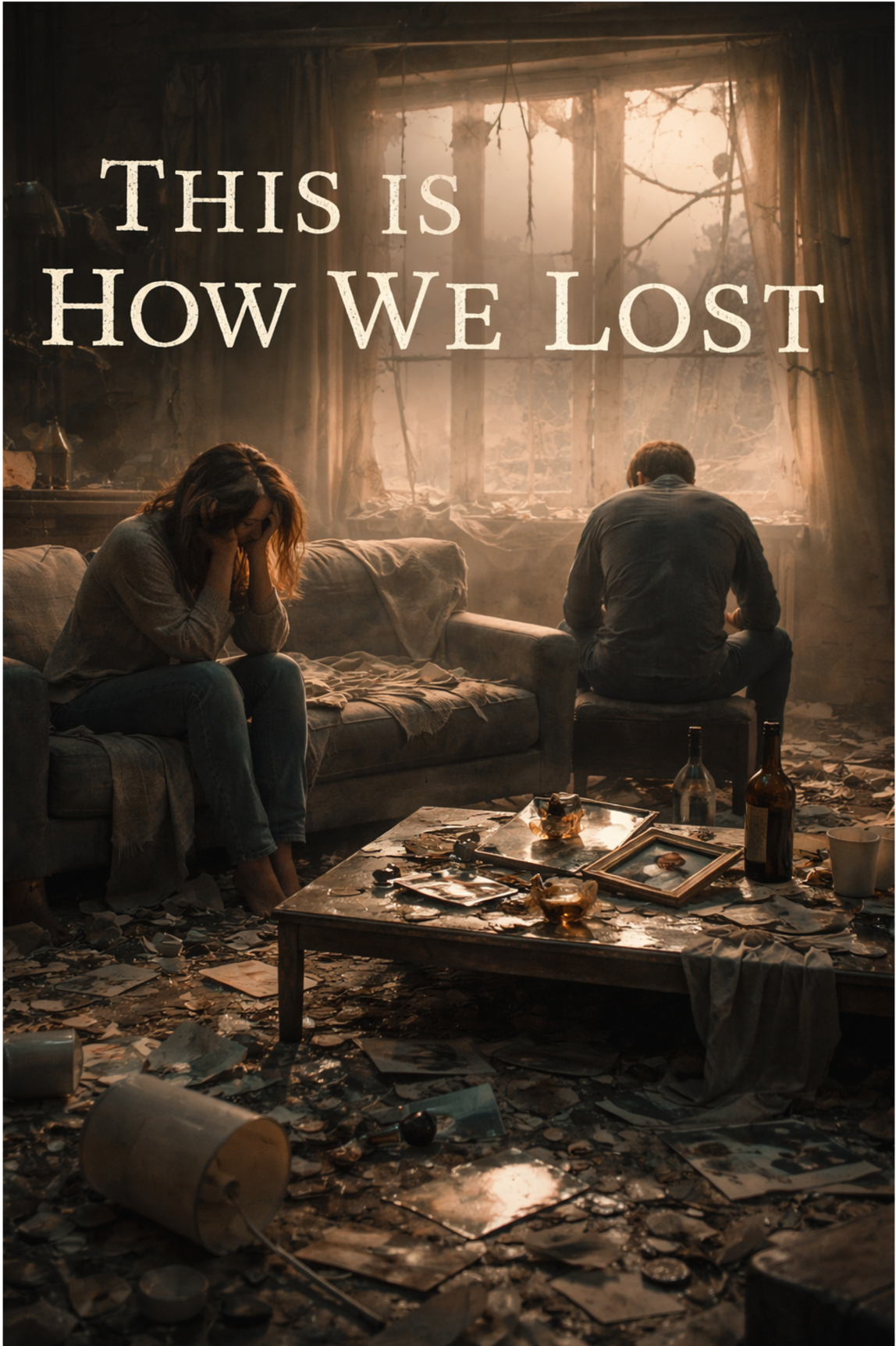


THIS IS HOW WE LOST



**This is how we lost
Going through a
divorce,
Or a separation,
It's like experiencing a world
war firsthand.
Only, nobody else around you
is going through it.**

So, you suffer in silence.

**People ask you to put down
Your defence systems,
And hug or shake hands
Because it makes them
Uncomfortable.**

*While your home,
And your family
Is ransacked everyday
And every night
By your enemies.*

*While you suffer to survive
Hour-by-hour,
Pushing away
The PTSD
And the memories
Of the things
That you have seen
And experienced.*

*Every-single-time that you
Are triggered
By the ongoing violence
All around you,
You need to pretend that
everything is ok.*

**Put on a happy face
Cry me a river**

**Build me a bridge
And
Get over it**

**Because everyone else
Around you
Is living their happy,
Peaceful lives.**

**If a tree falls,
And you don't see it,
Did it really make a sound?**

**And they wonder,
What is wrong with you?**

**You try to open your mouth
To tell them,
But
They close their eyes
And ears.**

Because war hurts everyone.

**They walk away.
It's not their issue.
Get over it.**

**If it can't be proved
Without
A shadow
Of a doubt,
If nobody
Wants
To get involved,
And nobody wants to hear it,
Then did it really happen?**

**So, you constantly live
In secret shadows.**

**They don't know
All the painful emails
That you must read
That re-traumatizes
you**

**From the violence that
Happened.
Each-and-everyday.**

What is wrong with you?

Grow up!

Move on!

It's for the kids...

*They don't know what happened
To you,
Or me,
Or to our kids,
That led to the war breaking out
All around us.*

*We are censored to the public:
We can't publish this.
In their newspapers.
We can't call others to action,
Or ask anyone to save us.*

*Nobody knows how
Our little people
Live in poverty,
While in HIS care,
Or how
Their home was shaken
By bombs and grenades
That looked like psychological
Warfare.*

*They don't know about
The raining gunfire,
That were hateful words used
To hurt us:*

Every Single Day.

*They don't know about
The secret combinations,
The war alliances and the war
tactics
Used to manipulate us
Day-in-and-day-out
To gain more territory.*

*They don't have to experience
The death and carnage,
The rot,
The flees,
The rats,
And the lice
That one sees
When they are deep-down
In the trenches,
Using lawyers like rifles,
On the bloody front lines.*

*They don't see
The razor wire put out
To keep "others" from
Their own lands,
And property.*

*They don't know
The late nights
That we have sat homeless,
Shivering and starving
Because we were pushed out of
our home.*

*They don't know about
The hateful words,
The spit, and rocks
That get thrown at you
By the enemy,
Even to this day.
When you aren't part of the war.*

*They don't understand
How strangers hate the
very sight of your
face,
Because of what they
have
Heard or read.
About you.
From your enemy.
His enemy.
I am the enemy, too.*

*They love a good story.
It gives them a thrill,
So, they add to the
hateful Language.*

*They join in on the
abuse,
Increase your
alienation,
Pass on his message,
Increase your
suffering.
Because you are the
enemy—the bad guy.
He is the hero.
There can only be one
winner,
And the winner writes
the Textbook.*

*People join and become
part of the opposition
because,
They love the hype of
propaganda. All
publicity is good*

*publicity, but it's
not.*

*Every morning you, me, I, we,
Get up and stand tall
Despite them.
It's not your fault that you are
hated, "like a Jew." Even though
the very rationale is nonsensical.*

**People just love to hate
One another—Especially you.
They see the weight gain,
And the stress lines that
Break free
All over your face
Like a spider making a web.**

**They see the thinning hair,
The bloodshot eyes,
With bags growing
Heavier and heavier,
Day-in-and-day-out.
But instead of helping,
They laugh at you—they join
in.**

***You, me, I, we,
Are a joke
All because of all
The sleepless nights,
All-the-worrying
And the empty bank account
That you keep opening up
Always,
Just in case
Only to see that yet again,
That your kids' dad
Hasn't paid his child support,
Again,
For the next month.***

*So, you have to make up the
Difference.*

*You work hard
Making minimum wage
Just to make ends-MEAT.
On top of everything else that
you are doing
To make it look like everything
Is ok.*

**Because divorce is like a
World War. Only, you must
hand
Your most precious
possessions over to the
enemy, who destroys you, for
a few days at a time.
And when they come back,
they are different than when
they left.**

**That same man who has
You followed by his friends,
Or by his extended family,
And even by strangers.**

**That same man who parks
Near your house
Late at night
To watch you through your
open window,
To see what you are doing,
when the kids are all away...**

**The same man who gets
Strangers involved because
They get a kick out of gossip,
And those same spies keep
reporting
Your most intimate details
Back to your enemy.**

**You don't know who you can
trust
Anymore. Every face could be
a spy, or they could be an ally
With your enemy.
Secretly lying in wait
To destroy you, and all that
you know and love.**

**The same evil humans
Who parrot to your kids that**

**You are the true enemy,
A wolf in sheep's clothing.**

**"SHE DOESN'T REALLY LOVE
YOU.
WHAT YOU SEE ISN'T REALLY
WHAT IT IS. SHE IS A SELF-
CENTRED MONSTER."**

**"SHE DOESN'T MEAN IT WHEN
SHE TELLS YOU THAT SHE
LOVES YOU, OR WHEN SHE
KISSES YOU GOODNIGHT."**

IT'S ALL A JOKE.

A SHOW.

A PLAY.

A LIE.

A FARCE.

**IT'S ALL TO GET BACK AT
HIM—AT ME.**

**SEE THOSE NICE CLOTHES,
AND THE NEW SHOES THAT SHE
BOUGHT YOU:
IT WAS TO MAKE HER LOOK GOOD TO
OTHERS.**

**SEE THAT ROOF SHE PUT OVER YOUR
HEAD? SHE DID THAT TO MAKE ME
LOOK BAD.**

**DON'T LOOK AT MY NEW CAR,
VACATIONS, OR SKIING TRIPS.
ONLY LOOK AT YOUR BARE SHELVES
IN YOUR CUPBOARDS:**

**THAT'S BECAUSE SHE STOLE FROM
ME!**

**WE HAVE NOTHING BECAUSE OF
HER!**

**YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL PEOPLE
WHEN I HURT YOU: IT'S NONE OF
THEIR BUSINESS!**

DON'T YOU WANT TO PROTECT ME?

**DON'T YOU LOVE ME AND WANT TO
KEEP ME SAFE?**

**I AM CHANGING AND TRYING:
SHE IS ONLY TRYING TO TAKE YOU
FROM ME.**

**IT WILL NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN...
UNTIL IT DOES.
HONEST.**

**LOOK AT ALL THESE PRESENTS:
IT'S BECAUSE I LOVE YOU.
LOOK AT ALL MY SACRIFICES,
THINGS ARE DIFFERENT NOW,
AND NOW LET'S HAVE FUN!**

**YOU DON'T NEED TO REMEMBER
WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE.**

**REMEMBER HOW SAD I WAS
WHEN I DIDN'T SEE YOU
THAT LAST TIME?**

**REMEMBER HOW SCARY THAT WAS
FOR YOU
AND FOR
ME
WHEN YOU WERE TAKEN FROM ME?**

IT WAS ALL HER FAULT.
IT DIDN'T HAVE TO BE THAT WAY.
SHE IS A MONSTER:
SHE WASN'T TRYING TO PROTECT
YOU.

LOOK AT HOW FUNNY
AND NICE
I AM TODAY,

I WASN'T REALLY LIKE THAT.

IT WASN'T ALL THAT BAD.

SHE PUT THOUGHTS IN YOUR HEAD,
AND TWISTED MY WORDS.

IT'S HER FAULT THAT THE POLICE
HELD ME IN PRISON.
SHE PUT ME THERE.
SHE HAD YOU
PUT ME THERE.

IT'S NOT MY FAULT,
IT'S YOUR FAULT—I MEAN
IT'S ALL HER FAULT.

GO AND ERASE HER EVIDENCE
AGAINST ME,
SHE ONLY WANTS TO TAKE YOU
AWAY.

I'M A CHANGED MAN NOW.
I AM GETTING HELP NOW, SEE?
YOU HAVE TO SAVE ME.

YOUR MOM USED TO BE A GOOD
MOTHER,
SEE THE HOME VIDEOS
WE LOOKED LIKE WE WERE IN LOVE.
SEE HOW NICE I AM?
I'M STILL THAT SAME GUY, SEE?

IT IS HER WHO HAS CHANGED:
SHE IS DIFFERENT NOW.
SHE IS NO LONGER SAFE.
SHE IS A BAD MOTHER.

YOU CAN'T TELL AT FIRST,
BUT IF YOU LOOK MORE CLOSELY,
IT IS THERE.
SEE?

LOOK AT HOW GRUMPY SHE GETS,
WHEN YOU DON'T CLEAN UP
IT'S BECAUSE SHE DOESN'T WANT
YOU.

LOOK AT HOW TIRED SHE IS,
SHE IS SPENDING ALL HER TIME
AT SCHOOL
AND WORK
BECAUSE SHE DOESN'T WANT TO BE
WITH YOU.

SHE ONLY LIES TO YOU
WHEN SHE SAYS THAT
SHE IS TRYING TO PROVIDE
A BETTER FUTURE FOR YOU.

SHE NEVER WANTED TO BE YOUR
MOTHER.
SHE IS A WORKAHOLIC
A DRIVEN FEMINIST—WHO ONLY
CARES
ABOUT MONEY MONEY MONEY
AND NOBODY
BUT HERSELF.

LOOK AT ALL THE NEW STUFF THAT
SHE HAS GIVEN YOU:
SHE BOUGHT IT ALL WITH MY
MONEY.

LOOK AT HOW BADLY YOU HAVE IT
AT MY HOUSE,
I HAVE NOTHING BECAUSE
SHE HAS TAKEN IT ALL AWAY.

DON'T LOOK AT OUR NEW FURNITURE
OR OUR NEW HOUSE
IN A NICE NEIGHBOURHOOD.
ONLY LOOK AT THE EMPTY
CUPBOARDS,
YOUR WORN-OUT SHOES,
AND THOSE CLOTHES THAT DON'T FIT
YOU
ANYMORE.

I DON'T CARE IF YOU DON'T LIKE
WEARING THOSE PANTS,
THEY ARE ALL WE HAVE!

Only, ex-husband, you are
the Liar.

I work hard because you
aren't paying me any
money, again.

Yes, I am tired, because I
must work hard

To ensure I maintain a
continuation of our
children's,
Prior lifestyle before I left
you.

PAS tells me so.

So that we can be safe.

To protect them from the
Gaping jaws of poverty
So that they know that they
have food to eat
A safe home with friends
and family

That love them.
So that they don't have to
worry
Anymore.

I do all of this for them.

So that they don't have to
be Afraid.

Anymore.

Meanwhile, you are saving
all your money
Only for you,
Squirling it away,
To spend it on yourself
And what you want,
Leaving nothing for your
kids

Because I am the enemy.

While constantly
complaining about
Any lack there could
possibly be
In my home.

If there is no lack,
Then I have too much.
I'm spoiled
I'm selfish.
All I have, I have
unlawfully.

Divorce is like a world
war,
Only me and my family
Are the only ones who
see it.
Nobody else knows how
you keep
All our kids' new
clothes,
One-outfit-at-a-time,
And send them home

In the old, worn-out
garbage.
That they got from you.

Then play dumb
Like you thought that
you bought them,
Or that somebody else
Gave them to you
Because they have been
at your house a long
time.

Or, how you refuse to
return them home to me,
Even when I have called
your Act.
That way, I have to
spend
My own money to buy
more.

*Nobody knows how you refuse
To return our kids to me for
Weeks at a time,
At exchange time*

*Or how you poison their minds
Against me
Every day that you have them.*

*So, when they come home, they
can't even look at me.
In the eyes.*

Nobody knows that you lie
Economic bombs, chaos,
and Sabotage
In my wake,
By changing our children's
Personal information
To yours

At the doctor's office,
At their schools,
At the dentist, that one time
That you made it.

Or, how you make yourself
The primary contact
So that you can reverse the
Parenting regime in court
In six months' time.

Nobody knows how
I must lock my bedroom
All-times-of-the-day
When I am not in there,
So that they don't pilfer through
My stuff, like a criminal

Or to squirrel it away for you
The next time they see you.

**Nobody knows how
Our second youngest
Elementary schooler
Hides food in his bedroom
Because mommy and daddy
are fighting again.**

**He is afraid that when he
wakes up, there might not
be food to eat.**

Nobody knows that

No matter how hard I work,
Or how much I provide for
our Kids,

It's not recognized,
appreciated, or valued.

Our children live in a
scarcity Mindset

Every day of their lives.

How they break their nice things
Because they don't feel like they deserve them.

How they are mean to each other,

Sometimes,

Because they only want to feel better: If they can shift the pain onto Somebody else,
Does that mean it went away?

Even for a moment?

Other people don't know how
I have to put cameras up all over my property,
Just to keep you from driving Past
The house

Again, and again.

People don't know how you took our oldest son's house key from Him
So that you could go through My home with your brother,
"Just to check things out."

People don't know that you Constantly talk about me to Others,

And tell our kids' schools that I'm not an "involved parent."

*Because they never see me at Parent Council meetings,
Or volunteering during school-hours*

Like the other married moms do.

You aren't working, so why aren't you there, Ex-husband?

Joining in the work?

I thought that you were an Involved parent.

Only, why aren't you working?

Oh, because you don't want to pay your child support.

To our kids.

But, no, you are a marvel At juggling it all—all by yourself.

Only, you don't juggle any of it: I do.

I set up the doctors' Appointments, and skip work and school
To take our kids to them.

All-the-while you sit on your Butt
At home, being a waste of skin.

Also, I'm the one helping our Kids

With their homework,
And tutoring them in their Math,

Late at night.

When I am so tired, I think I can't take one more step.

I am the one financially supporting their interests and needs,
At home.
At school.

In daycare, afterschool Programs, and extracurricular Activities.

I'm the one paying for that Class field trip,
Or sending them with donuts to School,

So that they can say thank
you to their teacher

For all that they do.

I'm the one giving our kids'
service projects
In the evening,
Instead of TV before bed.
I am teaching them the
value of their community.

**I am the one teaching them
To bake cookies at night.
For school.**

*I am the one holding them in my
arms
When they cry because it's all
TOO MUCH!*

**I'm the one putting them into
Therapy
To help with all their trauma**

**It hurts so much that my
eight-year-old told her
teacher that she wanted to
die.**

**I have another daughter
Who rips her hair out of her
Scalp, one hair at a time.**

I'm the one dropping our
kids off at football practices,
rugby, and boxing.

I am the one buying their
Equipment, cleats, and
jerseys
And making sure that they
have
A bottle of water and a
snack.
Even on your parenting
time Because you don't
want to.

**I am the one compensating
for your lack thereof,
As you complain and point
at mine.**

Giving them rides, and
making Excuses for you
When you don't show up
for them on time.

I'm the one smoothing over
the Loose ends
And the wrinkles when you
mess things up.

I am the one telling our kids
that everything is going to
be ok.

But you are the hero, right?

You are the one making
yourself visible.

You "act" like a good father
for the public eye,
While not actually being one.

You are the one doing nothing
And complaining about
Everything.

Telling everybody that I
don't update you
Or inform you about events
for our kids:

That's why you don't go!

Yet, those very people don't
see all the emails and events
on the JOINED CALENDAR

And the alarmed reminders
that I put on our joint app,
So that it tells you on your
Phone. You have no idea what
is going on!

Because of me.

*Every time I open my mouth to
ask for help,*

*Or to tell people what is
happening to us,
You blow up like a machine gun
and tell people that I am lying.*

You tell people that I am
discrediting you.

You tell people that I am
sabotaging your character.

Only, I'm not.

**I don't have time to waste
so Much effort.**

**I don't have ample hours of
nothing to do, like you.**

**They don't see how you
don't do anything, unless
you receive a parade and
public applause.**

**You see, you can only buy
Something expensive,
Here and there,
If you get to tell everybody
about it.**

**He needs a parade for a
ponytail: look, everyone!
Single moms all want to
drop their pants. Who is
that WONDERFUL MAN?**

*Meanwhile, you do nothing but
hurt your kids.*

*They get more bruises than
Dollars from you.*

*You have created psychological
and emotional*

*Warfare for our whole family
From the beginning, but nobody
knows about it, so it's okay.*

But if I make you
accountable for your
responsibilities,
I am the monster.

How dare I get MEP
involved

To ensure that you pay
some of your child support.
How dare I ask you to be
Accountable to the law?

But when every day we live
in a War zone,

And everyone else lives in
peace:

There is something wrong
with me.

Why can't you just hug,
shake hands, sit beside
each other and be friends
again?

It's for the kids.

**Stranger,
You wouldn't ask this of a
Holocaust survivor.
You wouldn't ask them to hug
somebody
Who put their family in a gas
chamber
Would you?**

**You wouldn't put them next
To their abusers from camp,
Ask them to forget about what
happened to them,
And tell them to shake hands,
To sit beside each other,
Hip-to-Hip
During or after the Second
World War**

Would you?

That wouldn't be humane,

So how can you ask this of me?

*What more do you want me to
give up for your comfort?*

So, I just shove the pain
down Deep

In my stomach,

Put on a fake smile,

and pretend that
everything is okay, because

I am the only one living in a
War zone,

While they all get to live in
Peace.

Because if you cannot prove
what has happened to you,

Without a shadow of a
doubt,

It means that it didn't
happen.

So, every day we suffer

Over so many things

That never happened.

Maybe even in this very

Moment,

**But if you can't see it, was it
ever there?**

**What happened is only a
Memory—an illusion.**

**If you didn't see it, it didn't
happen.**

So there.