

JAMES

EPILOGUE

KING

STICKS

AND

STONES

ALFIE GOES TO THAILAND - BOOK 5

JAMES KING

Sticks and Stones

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Contents

<i>FREE BOOKS</i>	iv
<i>AUTHOR NOTES</i>	v
1 Stop Feeling Sorry for Myself	1
2 The Power of Words	4
3 Abuse	7
4 A Great Journey	11
5 My Journey	18
<i>THE STORY CONTINUES</i>	20
<i>FREE BOOKS & OTHER MATERIAL</i>	21
<i>HELP OTHERS ENJOY THIS BOOK</i>	22
<i>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</i>	24
<i>ABOUT THE AUTHOR</i>	25
<i>OTHER BOOKS BY JAMES KING</i>	26

FREE BOOKS

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AUTHOR NOTES

For the best experience, I recommend you read the Alfie Goes to Thailand series books in order.

Post-it Notes – reveals that Alfie’s life was complicated, and by the time he flew to Thailand he was emotionally unstable. He had to reconcile the fallout from a bitter divorce, with the global financial crisis and a need to understand the culture of a country, which was often indifferent to reality.

House of Vipers – Alfie struggles to deal with the whirlwind of horrors which unfold chapter after chapter in the second novel of the series.

In the poor, hot and dusty north-east of Thailand Alfie Mynn, a South African businessman, has all but finished building a house for his partner Nin. Will her mother’s evil plot bring the family down. Can Mother use her daughter’s misplaced loyalty and the law, to ruin Nin and Alfie.

Can Alfie save himself before it’s too late?

A Million Roman Candles

Alfie goes on a journey that leaves him no options. He buckles up and drives away, with no plan, just an open heart and an empty mind, a man with no identity other than for official purposes. Just when he thinks he has succeeded, and his journey is over, a shocking event and a quirk of fate take him to a place he could never have imagined existed.

Will he recover, or will he end up as another statistic of abuse?

If you think any incidents or scenes in the series are unrealistic, or farfetched, remember the story is based on true life events. And truth is often stranger than fiction.

Learn more about me and my books at
<https://www.jameskingbooks.com>

Stop Feeling Sorry for Myself

My mood is black, bordering on suicidal. Nin has no further use for me. Her money is safely tucked away in the bank, and I am history. Abuse in the form of physical violence is easy to recognise. Mental abuse through verbal attacks, unwarranted silence or forced moroseness is not. Am I bitter? You bet I am. My disastrous marriage and the resulting acrimonious divorce in Cape Town's divorce court, caused me to spend hours researching abuse in relationships. I was shocked to find how many men suffer abuse from their wives or partners, but I never imagined it could happen twice, and in such quick succession.

If you had been through what I'd been through, you'd feel bitter too. Say what you want, you may be the most sanguine person on earth, but if you were treated with such disrespect, you'd probably have a breakdown or violent reaction. A less balanced person would have fled the country. I nearly did; my finger was on the Enter key, before there was a power cut and Qatar Airways' website disappeared. Riddled with angst, memories of the empty wine bottles and the post-it-notes on

the fridge door came rushing back.

I am feeling sorry for myself, and I make no apologies. I fear for my sanity; I have to get away from this place and away from myself before something bad happens. I'm not joking. I'm sane enough to know there's a problem round the corner.

I've been asleep a long time, and it's time to wake from my slumber and do something about it. I know about abusive relationships; who doesn't? But I never expected this. I know about junkies and alkie from the outside, that they go through hell. And I now know about domestic abuse from the inside.

"You are my son, and I know what you are capable of. How dare you turn your back on life – I let you down – I know. But that doesn't give you an excuse to let yourself down. Pull yourself together, get out there and show the world who you are."

When we argued, this was how my father tried to motivate me on more than one occasion. It may have been an elaborate game – a dance of vanities – seeking power over one another, the winner, to then abuse it without thought for morality. There was no winner. Had this not been the downfall of mankind for centuries?

When Hermann Hesse described the rape of the weak by the strong in the Glass Bead Game, he could just as easily have been describing the psychological abuse of one spouse by another.

World history is nothing but an endless dreary account of the rape of the weak by the strong. To associate real history, the timeless history of Mind, with this age old, stupid scramble of the ambitious for power and the climbers for a place in the sun – to link the two let alone to try to explain the one by the other – is in itself betrayal of the living spirit. It reminds me of a sect fairly widespread in the 19th or the 20th century whose members seriously believed that the

sacrifices, the gods, the temples and myths of ancient peoples, as well as all other pleasant things, were the consequences of a calculable shortage of surplus food and work, the results of a tension measurable in terms of wages and the price of bread. In other words, the arts and religions were regarded as mere facades, so-called ideologies erected above a human race concerned solely with hunger and feeling.

Doesn't the history of thought, of culture and the arts, have some kind of connection with the rest of history?

Absolutely not, his friend exclaimed. That is exactly what I'm denying. World history is a race with time, a scramble for profit, for power, for treasures. What counts is who has the strength, luck, or vulgarity, not to miss his opportunity. The achievements of thought, of culture, of art are just the opposite. They are always an escape from the serfdom of time, man crawling out of the muck of his instincts and out of his sluggishness, and climbing to a higher plane, to timelessness, liberation from time, divinity. They are utterly unhistorical and antihistorical.

The Power of Words

“The human tongue is a beast that few can master. It strains constantly to break out of its cage, and if it is not tamed, it will run wild and cause you grief.” - The Holy Bible

There is an English-language children’s rhyme, the first known record being 1830. The wording is self-explanatory and when spoken is a way of strengthening a person’s resolve against a verbal attack, to avoid physical retaliation and help them stay calm. The rhyme is usually a variant of:

*Sticks and stones may break my bones
But words will never hurt me.*

I am living proof that the age old and often quoted rhyme is a falsehood.

Words may only hurt if you succumb to the attack. Whoever said that doesn’t understand the power of words and the effect they can have on different minds. Senses drive emotions, and our

senses vary from person to person, circumstance, and time. Ask any playwright, filmmaker or author. Or ask why the Buddha said:

'Do not speak harshly to anyone; those who are spoken to will answer thee in the same way. Angry speech is painful: blows for blows will touch thee.'

If the person delivering a stinging rebuke is of no consequence to you and you can ignore them and walk away, that's fine for you. But when the words come from someone close and are delivered with ill intent, they can have a devastating effect, and they often do, causing serious illness and irreparable harm. When hurtful things creep into our daily lives, they go unnoticed and seem normal, until it's too late.

Arguments often lead to murder, and casual remarks to physical violence. Don't think for a moment that words will never hurt you. They can hurt, humiliate, and humble you. They are mighty powerful instruments and should be used with the utmost care. In the wrong hands they have the power to maim and inflict great suffering. In the right hands they have the power to heal, console and motivate. When trading words, use them wisely – treat them with respect. Do not be frivolous lest they turn and bite you in the arse.

If Shakespeare doesn't mind, I'd like to change a stanza from the opening speech of Richard III from;

*And now, instead of mounting barbed steeds
To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,
He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber
To the lascivious pleasing of a lute.*

to

STICKS AND STONES

And now, instead of speaking barbed words
To fright the souls of those who love her,
She dances nimbly in their company
To make them think she cares.

Abuse

The time I spent alone brought clarity to my thoughts. As I rode my bike to the beach, I was so engrossed in my thoughts, I nearly hit a stray dog wandering in the road. Nin's ego had grown huge over the last year, and her opinion of herself was so inflated it was on the point of bursting. Perched on a log under a tree, I wrote in my pocket notebook.

It seems she has developed a superiority complex. But she does not portray it in public. She is still demure, but I have seen her in action arguing with her family aggressively. Not nice at all. I put this down to her family's attitude (mother and sisters that is) and not hers, but now I'm not sure I was right. Perhaps I would not allow myself to believe what my eyes could see.

She mocks me in public and in front of other people she barely knows. Thais and farangs alike are shocked at her behaviour. I didn't come to terms with what should have been obvious a lot earlier. I was committed to the relationship and didn't want to

believe or accept what was happening.

She curses, using harsh language to bring intensity to her attacks. When I challenge her, she blames it on me. I am the one who taught her, when in reality, I seldom swear, and then only when he I am angry or upset. I would teach no one to behave in such a way. Nin is a dark angel, and she used her powers of seduction to convince me of her undying devotion to Buddha, before she broke me into small fragments. The escalation was gradual and controlled. I should have seen something was brewing, but she is a clever manipulator.

I asked her, more than once, why she pretended to know everything and why she thought she was a better person than everyone else. I received no more than a quizzical stare on each occasion. So, I kept the other questions in my head, sure I would get a similar response and believing I could find the answers myself. A week after Nin left, when I got back from my morning walk on the beach, I made coffee and wrote each question down on an A4 pad. There were seven, in no particular order, and they were a challenge. Even when I thought I had an answer, it was an answer, not the answer.

There were other possibilities.

How can she present herself to the world as a beautiful person, yet treat me so abominably?

Did she ever love me, or was it a charade until she finally told me the truth?

Was she dishonest from the start?

Why did her family speak badly about her?

Why was she concerned about uniting her family when they didn't want unity?

Why did she leave me before we sold the house?

Would she have been the same if I were rich?

If I could find the answer, not just an answer, to each question, I might have an idea why she abused me.

I want to believe her barrage of snide comments were frivolous. But I know they weren't. Every word was a rapier thrust or a razor slash intended to maim. Was the plan to make me doubt my worthiness, and force me to leave, or so I would tell her to leave and, either way, she could justify screwing me financially? I had heard stories like it, but I knew the importance Buddhists place on honouring. They call it '*Gat-dtan-yuu*', the feeling towards someone who contributes prodigiously to your well-being. Any person who does anything hurtful to such a benefactor is called '*nee-rá-kun*', which is utterly reprehensible, as a cardinal sin to a Catholic. If Nin is true to this teaching, then it rules out '*nee-rá-kun*'.

Whatever I think is inconclusive. Whatever I believe is just a belief, not a fact. I am sure she is damaged and unstable, and there are facts to hang my beliefs on. Playing amateur psychiatrist is driving me nuts, and the thought of being a real one is too scary to contemplate.

I opened a third beer and read some of her barbs and my retorts. Stuff I recorded for posterity, so that one day I could laugh at the banality of the saga, which I don't find amusing now.

You are a bad person. No doctor can help you – Good, I'll save on medical fees then.

You are not good enough for me – I worked that out long ago.

Nobody is good enough for me – I've got no chance then.

Why are you so stupid – It comes naturally.

Why are you so rough and rude – Strange, I always thought I was smooth and charming.

You think I'm your slave – Don't you mean, you think I'm your

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