

**THESE BOOTS ARE MADE
FOR WALKING**



Gail E Bradwell

A companion booklet to
Love and Fear...a deadly combination

These Boots are Made for Walking

A companion book to
**Love and Fear...a deadly combination*
also by Gail Bradwell

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The moral right of the author
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INTRODUCTION

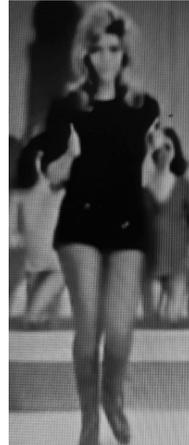
Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is something that many people who have experienced a traumatic event have to live with for the rest of their lives. Sometimes it may not emerge until later in life, perhaps we have more time to think about what we have experienced. They can come to light at unusual times and are best to be acknowledged, rather than ignoring how we are feeling. Forty-six years later, during all these years I have never stopped experiencing periods of PTSD.

The following short stories are examples of my experiences. I have found that the memories of my physical and mental abuse can pop up at any time. However, something usually happens to trigger these memories and I can be upset briefly or left feeling deeply distressed for days afterwards.

I was prompted to write this booklet, after having my hair styled which triggered another PTSD pop up and present it as a companion piece to my book *Love and Fear...a deadly combination*.

THESE BOOTS ARE MADE FOR WALKING

Some of the lyrics sung by Nancy Sinatra:
'These boots are made for walking, and that's just what they'll do, one on these days these boots are gonna walk all over you! Are you ready boots? ... start walkin!'
About twenty years ago, I received a phone call from Mark asking me for the name of the singer who sang 'These Boots are Made for Walking'. I knew the singer immediately, her name was Nancy Sinatra, and the song played an important part in my life. It triggered the following memory.



I ensured that my husband was always decked out in expensive top designer clothes, being the 'front man' of our business. On the other hand, I hungrily conserved our finances to rapidly expand our new enterprises. There came a day when my thrift flew out the window. When sneaking off to the markets with a close friend, I came across a pair of white leather handmade knee high boots which seemed to wink at me. This was in the early 70's when it was fashionable to wear boots with mini-skirts. The boots seemed to draw me to them. Even though they were very expensive, I just had to have them. The fit was perfect. When I bought them home, I hid them away to wait for a special occasion.

That special occasion soon arrived and when I first put

on my beautiful boots, I experienced an amazing sense of empowerment. Suddenly I felt in tune with myself and my world, singing along with Nancy Sinatra's big hit tune at that time – 'These Boots are made for Walking.' I took infinite pleasure in associating my boots with the words of her song.

Were these boots magical? I had my spirits elevated every time they were on my feet, showing off thin but shapely legs topped by a mini-skirt. It must have been obvious to everyone who knew me that my demeanour had changed. My face seemed to glow with a new-found happiness and pride. I was so glad I had spent my money wisely to purchase a little bit of magic in the form of my white leather boots.

I began to see my boots as a key that was able to release me from the violent prison my marriage had become. They became my most prized possession and I kept them in pristine condition, always at the ready for my mind to start singing – 'These Boots are Made for Walking'.

One day, only months after my purchase, to my horror I discovered that my magical boots were missing. Had they been stolen? Where did I leave them? Perhaps it was at the front door? But who would take a chance of them being the right size? A robbery of this sort would have been most unusual in our rather elite suburb. After all, my boots were very distinctive and I would have recognised them immediately. They were never found!

That day I lost more than my boots. I soon came to the realisation that I had missed an opportunity to regain and hold onto my own identity but it had been stolen too. My husband was the thief on both counts.