6. APPENDIXES

6.1 The Summary of A Child Called ‘It’: One Child’s Courage

Dave Pelzer was the third-born of five children (Ronald, Stan, Russell, and Kevin). His father was a fireman and, according to Dave, his mother was originally a loving, kind and wonderful person.

The book states that around the time that the author turned five, things within the family slowly began to change. While his father was away at work often, his mother became an alcoholic. The author's mother has claimed that Dave was so badly behaved that he required punishment. The summer before Dave started kindergarten his mother reportedly beat him, dislocating his shoulder. The book goes on to describe a period of mixed emotions over the following few years with the increasingly abusive and damaging behavior from Ms. Roerva gradually ostracizing Dave from the rest of the family.

The book describes the worsening abuse which Pelzer suffered at the hand of his mother and her alcoholism. Among the many incidents discussed is that Ms. Roerva attempted to burn Dave on a stove when he was eight years old. She also stabbed him in the stomach, and did not take him to the hospital. By this point he was no longer considered as part of the family and lived in the basement denied basic contact, play and food. Ms. Roerva has stated that she did not want Dave to interact with "her family" demonstrating the lack of regard in which he was held.
Over time, the depth of the abuse worsened. Dave claims he was forced to sit in the Prisoner of War position (head bent backwards facing sky and sitting on hands). His mother stopped using his name and began referring to him first as "The Boy" and finally "It." The punishments are reported to have evolved into 'sick games' in which Ms. Roerva made her son suffer.

Incidents cited in the book include; forcing ammonia down his throat, cleaning a sealed bathroom while inhaling the fumes from a bucket of ammonia mixed with chlorine bleach, inducing vomiting followed by forced ingestion, smashing his face against a mirror while forcing him to say "I'm a bad boy," lying in the bathtub naked with freezing water for hours, an 'accidental' stabbing, rubbing his face in his baby brother's soiled diaper, making him eat his youngest brother's feces out of his diaper, as well as starvation and general malnutrition.

6.2 The Biography of Dave Pelzer and His Works

Dave Pelzer was born in Daly City, California to Stephen Joseph Pelzer (1923-1980) and Catherine Roerva (1992), and was the second of five boys. As a child, Pelzer was allegedly abused by his mother, who thought of it as a game. Pelzer states that his mother enjoyed torturing him by starving him, forcing him to drink ammonia, and other horrors. His teachers stepped in on March 5, 1973 and 12-year-old Pelzer was placed in foster care. In 1979, he joined the Air Force and later became an author. The fourth boy Richard B. Pelzer has also written about his own abuse.
Pelzer has written a number of books:

- *The Lost Boy* (1997)
- *Help Yourself* (2001)