



book review
**FROM PRISONER
TO PRESIDENT**
By Jeanette M. Towne

Spousal abuse. The words can send a chill up the spine. Author Jeanette M. Towne has lived through it. Her book, *From Prisoner to President* (Intermedia Publishing Group, 2010), is a 328-page true story chronicling the years of verbal, physical, and sexual abuse that held her captive in her own private prison.

The “warden” was Jim, her alcoholic, drug-addicted husband. At first, he seemed like her dream man—handsome, apparently wealthy, and well respected. When he stepped in to rescue the naive 19-year-old from a close brush with prostitution, he seemed like a knight in shining armor. It wasn’t long before the armor tarnished.

From Prisoner to President is an unnerving but riveting story. The downward spiral of Jeanette and Jim’s relationship is harrowing and Towne takes readers along for every step. It is a classic tale of abuse. Over time, Jim progresses from infrequent explosions of violent anger to a settled disdain for his longsuffering wife. Jeanette goes from a carefree 19-year-old waitress to a terrified prisoner in her own home, just trying to stay alive.

Thankfully, the story doesn’t end there. This book is actually a story of redemption. As the title implies, by the grace of God, Jeanette eventually breaks free

from Jim’s grasp. She not only survives, but also rises to become president and CEO of a multi-million dollar corporation, build a solid marriage, and have a thriving family of her own.

This book isn’t for everyone. Towne is forthright in relating the abuse. The mental images she creates rival anything on the screen. Sensitive readers should avoid this one. The book includes violence, drug use, rape, and illicit sexual activity. None of it is gratuitous and each scene is integral to the story. Towne has done an admirable job of telling the story without glorifying the sin, even going so far as to “sanitize” her abuser’s language a bit.

All in all, her story is a cautionary tale for young women who are eager to break free of the constraints of home. It is also a testimony to God’s faithfulness and power to restore a broken life. Perhaps most important, it offers hope to other women trapped in abusive relationships. Spousal abuse is a growing problem. It’s one the church should be talking about and acting to prevent. This book is a good step in that direction. (For more about Jeanette Towne see her article on page 54. To order this book, go to <http://www.prisonertopresident.com>.)