

**Book Title: Ghost Girl: The True Story of a Child in Peril and the Teacher Who Saved Her**

**Author: Torey L. Hayden**

**Publisher: Avon**

**Year: 1991**

**ISBN #: 0-316-35167-9**

**Type: Adult nonfiction**

**Book Review by Karen Ruchti**

**Graduate Student**

**Southwest Minnesota State University**

[ruchtik@southwestmsu.edu](mailto:ruchtik@southwestmsu.edu)

As a teacher in a small midwestern town, Torey Hayden works with a girl who is so withdrawn that she does not speak or stand up straight. She feels like a ghost in her own little world. Hayden builds a relationship with Jadie and helps her feel secure by creating a place where she can lock the doors and talk to Hayden. During these conversations Hayden hears about a lifetime of sexual and emotional abuse. Some of Jadie's drawings and conversations indicate that she may be the victim of ritual abuse and satanic cultism. However, proof is elusive that satanism is involved, and Jadie is too afraid to talk. Using courage and devotion, Hayden helps Jadie come to terms with reality and helps her take the step that will be her salvation.

This is an excellent book and one that kept me wondering what was going to happen next. It shows that there are teachers who make the correct choices, even when their co-workers do not believe their evaluation of the situation. This book shows that teachers must take into account everything a student does and says. I found this especially true when Jadie was making her symbol drawings, and it took a dedicated teacher to pursue information about those symbols. The different professional's positions about what the symbols and actions meant kept me wondering about what was taking place and who was responsible. In the epilogue, Hayden explains different reasons regarding what could have been going on and who could have been responsible.

I highly recommend this book, although it deals with issues of child molestation and the satanic cultism that may be difficult subjects for some readers. I felt that the most heartwarming part of the book was the Jadie left for Hayden on her way to her new foster home that said "Thank You." This shows that students do recognize the effort put forth by teachers. I would have liked more specific information about what really happened to Jadie. However, it is possible that this information was never discovered.