**About LION TAMER Memoir Trilogy**

**by Therese Marie Duncan**

When Marie wakes at twelve years old to find her father’s hands are on her breasts, and are there again almost every time he hugs her, she is lost and finds deeper places to go with her pain.

LION TAMER is a fast-paced ironic comic-tragic voice memoir trilogy of triumph. It spans fifty years. In a titanic clash of her own loyalty and her father’s pride, Marie (myself) battles betrayal, being fondled, and becoming lost in self destruction, while her mother is a Civil Rights activist and Vietnam War protester. Marie survives with a steady stream of big ideas, some good and some bad, but holds tight the maxim she often heard in childhood—love never fails. In a surprising twist in Volume Three Marie sees a wrenching truth of her father’s past and heals the final wound of her own. The three volumes are a slow motion phoenix rising to which most people seem to relate in their own lives.

The Lion represents Marie’s inner dangerous restless confusion, fear, pain, impulsivity and loss of self, as well as external dangers.

LION TAMER’S market is women over thirty and men in the self-help community.

Volume One of LION TAMER, (complete, 99,895 words,) subtitled “Here I Am, Steel, Not the Kind of Girl You Marry” told in first person present tense spans age five through sixteen. Marie, sixth of ten Catholic children, wakes to find her father’s hands on her breasts and learns she can never safely hug him again. She thinks she is like Van Gogh, because alcohol helps her paint, and banging her head calms her down. One night, after her father inappropriately dances with her, Marie “takes control” by running headfirst into a wall. In the following months she builds on that confidence by dating a seminarian.

Volume Two of LION TAMER (fifty per cent complete) “Van Gogh’s Cadillac, Swan Dive and Undertows,” the years of undaunted improvidence, covers age sixteen to thirty-five. It’s a time of addiction, adventure, danger and confrontation. The turning point occurs after confronting her father who calls Marie and her sisters sluts and whores. Marie, telling her sober brother she’s “Fine, just losing my mind,” finally gets sober. When Marie tells her sober brother that she bangs her head, he tells her, “You can do that if you want, but you might be missing an opportunity for spiritual growth.” It’s Marie’s moment of truth. Her transformation begins.

Volume Three of LION TAMER (fifty per cent complete) “Trouble with Semis, The Man in the Red Jacket, The Dolly with the Purple Gown” covers the years of transformation. Marie finally embraces forces within herself and ultimately, in a surprise twist and riveting moment of pain and insight accepts and loves her father for who he is.

LION TAMER has been work-shopped at the Ojai Writers’ Workshop. Comments by manuscript readers: “It’s a page turner.” “I didn’t want it to end.” “I didn’t know whether to laugh or cry.” “I love Marie—you never know what she’ll do next.”