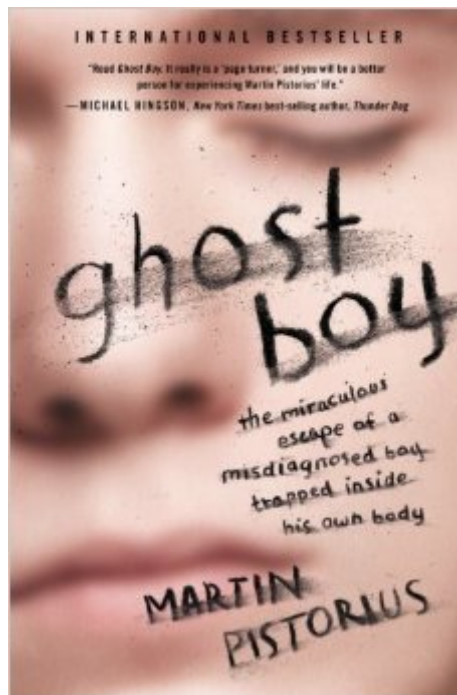


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# Ghost Boy: The Miraculous Escape Of A Misdiagnosed Boy Trapped Inside His Own Body



## Synopsis

They all thought he was gone. But he was alive and trapped inside his own body for ten years. In January 1988 Martin Pistorius, aged twelve, fell inexplicably sick. First he lost his voice and stopped eating. Then he slept constantly and shunned human contact. Doctors were mystified. Within eighteen months he was mute and wheelchair-bound. Martin's parents were told an unknown degenerative disease left him with the mind of a baby and less than two years to live. Martin was moved to care centers for severely disabled children. The stress and heartache shook his parents' marriage and their family to the core. Their boy was gone. Or so they thought. *Ghost Boy* is the heart-wrenching story of one boy's return to life through the power of love and faith. In these pages, readers see a parent's resilience, the consequences of misdiagnosis, abuse at the hands of cruel caretakers, and the unthinkable duration of Martin's mental alertness betrayed by his lifeless body. We also see a life reclaimed—a business created, a new love kindled—all from a wheelchair. Martin's emergence from his own darkness invites us to celebrate our own lives and fight for a better life for others.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

When Martin Pistorius was 12 years old, he came home from school with a sore throat. Over the next two years, his mind and body shut down, until he was left a quadriplegic who could not speak. Then, around the time he was 16, his mind started coming back to life. He tells his story in the book, *Ghost Boy*. As Martin becomes more aware, he realizes that he has little to no control over his limbs and that he has no voice. All he can do is smile and move his eyes and head. He tries to use these

signals to let everyone around him know that he is conscious and aware, but, as he states in the book, "They'd been told long ago that I was severely brain damaged, so when the young man with stick-like limbs, empty eyes, and drool running down his chin occasionally lifted his head, that's what they saw." Martin spends the next decade in his unresponsive body, without a working voice. His days are spent at a day care facility while his parents work, but his father picks him up every evening to take him home to the family. His mind is active, and he spends much of his time developing elaborate fantasies to escape the horror of being trapped inside his own body; it's the only way he keeps from going mad. Then a new caretaker enters his life and has a hunch that Martin is aware. She convinces others around her, and they take him to be evaluated for an alternative communication device. He passes the evaluation, and a new life is opened for him. Martin speaks of his faith in God; that while he couldn't explain it, he knew that God was with him and he wasn't alone. His courage and strength is inspiring, as is the love of his father and mother and the woman he ends up marrying. I couldn't put the book down.

Thank you Thomas Nelson via Booksneeze for providing me with a copy of this book! Martin was a normal, active boy until age 12 when he became ill. His parents took him to see many doctors and they had many test run, but no answers were to be found for his increasingly worse condition. Eventually he was without use of his body or mind. By the time he was 14, it seemed his death was inevitable. Yet Martin's mind came back - he was finally aware again. His body remained still though and thus begins Martin's journey as the self-dubbed, "Ghost Boy". He could see, hear and comprehend all that was happening around him, but he was completely unable to communicate it. This book is the story of those years as Martin's mind awakened, but his body did not. In his own words, haunting, yet uplifting, he shows readers what it was like living in a body that refused to help him. He speaks of days in care centers where unimaginable things happened, of days with his parents when he longed to comfort them, but couldn't, of nights when his demons revisited him and left him sleepless. Martin also shares his triumph. Of finally meeting someone who really saw him and knew he was more than just a shell of a body - knew he could understand what was happening all around him. Through that care worker his hopes were lifted and he worked long and hard to overcome the undiagnosed illness that had left him without speech, without movement, without a life - at first. Martin is a faithful Christian and he does speak of God and how He is the only one who heard him for so long. However, the story and Martin's miraculous life is mostly left to speak on its own. His strong, calm, and resolute faith are clear, but not overly stated or gratuitously gushed. I found it struck a nice balance.

Ghost Boy is the story of Martin Pistorius. Martin was a healthy happy child, but one day in January of 1988, when he was just 12, he came home complaining of a sore throat, and nothing was ever the same. Doctors didn't know exactly what was wrong with him, but he was diagnosed with a degenerative disease that left him a mute quadriplegic. He was an empty shell of a person, who just sat in his wheel chair all day staring blankly, while others had to push, prod, bathe, and feed him. Little did anybody know, but Martin was still in there, and for 10 unimaginable years, he was stuck in a body that he couldn't move or speak with. Sadly, when you are unable to move or speak, you cannot tell people that you are cold, hot, uncomfortable, you can't tell them what you want to eat, drink, or what you want to do. Worst of all, he was abused mentally, physically, and even sexually by caregivers. Without a voice, he couldn't tell anyone about it, so the abuse continued, and he would never know when it would happen again or for how long. It wasn't until one of his kind caretakers looked into his eyes, and believed that Martin could really understand the world around him, he just couldn't communicate it. She urged his family to get him tested, and Martin finally had a sliver of hope for a normal life. After a series of tests, they found out what Martin already knew for years, he had a fully functioning brain. His parents got him a keyboard and eventually a computer that allowed him to communicate. Against all odds, Martin's life starting becoming better and better. He got a job, he "spoke" at lectures, and he attended a class at university.

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