



THE CHILD CATCHER

A Fight for Justice & Truth

by
Andrew Bridge

Andrew Bridge's debut memoir, *Hope's Boy*, was a *New York Times* bestseller and a *Washington Post* Best Book of the Year. *The Child Catcher* (Regalo Press; September 24) is the long-awaited follow-up in which Andrew recounts his first case as a children's rights lawyer, working to close one of the country's most notorious children's mental institutions. In this David vs. Goliath story, Andrew fought for the children confined to Alabama's state-run Eufaula Adolescent Center, an institution much like where he was held in foster care.

Andrew's role was part of American history's longest-running, most bitterly fought mental health lawsuit. After 11 years in Los Angeles foster care, Andrew aged out of care, earned a scholarship to Wesleyan University, and graduated from Harvard Law School.

Eufaula was a violent and secretive institution in the rural South and a place the State of Alabama refused to surrender. Alabama lied to parents, luring them to admit their children to Eufaula and then refusing to return them. The institution brought in jobs and money. Two children hanged themselves; one survived, and the other didn't. Andrew's fight led him through backwoods squatters' camps and into the lives of families caught in a permanent underclass. He sat with children struggling to explain what had happened to them and parents who tried to find mental health care for their children. His pursuit of justice resulted in Eufaula's closure.

After this victory, Andrew returned to Los Angeles to defend foster children where he grew up. As CEO of The Alliance for Children's Rights, he represented children at MacLaren Hall, where he was confined. Under his leadership, The Alliance sued Los Angeles for not visiting foster children and won the right for every child to see their social worker regularly.

Andrew chaired Los Angeles County's Blue Ribbon Foster Care Task Force and called for an end to the disproportionate removal of African American babies from their families. Despite never being adopted, he co-founded National Adoption Day. Andrew, the son of a teen mother, also co-founded New Village Girls Academy, California's first charter school for pregnant and parenting teens. He now serves on the Arizona Foster Care Review Board and advises foster care systems nationwide.

The troubled teen industry makes headlines daily, and for-profit corporations that run it pull in billions of taxpayer dollars (*This is Paris, Hell Camp*). *The Child Catcher* is reminiscent of Erin Brokovich's fight against a formidable industry. It defines the struggle that parents confront to find mental health care for their children and their right to have the final word on what happens to their children. It is also the true story of Andrew's fight to rescue children from harm and the hope that justice for children is possible.

With each book purchased, a charitable donation will be made to CASA, a national volunteer organization for foster children.

THE CHILD CATCHER
by **Andrew Bridge**
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About Andrew Bridge:

Andrew Bridge spent 11 years in Los Angeles County foster care. After aging out, he attended Wesleyan University and then graduated from Harvard Law School. He is a Fulbright Fellow and a Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Practitioner Resident. Bridge began his legal career representing children against the State of Alabama, where his work resulted in the closure of one of the country's most notorious psychiatric institutions. Returning to Los Angeles, he became CEO of The Alliance for Children's Rights, where he worked to expand free legal services to children in foster care and poverty. Bridge is the cofounder of the New Girls Academy School, California's first all-girl college preparatory school for pregnant and parenting teens. He is also a cofounder of National Adoption Day. Most recently, Andrew was a member of the executive management team for Illinois DCFS, and with Arizona as his home, Bridge now serves on the Arizona Foster Care Review Board, where he advises Arizona's Juvenile Court on the safety and well-being of individual children in the state's care. Bridge's memoir *Hope's Boy* was a *New York Times* bestseller and *Washington Post* Best Book of the Year. His work has garnered coverage in *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Showtime*, *The Observer*, *The CBS Early Show*, *NBC Nightly News*, *Time Magazine*, *PBS*, *Psychology Today*, *NPR*, and *Observer Magazine*. His second book, *The Child Catcher*, will be released in September 2024.

About CASA:

The National CASA/GAL Association for Children supports and promotes court-appointed volunteer advocacy for children and youth who have experienced abuse or neglect. We believe that every child should be given the opportunity to thrive in a safe and loving home.

Praise for *The Child Catcher* by Andrew Bridge:

"In the 18 years between a child's birth and high school graduation, 3.6 million children will enter foster care in the U.S. Andrew was one of those children. Then, he became a lawyer for them. By turns reflective and poignant, always keenly observed, Andrew tells the story of those he represented in foster care. Balancing triumph and loss, Andrew reminds us how King's admonition that "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere" applies distinctly to children, especially those in foster and related care systems."

—**James Tucker, Civil Rights Lawyer, State of Alabama**

This gripping book explores the shadowed world of adolescent mental health institutions and the dark truths often found behind those doors. Admitted to one of these institutions at just six years old, Andrew Bridge survived and became the lawyer who fought to defend 120 children trapped in a remote institution in rural Alabama. Intimate, rigorous and humble, *The Child Catcher* is both heart song and triumph.

—**Melissa Bond, Author, *Blood Orange Night: My Journey to the Edge of Madness***

Last year alone, 4.2 million young people experienced at least one night of homelessness in the United States. Through his own experiences, Andrew very personally and marvelously shows how institutions like Eufaula, and the perverse economic incentives they create, have driven us to a place where youth homelessness, hopelessness, and worse have become the accepted result of foster care. *The Child Catcher* is a rallying cry for action for today's children and generations to come.

—**Bill Bedrossian, President & CEO, Covenant House International**

Praise for *Hope's Boy* by Andrew Bridge:

"In luminous prose and heart-wrenching detail, Andrew Bridge reminds us to honor the power of love in our fractured world."

—**Caroline Kennedy**

"It took great courage to write this memoir.... Our discomfort with love and failure had helped create and fuel a foster-care bureaucracy that often operates with a breathtaking lack of humanity. Bridge survived to write this beautiful moving memoir. So many children don't."

—**Los Angeles Times**

"Filled with vivid scenes and empathetic description, refreshingly free of the self-absorption that mars so many horrendous childhood sagas. *Hope's Boy* is compulsively readable."

—**The Washington Post**

"*Critic's Choice*... Shocking, inspiring, unforgettable."

—**People Magazine**

"*Hope's Boy* is an uplifting tale.... a not-so-subtle call to improve an inadequate service, for as [Bridge] makes clear, he's not the only foster child who lies awake at night waiting for Hope to take him home."

—**Associated Press**

"Bridge, a Harvard Law School graduate who has devoted his career to children's rights, has provided remarkable insights into a dark corner of American society."

—**Publishers Weekly**

"Once you read *Hope's Boy* you will find that many of your ideas have changed. If you never really thought about foster care, you will now. If you thought foster care was a benign and necessary system, you will challenge that assumption every time the subject comes up. If you thought that parents whose children wind up in foster care are all criminals and monsters, you will have to think again."

—**Book Reporter**

"Bridge writes with honesty and tenderness.... For a tale well told, and the courage and dignity to tell it without bitterness, for a message ultimately of hope, Dickens would be proud."

—**BookPage**