Beat: Entertainment

Film director Woody Allen`s adopted daughter renews sex abuse allegations

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USPA News - Dylan Farrow, the adopted daughter of Woody Allen, on Saturday renewed her claims that she was sexually abused by the American film director when she was seven years old. It was the first time she discussed the allegations publicly.

"What`s your favorite Woody Allen movie?" Dylan Farrow, 28, asks in an open letter published by the New York Times. "Before you answer, you should know: when I was seven years old, Woody Allen took me by the hand and led me into a dim, closet-like attic on the second floor of our house. He told me to lay on my stomach and play with my brother`s electric train set. Then he sexually assaulted me." She adds: "He talked to me while he did it, whispering that I was a good girl, that this was our secret, promising that we`d go to Paris and I`d be a star in his movies. I remember staring at that toy train, focusing on it as it traveled in its circle around the attic. To this day, I find it difficult to look at toy trains." The child abuse allegations first surfaced in 1992 after his long-time girlfriend, actress Mia Farrow, discovered Allen was having an affair with her then 19- or 21-year-old adopted Korean daughter, Soon-Yi. She made the discovery by finding nude photos of Soon-Yi at Allen`s home, but the film director later defended the relationship, saying he had never lived with Mia and was not a father figure to Soon-Yi. It would later ensue a bitter and highly-publicized custody battle for Allen`s three children with Mia Farrow, whose allegations that Dylan was sexually abused triggered a police investigation. But doctors found no physical evidence of sexual abuse and the Connecticut State Police filed no charges, although New York Supreme Court Justice Elliott Wilk expressed his doubts over those findings. The allegations were all but forgotten after Allen lost the custody battle and continued his successful career, which recently earned him the prestigious Cecil B. DeMille Oscar for "outstanding contributions" to the world of entertainment. He also married Soon-Yi in the Italian city of Venice in December 1997. Allen did not immediately respond to Dylan Farrow`s renewed accusations, which were previously discarded by the film director`s lawyers as either a fabrication of Dylan or a fabrication of Mia that she talked the girl into telling. They also said Allen passed a lie-detector test and pointed out a `suspicious` series of stops and starts in a videotape in which a young Dylan confirms the abuse. "For as long as I could remember, my father had been doing things to me that I didn`t like. I didn`t like how often he would take me away from my mom, siblings and friends to be alone with him," Dylan wrote in Saturday`s letter. "I didn`t like it when he would stick his thumb in my mouth. I didn`t like it when I had to get in bed with him under the sheets when he was in his underwear. I didn`t like it when he would place his head in my naked lap and breathe in and breathe out." Dylan claims the abuse happened so often that she began to believe it was normal behavior for a father, but says she later told her mother after the alleged abuse in the attic at age 7. "I didn`t know the firestorm it would trigger. I didn`t know that my father would use his sexual relationship with my sister to cover up the abuse he inflicted on me," she wrote. The adopted daughter adds: "I didn`t know that he would accuse my mother of planting the abuse in my head and call her a liar for defending me. I didn`t know that I would be made to recount my story over and over again, to doctor after doctor, pushed to see if I`d admit I was lying as part of a legal battle I couldn`t possibly understand." Dylan, who says she is now happily married, says it "haunted" her while growing up that Allen had gotten away with the alleged abuse and that she was "terrified" of being touched by men. "I developed an eating disorder. I began cutting myself. That torment was made worse by Hollywood. All but a precious few - my heroes - turned a blind eye," she writes. The open letter also blamed celebrities for working with Allen, and said the recent Cecil B. DeMille Oscar and other awards in the past felt as a way to tell her to "shut up and go away." She added: "What if it had been your child, Cate Blanchett? Louis CK? Alec Baldwin? What if it had been you, Emma Stone? Or you, Scarlett Johansson?"

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