

Learning of My Mother's Death Six Years After It Happo

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Synopsis

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On Hearing of My Mother's Death Six Years After It Happened: A Daughter's Memoir of Mental Illness is the moving yet deeply disturbing story of a middle-aged mother and a teenaged daughter torn apart by the sudden onset of the mother's insanity. It details the severe paranoia and absurd delusions that began to control my mother's behavior, her fears of being murdered or assaulted or poisoned, and how her suspicions eventually fell onto those closest to her. It follows her transformation from loving parent to violent psychotic and my transformation from obedient daughter to terrified runaway. It exposes the system's woeful failure to rescue a family in crisis and illustrates how stigma and social isolation prevented both mother and daughter from getting the help they needed. It explores the emotions with which I have struggled since I left home: my unending guilt and uneasiness over leaving, and my eternal fear and foreboding of being found. It speaks of my struggle to survive without her, of the many months of hunger and homelessness and hopelessness that were the direct result of her illness; how it nearly took away everything my mother had once wanted for me and for which I had labored so tirelessly. And it depicts the overwhelming revelatory moment when I finally learned she had died - six years before. It's a story of survival, both my mother's and my own. It's a story of grief and of loss, both hers and my own. And ultimately, it's the story that reconciles us - both the adult daughter and the mother she lost, and the young girl and the mother who was already long gone. She rests, in peace. Perhaps now I can, too.

This second edition of this award-winning memoir has been revised and rewritten in response to comments from readers and now contains eight additional chapters not included in the original 2014 release.

Reader's comments

comment 1:

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