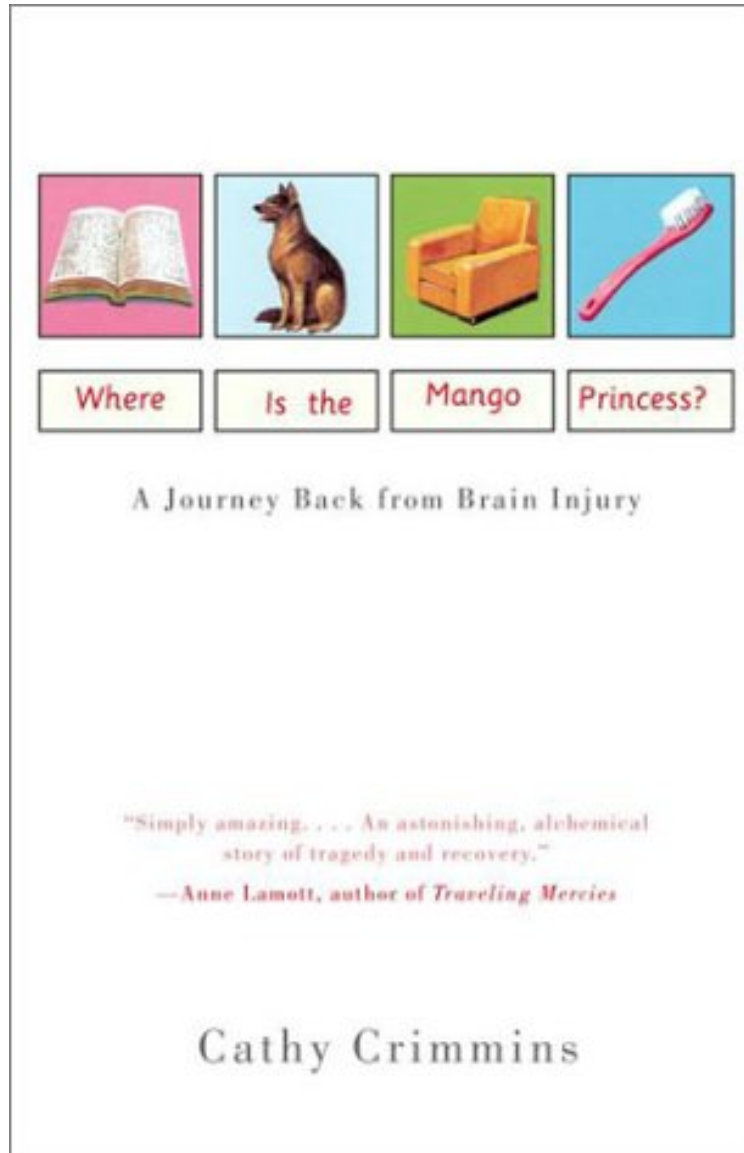


Where is the Mango Princess? A Journey Back from Brain Injury

Cathy Crimmins

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Cathy Crimmins : Where is the Mango Princess? A Journey Back from Brain Injury before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Where is the Mango Princess? A Journey Back from Brain Injury:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. I wish I could give it a better reviewBy pursuetruthSeeing the overwhelmingly wonderful reviews for this book, I had no reason to believe I would be disappointed.I was wrong. I

want to be sure to say that the family has my full empathy. I know that what they have all gone through, and continue to go through, is nothing I take lightly. That said, the book was an account. I found myself cheering everyone on, of course....but not liking any of them. I appreciated the author's honesty throughout, but I can't say that I learned much about traumatic brain injury. I felt the book was a waste of my time and my money. I sincerely wish this family the very, very best, but I do not recommend this book at all. Considering that the wife and author of the book is actually an author by profession, I was deeply disappointed. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The Great Before and After By L. Penny "Accidents divide things into the great Before and After." -from the Prologue. Where is the Mango Princess? is an honest, heart wrenching account of a family enduring a TBI. Cathy Crimmins holds back little in her blow-by-blow account of her husband's bizarre boating accident that left him forever struggling with a brain injury. I would highly recommend this book to any of you close to someone suffering with a TBI. Not only is Crimmins story heartfelt and relatable, but its also informative and enlightening. A must-read for the TBI community. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. In the same boat ... By D. Frost As the wife of another TBI survivor, I found myself nodding in understanding, with tears of shared memories sliding down my cheeks, over and over as I read this book. My husband was nearly killed when a large birch tree he was felling on our property 'kicked back' and swatted him like a fly. Like Al, he was air-lifted, close to death, to the nearest hospital trauma unit ... where I experienced much the same minute by minute, day by day nightmare Cathy describes so well. The first hours, wondering if your husband will live or die ... days that feel like weeks, weeks that feel like months. And then reality hits ... rehab is a battle not only for the TBI survivor, struggling to swallow, speak or sit up, but for the caregiver as they fight equally hard for every benefit, every extra day of covered services ... along with the constant trauma and stress of wondering what the future will bring. They call a severe TBI a 'life-altering event' for good reason. it forever alters the life of not only the survivor but of their main caregivers as well. This is a well written book, full of the realities of life with a TBI survivor, without exaggeration.

Humorist Cathy Crimmins has written a deeply personal, wrenching, and often hilarious account of the effects of traumatic brain injury, not only on the victim, in this case her husband, but on the family. When her husband Alan is injured in a speedboat accident, Cathy Crimmins reluctantly assumes the role of caregiver and learns to cope with the person he has become. No longer the man who loved obscure Japanese cinema and wry humor, Crimmins' husband has emerged from the accident a childlike and unpredictable replica of his former self with a short attention span and a penchant for inane cartoons. Where Is the Mango Princess? is a breathtaking account that explores the very nature of personality-and the complexities of the heart. Outstanding Book Award Winner from the American Society of Journalists and Authors

.com "Alan's brain got run over by a speedboat," Cathy Crimmins writes. "That last sentence reads like a bad country-western song lyric, but it's true. It was a silly, horrible, stupid accident." And so begins the harrowing tale of a family vacation gone awry when a speedboat collides with her husband's small craft, changing their lives forever. Crimmins (The Seven Habits of Highly Defective People and When My Parents Were My Age They Were Old... or Who Are You Calling Middle-Aged?) is used to writing with wit, self-effacing humor, and a warmth that can bring readers to their knees--or at least to tears of laughter. But in this stunning memoir about her husband's brain injury and the subsequent fallout, Crimmins has outdone herself, bringing all her sharply honed narrative skills into play as she tackles the life-wrenching drama of witnessing her husband's near death and ensuing rebirth as a very different person. Crimmins takes readers inside the drama with all the right details and interior feelings to keep us fully mesmerized: her 7-year-old daughter's ashen face, her husband's twitching body, the paramedic's alarming question, "Is your husband one of these people that ordinarily has large pupils?" As deftly as she takes readers inside this personal story of not-quite recovery--more like discovery--she is also able to pan back and show readers the comedic silver lining (the self-important doctors, the moments of mishaps, and of course, the whereabouts of the mysterious Mango Princess) that lies within the cloud of her family's tragedy. Anyone who has endured a head trauma or loved someone who has will be engrossed by this wise and knowledgeable storyteller. The rest of us will have a captivating lesson about the rejuvenation of the brain as well as the human heart. --Gail Hudson From Publishers Weekly Although it was frightening when Crimmins's husband, Alan, an attorney, suffered a traumatic brain injury (TBI) while on a family vacation, it was his long-term rehabilitation that proved most daunting, for brain injuries can cause significant personality changes. This chronicle of Al's injury, treatment and rehabilitation shows how perplexing and stressful traumatic brain injury can be for both victim and family. Crimmins (When My Parents Were My Age, They Were Old and Newt Gingrich's Bedtime Stories for Orphans) knows how to tell a story for maximum effect, filling this account with funny and outrageous anecdotes, raw emotion and predictable rage toward HMOs that won't fund optimal treatment. Like many TBI patients, Al became bizarrely uninhibited; Crimmins describes how he swears profusely and masturbates in public, and her worries about suddenly being married to a stranger: "I once had a husband who was doing a dissertation on Samuel Beckett, who had a thing for obscure Japanese cinema.... I can't imagine being married to a man who won't be able to discuss books or go to the theater with me." Despite Alan's extraordinarily good

recovery, Crimmins muses, "I miss his dark side.... Now I wince as he chortles over mediocre cartoons... with TBI he has become what he wasn't before, a regular, uncomplicated guy." Though this story is an eye-opener on some levels, it remains essentially shallow. More information on neurological research would have been welcome, and attention to the experience of other TBI families (to which Crimmins devotes only three paragraphs) would have added the perspective that this self-centered account lacks. Agent, Kim Witherspoon. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Crimmins' husband, Alan, suffered a traumatic brain injury in a speedboat crash. This book tells the stories of Alan's slow and irregular return to a reasonably normal existence; of the changing relationships involved, especially that of Cathy and the Crimmins' daughter, Kelly; and of how an HMO impeded a patient's treatment and recovery by misguided attempts at cost cutting. The contrast between the Canadian helicopter trip after Alan's injury and the HMO's refusal to jet him from Canada to Philadelphia graphically illustrates the difference between the Canadian and U.S. medical systems. Flare-ups of anger and impulsiveness created major problems, including the low point when Alan savagely kicked Kelly, and make for blistering reading. Alan's progress, however, was remarkable, the result of scientifically minded, deeply caring physicians and nurses in Canada, where the accident occurred, and in the U.S. Alan eventually returned to work part-time in law and banking, though some of his problems remained. Despite not glossing over appalling details, this is an optimistic book. William Beatty Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved