



Shadow Child: An Apprenticeship in Love and Loss

Beth Powning

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In this perceptive, profoundly moving meditation on love and loss - and the often poignant connection between the two - Beth Powning shares the lessons that time and nature have taught her.

Like many young women with career ambitions in the redefining 1960s, Beth Powning struggles with the decision as to whether, and when, she should start a family, although eventually her ambivalence about motherhood yields to a dream of a baby. At the age of twenty-four she becomes pregnant, and her dream becomes reality. Then, late into a cold February night, eleven days past her due date, under induced labor, Beth delivers a stillborn son.

Several years later, to overwhelming joy, Beth gives birth to Jacob, but the growth of her second son is soon shadowed by that of Beth's other, first child, who has emerged from the darkness of memory. So it is that she begins to come to terms with the conditions of life that hone and humble each of us-with birth and death, with joy and pain, with losses and love and the relentless passage of time-in this beautifully wrought exploration of selfhood, womanhood, and motherhood.

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