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The End Of Normal: A Wife's Anguish, A Widow's New Life



NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

The End of Normal

A Wife's Anguish, A Widow's New Life

Stephanie Madoff Mack



Synopsis

A New York Times bestseller, the explosive and heartbreaking memoir from the widow of Mark Madoff and the daughter-in-law of Bernard Madoff. When the news of Bernard Madoff's Ponzi scheme broke, no one was more shocked than the members of his own family. Before then, Madoff's son, Mark, and daughter-in-law, Stephanie, had built an idyllic life. Yet, while Mark's thriving business was entirely separate from his father's now notorious fund, he and Stephanie found themselves in the eye of the storm and grappling with their own sense of betrayal. Mark refused to see or speak to his parents, and on the second anniversary of his father's arrest, he hanged himself. Left to raise her children as a single mother, Stephanie tells the real story of her marriage to Mark, of being a part of the Madoff family, and of life for two years following her father-in-law's arrest and incarceration. *The End of Normal* is a searing inside look at one of the most controversial stories of our time, and an extraordinary memoir of surviving personal tragedy amid public scandal.

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Customer Reviews

I found this book to be oddly fascinating the way a true crime book is fascinating. Not because it is about the Madoffs, but because it gives a glimpse inside the head of the author who represents herself to be a fully functioning adult but seems completely unaware just how undeveloped and immature she is -- like a really bad teenager. It is almost impossible to believe she wrote the stuff she was thinking and put it in a book. Everything is about her and her needs. She has little to no empathy for anyone and thinks it is appropriate and justified to lash out and dump vitriol on everyone around her. Her disgust for Bernie Madoff we could understand -- but her temper tantrums and misguided jealousy are present way before the scandal ever broke. She is adamant in being furious with and irritated by her husband's ex-wife Susan, her stepchildren, her brother-in-law, Andy, his girlfriend, Andy's ex-wife and Ruth and Bernie before Bernie's confession ever takes place. It made me feel sorry for all the people on the receiving end of her garbage. One of the most (of many) disturbing scenes of her screaming diatribes comes after her husband's suicide when she calls Susan (Mark's ex-wife) and berates her for having Ruth (Mark's mom) at her house to comfort her (and Mark's) children who have just lost their father. What? I don't understand the people who think this is a beautiful love story or a story about redemption or anything positive. This book doesn't have anything to do with love.

Stephanie is obviously not very likable, as others have noted. But I am basing my review on the book itself not on her personality. The book is a good, easy read. Stephanie's anger is understandable, but probably not completely rational at times. It seems like she was pretty mean and nasty towards members of her husband's family even long before Bernie was arrested. I understand her pain and anger towards the Madoffs to an extent, but her husband ultimately made a very selfish, stupid decision to end his life and leave his four children without their dad. This is a very sad story, without any real resolution or sense of peace at the end.

While I found it to be a very interesting read, I couldn't help but wonder how the author & her husband were allowed to keep 3 multi million dollar properties. Yes, it seemed that the husband didn't have anything to do with the ponzi scheme, but one has to wonder if the other trading firm - which he ran, could have existed without the millions of dollars pumped into the other company through ill gotten gains. You can't really feel bad for her, as it doesn't seem that the author has ever had to work & even after the collapse of the company, she's still out taking surfing lessons in Nantucket whiles 100s of other people and charities are left penniless. The other thing that struck me is that she expected Ruth Madoff to abandon her husband of 50 years for her sons, but had no

problem writing him letters in jail. It's horrible what happened to her & that her husband killed himself, but the only people you really can feel bad for are his children. She comes across as a spoiled, bitter woman & you can't really feel bad for her. I purchased the book for \$0.01 on . It is a really quick read, I read it in 1 day, so if you want it, do yourself a favor & get it from the library or buy it from a reseller.

3.5 Stars. It was interesting to hear the story from her perspective. However, I did get the impression that she was a bit spoiled--and that she had no idea just how much. My bet is she doesn't really understand how the rest of us live. I completely understand her anger and her grief though. It's an interesting read, but it's also one woman's side of the story. My bet is there are several other people who see things a bit differently. I guess I'd recommend it for a quick, easy read. I read most of it on a long plane ride.

As a daughter who lost her suicidal mother at 16 and suicidal father at 26 I understand the void and the survival mode. This book has opened my wounds and while reading it I know it's 100% truth because it's also how I feel. The anger, denial, acceptance, depression, bargaining that just keeps circling. This is a true story, humiliating to the writer, not meant to glorify herself but only to try to heal and expose her side. A chronic non healing ulcer. Like mine. Sorry for your loss. Hope we have the strength to just keep swimming specially for our children.

The author would not have the slightest chance to write a book were it not for her father-in-law, whom she bashes without the slightest idea of the pain she was in with her husband and then son. However, it did help my speed reading as there was not an enlightening moment.

Is this book worth reading? Yes. Does it have flaws? Yes Stephanie gives the inside view of what is happening in the Madoff family before and after his being turned in by his sons. It's a tragic situation for which few will find much sympathy. But I am one who does. Stephanie portrays her love story marriage fitting in to a unique family including step kids and former wives. It's not totally clean with plenty of "catty" infighting by the females, Stephanie included and maybe front and center. But imagine your world being turned upside down by this admission and your fun loving, successful husband convicted in the court of public opinion and withdrawing into himself. Guilt by association. Am I convinced that Mark did not know of the crimes? I have no knowledge. But his actions throughout the aftermath indicates a lack of knowledge and I tend to follow the American legal

system edict, "innocent until proven guilty" and he has not been proven guilty and not even indicted. Mark's ultimate suicide is incredibly tragic in the manner in which it occurs with his son left to fend for himself. And Stephanie acknowledges answering texts with frustration prior to his suicide. It's just tragic and is followed by the aftermath where families are torn apart arguing over petty matters. This book gives a good account of the tragedy. It is a quick read and I'm glad I finally read it. It will be controversial and your opinion may vary. Read to understand what it was like on the inside of the bubble.

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