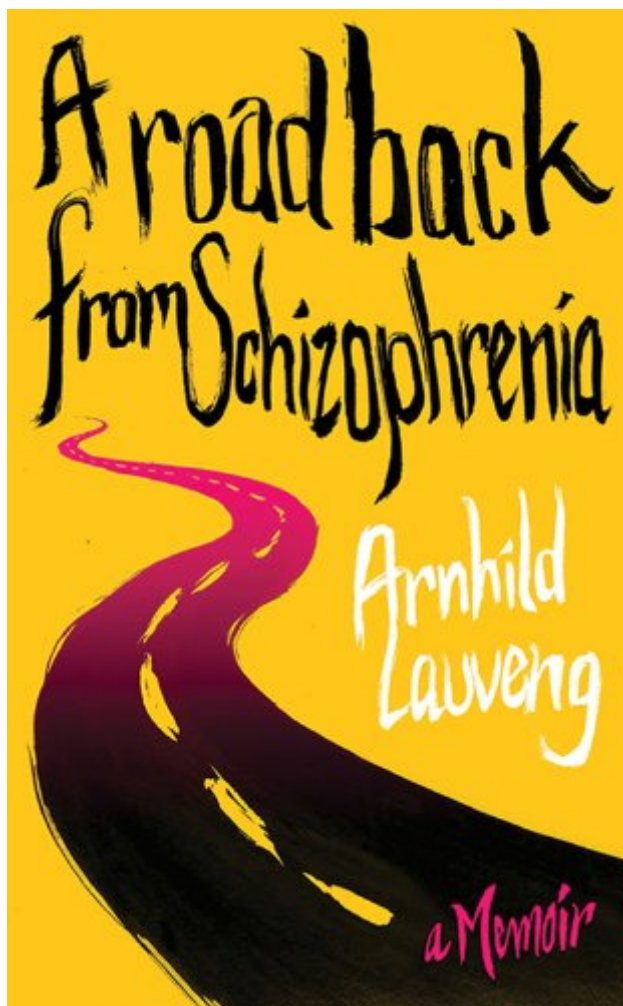


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A Road Back From Schizophrenia: A Memoir



Synopsis

For ten years, Arnhild Lauveng suffered as a schizophrenic, going in and out of the hospital for months or even a year at a time. *A Road Back from Schizophrenia* gives extraordinary insight into the logic (and life) of a schizophrenic. Lauveng illuminates her loss of identity, her sense of being controlled from the outside, and her relationship to the voices she heard and her sometimes terrifying hallucinations. Painful recollections of moments of humiliation inflicted by thoughtless medical professionals are juxtaposed with Lauveng's own understanding of how such patients are outwardly irrational and often violent. She paints a surreal world "sometimes full of terror and sometimes of beauty" in which "the Captain" rules her by the rod and the school's corridors are filled with wolves. When she was diagnosed with the mental illness, it was emphasized that this was a congenital disease, and that she would have to live with it for the rest of her life. Today, however, she calls herself a "former schizophrenic," has stopped taking medication for the illness, and currently works as a clinical psychologist. Lauveng, though sometimes critical of mental health care, ultimately attributes her slow journey back to health to the dedicated medical staff who took the time to talk to her and who saw her as a person simply diagnosed with an illness "not the illness incarnate. A powerful memoir for sufferers, their families, and the professionals who care for them.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I bought this book after reading a copy from the local library. The missing star is for a few, very minor flaws in the translation. The writer was treated for and recovered from schizophrenia. It's a beautiful, humane book. The author sees deeply and clearly that people experiencing this devastating illness are human beings first and need to be cared for and treated well. Her own recovery is nearly complete, but she understands the vast spectrum of functioning and possible outcomes. She provides testament that all people, no matter how debilitating their suffering, need to be treated as full human beings not patients or diagnoses. If you live in the United States and are confronted by the lack of mental illness care [no longer a system, but a huge series of chasmic cracks for people with illness to fall through into prison and homelessness], it will break your heart to see the level of services for people with mental illness available in other countries. Why aren't we helping people with mental illness live their best lives here in the United States? It is good to see that so much more is possible and does happen.

This book is brilliant. I can hardly believe it exists. I want, so badly, to sit down and talk with Arnhild one day, not only to discuss the incredible wisdom and honesty in these pages, but just to say "Thank you." The world needed someone to say just these words, and now she has. What a brave, beautiful, brilliant woman. I could not recommend this book enough.

It's common in this era to think of schizophrenia as an incurable brain disease. But many people come back from psychosis. Arnhild Lauveng, an experienced psychologist whose work speaks eloquently to both professional and nonprofessional readers, is one of the most articulate voices among those who have recovered. Her story is a powerful argument for providing psychotherapy and support, not just medication and management, to those who have suffered the most extreme psychotic terrors.

deeply moving. stunning account by a brilliant, courageous person who despite having been consigned as a young adult to live out her days in a nursing home with a diagnosis of

'schizophrenia,' through her own determination, with the help of a therapist, fought her way back to a productive life. you will never think the same way about 'schizophrenia' again after reading this book

An informative first person account of having and recovering from the disease...and she became a psychologist and gives insight on dealing with patients in a respectful manner.

This book goes a good distance toward demystifying schizophrenia. It's written in an approachable style by a woman (Arnhild Lauveng) who has been both a psychiatric patient and a professional psychologist. Lauveng is particularly strong at making a case for patients. She accurately depicts the mistakes that institutions and their staff can make in interpreting and engaging with patient's behavior, and offers alternative solutions. As a patient, Lauveng was subjected to isolation and frequently strapped into a bed. She saw firsthand how doctors and staff can stereotype patients by rigidly adhering to the clinical attitudes with which they have been indoctrinated, and not really seeing the patient as a human being. Lauveng's weakness may be in employing too many metaphors for the symptoms of schizophrenia. She is surrounded by "fog", haunted by the voices of "The Captain", and she claims that she sees "wolves" prowling in the hallways. These descriptions may not be entirely helpful. But she nevertheless succeeds at showing that schizophrenia covers a large spectrum of symptoms and behaviors, and she employs interesting literary allusions---the folk tale of "Askeladden", and Soren Kierkegaard's "stages of awareness"-- to illustrate her life dilemmas. The author clearly is an intelligent and perceptive person. At 168 pages, this book is a quick and entertaining read which should be of interest to anyone who has been a mental patient, or who is close to someone who has been diagnosed with a mental illness. No miracle cures are offered, but a rational form of encouragement and hope is proffered.

This book manages to make insanity rational. I learned as much about myself as I learned about the author. And it brings hope to hopelessness. A compelling read.

What is it like to be lost in the world of schizophrenia? The jacketed paragraph will touch you so profoundly that you realize only someone who has been there can articulate such an insightful narrative.

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