

The End: The Human Experience Of Death

Bianca Nogrady



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The End: The Human Experience Of Death Bianca Nogrady **A fascinating exploration of the universal human experience of death.**

We sat around and on the bed, laughing and joking as if this was a typical family gathering. The shrunken form of our dying grandmother lay on the bed, breathing fast and shallow, her once-bright eyes half closed and sunken in their sockets. To some it might have seemed disrespectful to be treating her as part of the furniture as she took what were her very last breaths on this earth. But to us, it seemed almost normal that we should carry on being her boisterous, jovial grandchildren, filling her ears with the sounds of normality as she slipped away.

Looking back on that experience, Bianca Nogrady realised she had so many questions. Was her grandmother in pain? Could she hear them? Did she know they were there? Was she aware of what was happening to her? What was she experiencing as the spark of life that had sustained her for 87 years finally flickered out?

We know so much about birth - generations of women have shared their experiences with their sisters, daughters and grand-daughters, medicine has exhaustively explored and documented every possible angle of birth, and it is a joyous moment that is shared with friends and family.

But at the other end of a life, death is hidden, taboo, mysterious, fearful, rarely shared and often a lonely, dark book-end. Death will come to all of us - it is one of few experiences that unites every single being on the planet. But we don't talk about it, we try not to think about it and anyone who breaks these unspoken taboos is viewed as being unnecessarily morbid. Yet many who have been present at the death of a loved one talk of it as being a gift, they have taken part in a profound moment.

The End is an exploration of that experience, exploring the human experience of death from every angle - the spiritual, the historical, the physical, the metaphysical; from the perspective of those who have witnessed it, those who face it, and those who have somehow stepped back from it.

The End investigates an experience common to every single one of us and does so in a way that is engaging, compelling, a bit funny and a bit quirky in places, heartbreaking in others, but most of all fascinating.

The End provides a different framework through which to view death instead of the fear and mystery that so often shrouds this incredibly important moment of life.

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