



Long Live the Tribe of Fatherless Girls: A Memoir

T Kira Madden

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“Frank and funny and powerful and surprising. An utterly gorgeous debut.”-Lauren Groff

Acclaimed literary essayist T Kira Madden's raw and redemptive debut memoir is about coming of age and reckoning with desire as a queer, biracial teenager amidst the fierce contradictions of Boca Raton, Florida, a place where she found cult-like privilege, shocking racial disparities, rampant white-collar crime, and powerfully destructive standards of beauty hiding in plain sight.

As a child, Madden lived a life of extravagance, from her exclusive private school to her equestrian trophies and designer shoe-brand name. But under the surface was a wild instability. The only child of parents continually battling drug and alcohol addictions, Madden confronted her environment alone. Facing a culture of assault and objectification, she found lifelines in the desperately loving friendships of fatherless girls.

With unflinching honesty and lyrical prose, spanning from 1960s Hawai'i to the present-day struggle of a young woman mourning the loss of a father while unearthing truths that reframe her reality, *Long Live the Tribe of Fatherless Girls* is equal parts eulogy and love letter. It's a story about trauma and forgiveness, about families of blood and affinity, both lost and found, unmade and rebuilt, crooked and beautiful.

Long Live the Tribe of Fatherless Girls: A Memoir Details

Date : Expected publication: March 5th 2019 by Bloomsbury Publishing

ISBN : 9781635571851

Author : T Kira Madden

Format : Hardcover 336 pages

Genre : Autobiography, Memoir, Nonfiction, Lgbt, Biography Memoir



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From Reader Review Long Live the Tribe of Fatherless Girls: A Memoir for online ebook

Alisha says

If I could give this memoir all the stars in the world, I would. It wrecked me hard and slowly put me back together again. I can't put much more into words to do this any justice, so I'll leave you with hers.

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"The two of us dip our legs in the water, sit on the lip of the pool. When I think of my father, I think of my heart breaking in stages. A dull pain, then piercing. Electric. Still, somehow, gradual. The way his legs look in this swimming pool today—that's the first stage of my grief. Even the blue bloat of water doesn't make them look any stronger, or more capable, than a child's.

One thing I'd change, he says, is that I never did teach my daughter to swim."

270

"But that mother-daughter thing—I believe in it now. It's something that can spool out forever like a string between two cups. A thread that will hum when you need it.

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"We look too young for this."

Chelsea Bieker says

I just love this book-this sort of memoir doesn't come around too often. Madden performs a kind of magic here—at once a page turner, coming of age, heart racing mystery, full of ache and sting. I have read this multiple times and read it again and again for truth. A complete and utter stunner of a book.

Erin says

I love a good, gritty memoir, so Madden's book (one I chose primarily for the incredible title) definitely delivered. Madden (related to the Steve Madden shoe company) lived a strange childhood filled with drug-addled parents and a painful private school experience, and this backdrop created some truly odd and unique memories to recount. I think Madden has a wonderful way with words - her writing is graphic, intense, and insanely honest. I did have a hard time with how much the book jumped around though; it was difficult for me to keep track of what age Madden was during different events. I would have given this book five stars if the narrative was more chronological. I also wished the events at the end of the book with her mother and long-lost relatives had been given more time (maybe rather than the many drug and alcohol-filled exploits of her youth). Madden's voice is definitely a powerful one, and I'll be interested to see what she does next.

Jennifer says

Visceral, emotional, engaging from the very first line. Madden's memoir invokes the times it reflects and captures a family on the precipice of becoming the people they truly see themselves to be. The writing in itself is something to fawn over and absorb wholly, beautifully written and completely evocative and heartfelt.

Valerity (Val) says

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This was a quite gritty, but real memoir, written about a young girl growing up in Florida with a mother who was involved with someone else's husband at first. They eventually got together and married, but it was not an auspicious beginning. The girl seems to grow up under a bit of a cloud, with a mannequin for a housemate and eventually dealing with both parents having sobriety issues. She has two step-brothers but they don't really become close, mostly visiting at odd school breaks and maybe Christmas break. There's plenty of money for a good school, but she doesn't seem to fit in well since she spends so much time alone talking to her store mannequin. She's not real good at making friends and gets teased a lot. Being bi-racial and beginning to become aware that she likes girls more than guys isn't helping her popularity either. The book jumps around some, but I found it pretty readable. Perhaps because I grew up in a chaotic household myself where there was alcohol and things got out of control many times. When that's your normal you can relate. It doesn't seem strange when the mother keeps wanting to go check to see if the father is at the bar on their way home from school, stopping at the grocery store in the same plaza.

The book follows as they get older and situations happen that get more intense. I won't give away any more. It's worth reading, rather different in some ways. I didn't find it all that humorous, as touted; perhaps sharing the pain of a similar way of growing up with secrets, I feel more the painful side of things, the times that were embarrassing and painful and such. For memoir readers. My thanks for the advance electronic copy that was provided by NetGalley, author T. Kira Madden, and the publisher for my fair review.

3.5 of 5 stars

Also on my BookZone blog:

<https://wordpress.com/post/bookblog20...>

dori says

. When this galley passed through my "you might enjoy this" I wasn't so sure at first - reading the memoir of someone who grew up with what appears to be a sizeable little pile of privilege isn't usually my steez, but I'd actually found my way to this Prada-bespectacled author via my newest Twitter account the same day I'd seen this book on NetGalley.

Since I am, in the end, a bit of a memoir junkie, I decided to give it a go, got behind on my studies even, and had to decode a pretty oddly-formatted galley (NOT the author's fault). T Kira Madden is an excellent writer.

Privileged kids can have crappy upbringings too, of course, but when you're born with a plastic spoon in your mouth, it can be hard to drum up compassion for those who got the silver ones unless you withhold judgment, open your mind a bit and just listen to another woman speak her piece.. Glad I did. There's a lot of emergence here.

What kind of book does a memoir writer produce next? Who knows - many don't. I hope she does. She's got a good gift.

Cindy H. says

WOW! Thank you NetGalley for this powerful and painful memoir so bravely and beautifully written by T. Kira Madden. In exchange for the ARC I offer my unbiased review.

I fell for the title before I even knew what I was requesting. This is one of the most heart wrenching memoirs I have read, not because the story is so shocking or astonishing but it's just so honest and unflinching in its delivery. T Kira Madden has a natural gift for storytelling and I was a willing listener. My mommy heart was aching for this lonely little girl who had to function in a difficult adult world and a nasty private school environment. I never felt such rage as I did while reading these pages.

The formatting of my ARC was wonky (the letter f and the fl combination was missing) so sometimes reading this story was a mini battle of wits and words. In the end I'm glad I persevered because this was a rewarding read. Highly recommend and can't wait to see what Madden does next.

Adam Dalva says

I came to this extraordinary memoir of linked essays through "The Feels of Love," a gobsmackingly good essay that the author wrote for Guernica Magazine. "The Feels of Love," which I have taught in every writing class since 2016, is a wrenching, vivid look at the rippling consequences of teenage sexual assault. I was excited for LLtToFG (great title!), and could only hope that the other essays would match the experience. And, somehow, it exceeded it.

The stories of Madden's life are so fascinating - from queerness to drugs, from the Rat's Mouth of Florida to New York City, with surprise siblings and Steve Madden shoes along the way - that this would have been a compulsively readable book no matter what, but when you throw in that Madden is an exceptionally gifted writer on the line level, you have something special here. She is unflinching, emotional, hilarious, in touch with every age of adolescence.

I defy anyone reading this not to fall in love with the author - Madden is someone to root for, and someone who speaks to something desperately needed right now. Singling out individual essays would be foolish, because the united whole is what matters here. This is a memoir to come back to, that rare thing where talent and content unify instead of cancel out. Out this March: be excited for it.

Autumn says

Look, I only picked this up b/c Mary Gaitskill blurbed it, then I couldn't put it back down. T Kira is a swell writer who has seen some shit despite her relative youth. It's like a very literary Go Ask Alice or I'm With the Band, with a very sympathetic eye to fast girls everywhere, but particularly in Florida.

You know who would like this book? Anna Biller.

Jade Miller says

I read this book over the summer- which is a very chaotic time for me. However, despite my crazy work schedule I was able to finish Long Live Tribe of Fatherless Girls in 2 days! Madden's story telling ability blew me away. To be honest I am not even a huge book person. For my fellow "one book a year" people, this book is for us! It's so hard to type without giving away too much! It's so crazy how intense, funny, sad, moving, and inspiring this book is all at once! I can't wait to get my hands on my own copy just in time for my next vacation!

Cynthia LaFave says

This book is so pure that the reader is transported into both the good and the bad of the writer, without shame or pride. It is chaotic how her life unfolded over time, but she developed coping mechanisms in the best of times and the worst of times. There is no putting this book down once you start it, it will transport you completely to the life it tells the tale of. You will love Kira, the girl, the woman, the writer, the hopeless and the hopeful. Reading this is pleasure and pain, but it gives you so much to take away from it that you will remember it always.

Lindsay Hunter says

I wish I could give 10 stars. I cried as it ended. A gorgeous and raw book.

Katie Devine says

Stunning and powerful debut. Madden is relentless and unflinching in her exploration into her family and herself. From 1990s South Florida to 1970s Hawaii to 2018 in New York, this memoir invites the reader on a harrowing journey filled with pain and questioning, danger and tenderness, discovery and fierce love. Madden is completely unafraid to break her own heart along the way, and has crafted this book that will do the same to its readers. I am grateful to have received an early copy and to not have had to wait a minute longer to read this gorgeous memoir.

Meakin Armstrong says

This book is affecting — it'll make you cry and laugh—but it'll also teach you a thing or two. Men need to read this, most of all.

Kimberly Parsons says

This book is a revelation--a compelling, heart-wrenching story told in gorgeous prose. I read it months ago but keep taking it off the shelf to marvel at the flawless sentences.
