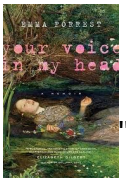
Your Voice in My Head



"Can I tell you what it's like to live inside Millais' painting of Ophelia"? asks Emma Forrest in her memoir, *Your Voice in My Head* [1]. Forrest is already a published author and journalist when in her early 20s moves from London to New York. Her professional rise as a writer coincides with her extreme struggles with self-cutting, an eating disorder, mania, a suicide attempt, and depression.

Forrest credits a lot of her survival to psychiatrist, Dr. R. So when Dr. R dies suddenly, and then a famous Hollywood actor dumps her via text message shortly after, Forrest is left alone to pick up the pieces of her heartbreak and loss.

This isn't the type of memoir I usually read, but I'm glad I did. Forrest walks well the line of artistic genius and insanity. You care for her, even when the choices she makes are hard to understand. Rounding out the sympathetic characters are Dr. R, and Forrest's own parents who deal the best they can from London.

Describing someone's descent into emotional and mental hell is a tricky business, but through the force of Forrest's writing she comes close to letting the reader understand the edge of truth. The original style of writing draws you in from the first page and makes for a fast read that is at times terrifying and funny.

I found the need to read something quite different after I finished this, but there are other literary memoirs out there that also address some of the major themes of loss, grief, and mental health. Try *The Long Goodbye* [2] by Meghan O'Rourke, who is struggling to overcome her mother's death while her marriage crumbles. Stacy Pershall also incorporates humor in her frank descriptions of surviving bipolar disorder, suicide attempts, and eating disorders in her memoir, *Loud in the House of Myself* [3].

For the Love of Reading [4] Information, Answers & Reviews [5] Memoir [6] Nonfiction [7] Your voice in my head [8]

Posted by Sarah B. on Feb 16, 2013

- [9]
- [10]
- [11]