



Reader's Choice Literary Reviews

Someone Stop This Merry-Go-Round: An Alcoholic Family in Crisis

Many of us have had a spouse or family member arrive home after a few too many drinks. Some of us have needed to make up excuses for a loved one's occasional overdrinking. Imagine if this was a daily occurrence. Waiting, worrying, and watching the clock, wondering when, and in what state, a spouse would finally come home, and then trying to hide it all from neighbors, family and the children.

For seventeen years, this was author Alberta H. Sequeira's existence every day as she dealt with her husband's alcoholism. She loved mild-mannered Richard Lopes and witnessed how alcohol changed him from a loving family man with a successful business to a careless, angry, abusive drunk.

Written like dramatic fiction, *Someone Stop This Merry-Go-Round: An Alcoholic Family in Crisis* is a fast paced, tension-filled account of a woman's tireless effort to keep her family together, her two children safe and to protect her own mental and physical well being. Sequeira gives an honest telling of life married to an alcoholic—a life filled with sadness, fear, pain and despair.

Sequeira didn't believe in divorce and was too proud to seek help from her parents, deciding to go it alone. Several times it seemed her husband was ready to quit his devastating lifestyle and commit fully to being a good partner and devoted father, only to have him fall back to bingeing and his alcoholic ways. This rollercoaster life took its toll on Sequeira, plaguing her with frequent panic attacks and eventually bringing her to the brink of a total breakdown.

Through arguments, unpaid bills, violent rage, emotional abuse and neglect, Sequeira kept hope that her husband would eventually realize he had a problem, and seek treatment. He never did...always believing he was just having a few drinks with his buddies after a hard day's work. Sequeira takes her share of the blame for all the times she could have kicked him out, demanded he got help, or pressed charges for the abuse. I found myself cheering for her, hoping that in the end Mr. Lopes would choose to save his marriage and his family. Despite being divorced from Mr. Lopes, Sequeira suffered greatly when he succumbed in 1985 to the damage done to his body from a lifetime of drinking.

Alberta H. Sequeira is a talented writer. She shows great courage not only in surviving, but in her willingness to return to these experiences when she wrote this memoir. I believe this book could be of great help to alcoholics, their families and even counselors. I highly recommend *Someone Stop This Merry-Go-Round: An Alcoholic Family in Crisis* and I look forward to the follow-up coming soon. The sequel, *Please, God, Not Two-This Killer Called Alcoholism* details how Sequeira's daughter, Lori Cahill, followed the same path as her father.