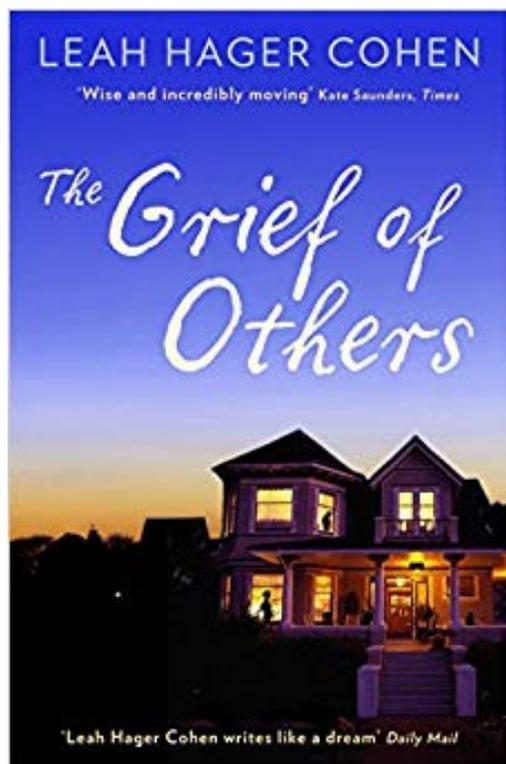


The Grief of Others *by* Leah Hager Cohen



DOWNLOAD LINKS (Clickable)



ISBN10: 184668627X

ISBN13: 978-1846686276

Author: Leah Hager Cohen

Book title: The Grief of Others

Publisher: Clerkenwell Press; Main edition (March 21, 2013)

Language: English

Category: Contemporary

Size PDF: 1824 kb

Size ePub: 1540 kb

Size Fb2: 1906 kb

Rating: 4.1/5

Votes: 230

Pages: 386 pages

The Ryries have suffered a loss: the death of a baby just fifty-seven hours after his birth. Without words to express their grief, the parents, John and Ricky, try to return to their previous lives. Struggling to regain a semblance of normalcy for themselves and for their two older children, they find themselves pretending not only that little has changed, but that their marriage, their family, have always been intact. Yet in the aftermath of the baby's death, long-suppressed uncertainties about their relationship come roiling to the surface. A dreadful secret emerges with reverberations that reach far into their past and threaten their future. Moving, psychologically acute and gorgeously written, *The Grief of Others* asks how we balance personal autonomy with the intimacy of relationships, how we balance private decisions with the obligations of belonging to a family, and how we take measure of our own sorrows in a world rife with suffering. This novel shows how one family, by finally allowing itself to experience the shared quality of grief, is able to rekindle tenderness and hope.



Reviews of the **The Grief of Others** by Leah Hager Cohen

Nuadora

The prologue to *THE GUILT OF OTHERS* is exquisitely poignant: a mother refusing to let go her new born baby whose congenital birth defects were discovered in the womb when the foetus was five months. The baby's birth and death brings to the surface molten cracks in the Ryrie family that have simmered unacknowledged for years.

The story moves back and forth between John and Ricky Ryrie, their children Paul and Biscuit, John's pregnant eldest daughter from a previous relationship, Jess, and a stranger, Gordie. Binding them all together, as most of humanity is bound together, are the threads of birth and death.

Cohen's compassionate prose slides easily between the year since the baby was born and died, and the first time Jess met her biological father. In all the Ryrie's memories, that long ago holiday was a golden time, a time of perfect happiness in which the possibility of death, while a real threat (a single mother drowns in the lake, leaving behind two orphaned children) cannot touch them.

But death - in the form of baby Simon - does touch the family and, in doing so, cracks their fears and flaws, their wounds and worries, wide open. The underlying question in the story is whether that perfect holiday was an illusion. Or was the love underpinning it real enough to salvage the family from their current crisis of grief and pain?

The last chapter, however, was a bit strange: there were a few questions raised (did John sleep with Madeleine? Were Gordie's father's dioramas put on show?) that were dealt with tangentially, as the story shifted from the personal details of a family we, as readers, have come to know intimately, to a more universal viewpoint. I suggest that this was an attempt to link the personal with the collective; to show that all the joys and sorrows of life are shared not only by individual families, but by all people, loved ones and strangers alike. For me, though, while the philosophy behind the chapter was interesting and well-written, the abrupt change of style was confusing, pulling me out of my involvement with the Ryries, rather than leaving me with a sense of restoration and completion.

Overall, though, *THE GUILT OF OTHERS* is a tender and moving story, beautifully written and held together with the lightest of touches

Ber

Loss presents itself in its many forms throughout this portrait of a family: the Ryries, who live in Nyack, NY, and seemingly live ordinary lives.

When their third child is born anencephalic, his death is a certainty. In fact, he lives for fifty-seven hours.

Then the family shifts into everyday life, with scarcely a blink, and their separate grief unfolds in symptomatic ways that reveal the testing of the bonds that connect them.

The Grief of Others is narrated in alternating perspectives, moving back and forth between the past and present. In the beginning, we see the ten-year-old daughter Biscuit struggling with her own ritualistic way of dealing with what has happened.

Paul, the thirteen-year-old, is silently suffering while being brutally bullied by classmates.

And John and Ricky, the parents, move along parallel pathways, seldom connecting at all, until it is

soon apparent that the events of loss were not the trigger for their disintegrating marriage, but the instrument that casts a spotlight upon what is wrong in their relationship. Secrets, betrayals, and lies are all gradually revealed as the reader turns the pages.

A wild card in this tragic family portrait is Jess, John's daughter from a youthful relationship; her unexpected appearance could tip the fragile balance between them all. She is in her early twenties and has only spent time with the Ryries once before, on a vacation to the family cabin when she was in her early teens.

Will Jess's needs somehow breathe life into the disintegrating family? Will her presence somehow bring the family together? Or will her individual set of lies and secrets cast the final stone on the funeral pyre that seemingly defines the family group?

This story was beautifully crafted and the characterizations were rich and multilayered, lending an authenticity to the drama as it played out, showing the reader that families are often comprised of individuals living parallel existences until something or someone helps shift the balance to bring about a kind of catharsis.

I recommend this story for anyone who wants to understand the nature of grief, and its effect on individuals and on the family. Four stars. I deducted a star for one missing ingredient: emotion.

White_Nigga

Ricky Ryrie just gave birth to her son, Simon, who will in 57 hours, breathe his last breath. Simon is diagnosed with a condition that is "incompatible with life" during Ricky's 5th month of pregnancy. The choice that Ricky makes in that moment will affect each member of her family. THE GRIEF OF OTHERS tells the story of the life before, during and after Simon. The Ryrie family is falling apart. Grief and lies tear them apart and grief and truth will pull them together.

Related PDF to [The Grief of Others](#) by Leah Hager Cohen

[The Orphaned Adult: Understanding And Coping With Grief And Change After The Death Of Our Parents](#) by Alexander Levy

[Up From Grief; Patterns of Recovery](#) by bernadine kreis

[Finding My Way: Healing & Transformation Through Loss & Grief](#) by John M. Schneider

[The Anatomy of Bereavement \(Master Work\)](#) by Beverley

Raphael

When Will I Stop Hurting?: Teens, Loss, and Grief (It Happened to Me) (No. 8) by Edward Myers, Kelly Adams

Help Comfort & Hope by Hannah Lothrop

The Grief Recovery Workbook: Helping You Weather the Storms of Death, Divorce, and Overwhelming Disappointments by "Chaplain Ray" Giunta

Life After Loss: A Practical Guide To Renewing Your Life After Experiencing Major Loss (4th Edition) by Bob Deits

Shadowchild: A Meditation on Love and Loss by P. F. Thomese, Sam Garrett

Lesbian Widows: Invisible Grief by Victoria Whipple