

STANDING UP

A Memoir of a Funny (Not Always) Life

Author: Marion Grodin

Review Issue Date: October 15, 2013

Online Publish Date: October 6, 2013

Publisher:*Center Street/Hachette*

Pages: 320

Price (Hardcover): \$23.00

Publication Date: November 5, 2013

ISBN (Hardcover): 978-1-4555-1013-9

Category: Nonfiction

The chronicles of a comedian's life.

Stand-up comedian Grodin delves deeply into the fabric of her life to bring readers an honest examination of her roller-coaster existence. Experimenting with sex and drugs in high school turned into years of casual relationships and life lived for the high from alcohol, marijuana, cocaine and heroin (“Alcohol and other drugs had helped me feel like I didn’t have any worries in the world. But heroin made me feel like I didn’t have any world”). Grodin scrutinizes her codependent relationship with her mother and how she longed to be away from her. However, in times of great stress, the author wanted nothing more than to be wrapped in her mother's arms. When her mother was diagnosed with brain cancer, she writes, "I had always been like my mother's little husband, and now I moved into this role completely—the role I felt I'd been in training for my whole life—I became her caretaker....Though the circumstances were as dire as it gets, she was thrilled that we were together." Throughout all her ups and downs, the author’s father, actor and talk show host Charles Grodin, was always there, with encouraging words, money, love and support, no questions asked. Multiple times, Grodin bottomed out, only to scrape herself together, facing her addictions, her weight issues and her fears. Eventually, Grodin entered a stable relationship, finally said yes to a second marriage proposal and began trying for a child, with heartbreaking results. Further insult was added when Grodin was diagnosed with cancer in the very thing she had always wished as a teen to rid herself of: her breast. Despite the harshness of her oftentimes self-induced problems, the author interjects her offbeat humor throughout the text, providing much-needed relief from the recitation of her pendulum of emotions.

Sharp, witty, occasional black humor from a woman who has gone through hell and back and lived to tell the tale.