

Surviving in Spirit: A Memoir about Sisterhood and Addiction



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By the time Céline Berliet died at age 30, she was Kermit the Frog green and she vomited blood more frequently than she was able to eat. In than a decade, Mélanie's older sister had gone from summa cum laude Columbia graduate to NYU PhD student to unemployed, rambling, stumbling drunk saddled with a cirrhotic liver beyond repair. By the time Céline died, Mélanie, on the other hand, was no longer a Miss Goody Two Shoes from a waspy Connecticut suburb trotting down the Sensible Path. She was an adult who had abandoned a secure job on Wall Street to establish a career as a writer dedicated to infiltrating fascinating subcultures. What prompts a young woman to abandon the safe bounds of convention for the unknown? At first, all Mélanie understood was that she'd lost her sense of what 'supposed to' meant. And that her sister was sick. As Céline's illness escalated, Mélanie gradually stopped agonizing over what she was supposed to do/think/know/read/listen to/watch/feel, or who she was supposed to be/befriend/love/like/learn from. So she pitched projects that sounded crazy and/or dangerous to most, but which gave her a thrill and enabled her to establish a career as an immersive journalist. She grew some balls, so to speak, after freeing herself from giving a shit about what others might think. Gradually, you see, a basic on had crept up on Mélanie: Life is beautifully short and fragile as fuck. Life happens. While it's tough to understand what leads a person into addiction—to witness someone you love kind-of kill herself—the truth, Mélanie realized, is that you can learn from it.

The devastating beauty of what happened to Céline forced Mélanie to question who she is. However unwittingly, in dying, her older sister empowered her to take risks—and to live.

ENDORSEMENTS: "Mélanie's writing is honest and thought provoking, but also entertaining. Without a doubt, she keeps it interesting." -JARED COHEN, author of *The New Digital Age: Reshaping the Future of People, Nations, and Business* and *Children of Jihad: A Young American's Travels Among the Youth of the*

Middle East “Inspired by her sister's untimely death to buck convention and lead a full life, Mélanie's story is uniquely tragic, but relatable to anyone familiar with life's capacity to shock and the challenge of searching for self. This book will resonate with you long after you've finished it.” -MEGHAN McCAIN, author of *America, You Sexy Bitch: A Love Letter to Freedom and Dirty Sexy Politics* "You should be very excited to read about Melanie's adventures with addiction and married men since it's probably the safest way to experience both."
-JOEL STEIN, *TIME* columnist and author of *Man Made: In Which a Dad Learns to be a Man for His Son*
“Mélanie's writing is funny, sexy, and intelligent.” -BRIAN DONOVAN, author of best-selling Kindle Single *Not A Match: My True Tales of Online Dating Disasters* The book is now available on Amazon, ibooks, and Google Play! <http://thoughtcatalog.com/book/surviv...>