



Willow Weep for Me: A Black Woman's Journey Through Depression

Meri Nana-Ama Danquah

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The first book to focus on black women and depression, seen through the personal journey of a young black woman's descent into despair.

Meri Danquah, a "working-class broke," twenty-two-year-old single mother, began to suffer from a variety of depressive symptoms after she gave birth to her daughter, which led her to suspect that she might be going crazy. Understanding the importance of strength in a world that often undervalues black women's lives, she shrouded herself and her illness in silence and denial. "Black women are supposed to be strong—caretakers, nurturers, healers of other people—any of the twelve dozen variations of Mammy," writes Danquah. But eventually, she could no longer deny the debilitating sadness that interfered with her ability to care for her daughter, to pursue her career as a writer, and to engage in personal relationships. "This is how the world feels to me when I am depressed," she writes. "Everything is blurry, out of focus, fading like a photograph; people seem incapable of change; living feels like a waste of time and effort."

She moves back to the city of her childhood where she befriends two black women who are also suffering from depression. With their support she confronts the traumatic childhood events—sexual abuse, neglect, and loss—that lie beneath her grief. This is not simply a memoir about depression, it is a powerful meditation on courage and a litany for survival.

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