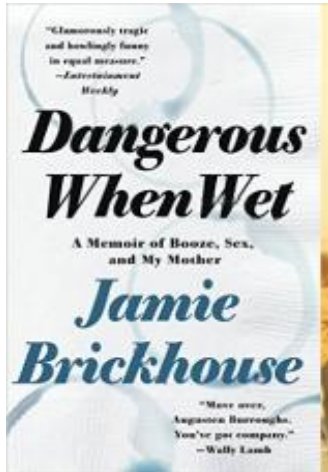


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## Dangerous When Wet: A Memoir of Booze, Sex, and My Mother

by Jamie Brickhouse

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### About the Book

"Whoever said you can't get sober for someone else never met my mother, Mama Jean. When I came to in a Manhattan emergency room after an overdose to the news that she was on her way from Texas, I panicked. She was the last person I wanted to see on that dark September morning, but the person I needed the most."

So begins this astonishing memoir --- by turns both darkly comic and deeply poignant --- about this native Texan's long struggle with alcohol, his complicated relationship with Mama Jean, and his sexuality. From the age of five, all Brickhouse wanted was to be at a party with a drink in one hand and a cigarette in the other, and all Mama Jean wanted was to keep him at that age, her Jamie doll forever. A Texan Elizabeth Taylor with the split personality of Auntie Mame and Mama Rose, always camera-ready and flamboyantly outspoken, Mama Jean haunted him his whole life, no matter how far away he went or how deep in booze he swam.

Brickhouse's journey takes him from Texas to a high-profile career in book publishing amid New York's glamorous drinking life to his near-fatal descent into alcoholism. After Mama Jean ushers him into rehab and he ultimately begins to dig out of the hole he'd found himself in, he almost misses his chance to prove that he loves her as much as she loves him.

Bitingly funny, raw and insightful, DANGEROUS WHEN WET is the unforgettable story of a unique relationship between a son and his mother.

### Discussion Guide

1. This was an enlightened young man who would seem to have benefited by early intervention counseling. Why do you think he didn't seek the special attention such counseling would have offered once he actually was in New York on his

own?

2. Why do you think Michahaze stayed with Jamie after everything he put him through?
3. Do you think any of the blame of Jamie's drinking lies with Mama Jean? Do you think Jamie is to blame for his drinking or do you believe it is a disease?
4. Jamie makes the claim that he could not understand Mama Jean's pronouncement, "You don't know what love is," nor her all-consuming love until after he got sober from 20 years of "drinking a silo booze," and that ultimately that love saved him. Do you agree? Do you think her love was more harmful or helpful to him?
5. Voice is crucial to any book --- fiction or nonfiction --- in the telling of a story. Do you feel that Jamie has a strong voice and did his irrepressible humor help you get through some of the darkest parts of the book?
6. Given that DWW is a recovery memoir told through the lens of Jamie's relationship with Mama Jean, how would you compare it to other memoirs of alcoholism and addiction?
7. If you have or have had substance abuse problems, was Jamie's story one with which you could identify, even his circumstances were different? Would you recommend DWW to people who are suffering from or affected by alcoholism and addiction?
8. Mama Jean's decline and death from Lewy Body Dementia is a salient part of the book. How would you compare it to other memoirs that cover dementia and would you recommend DWW to anyone coping with a family member's dementia?
9. What lessons can mothers take away from DWW? What lessons can sons take away?
10. Jamie reveals many incredibly personal secrets in DWW, including his HIV status, which he never told Mama Jean. Even though HIV is a manageable disease, do you think it is still stigmatized and should more HIV-positive people "come out" to relieve that stigma?

## Author Bio

Jamie Brickhouse, author of *DANGEROUS WHEN WET*, has been published in *The New York Times*, the *International Herald Tribune*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Lambda Literary Review*, *The Fix*, *Addiction/Recovery eBulletin* and the Latin American travel magazine *Travesía*. He is also a guest blogger for the Huffington Post.

Brickhouse spent over two decades in the publishing industry, most recently at two major houses as head of their publicity and lecture divisions. He is founder and CEO of the speakers bureau, redBrick Agency. He has also performed stand-up comedy and recorded voice-overs for the legendary cartoon TV show "Beavis and Butthead." A native of Beaumont, Texas, Brickhouse lives in Manhattan with his partner, Michael.

## Critical Praise

"Move over, Augusten Burroughs. You've got company."

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### **Dangerous When Wet: A Memoir of Booze, Sex, and My Mother**

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