

Spirit Unbroken: The Two Sides of Love

by Rick Garlock and Alice Garlock



About the Book

Spirit Unbroken: The Two Sides of Love received Honorable Mention in the Memoir/Autobiography category at the 2008 DIY Award Festival. Rick and Alice have expressed gratitude and humility in their continued opportunities to tell Alice's story.

For a more detailed update on this award as well as the author's December Operation Paperback book "give away" for soldiers at Christmas, please visit the blog at www.inkwaterpress.com.

Driven by her life-long dream to find her maternal family in Japan, as a young girl Amy faces the darklings of her demeaning childhood, and as an adult, fights for her life back through self-discovery and with her newfound heritage.

Imagine if you will --- a beautiful 28 year old lady in Japan; in the middle of the last century and from an affluent family. A Buddhist teacher and yet a spirited woman, who yearns to see the world and then one day her dream comes true! She is wooed by a US military man during the Korean Conflict and in a matter of time, is married. She has her first child in Japan and then two years later, finds herself heading for America --- the streets paved in gold, pregnant with her second child --- Alice.

Entering through the port of Seattle, she crosses her new country; ten-fold bigger than her native Japan, landing forebodingly in the backwaters and fields of the rural Midwest. There she will not be able to raise her head above the cornfields and cast eyes on Japan again until close to her death, 30 years later. The torch in her quest to rekindle her heritage is passed to her daughter, who fought through an almost prison-like childhood to come out on the other side of the Pacific; her maternal family at last in hand, a half of century later.

Sincerely written, this book is a *master of artistry* in the telling and passes the ultimate test --- and that is, that this book will continue to be a worthwhile read, long after you've put it away on the shelf.

Discussion Guide

1. After years of living in fear of an unstable father Amy receives a phone call notifying her of her father's death. Amy is cheated of a father/daughter relationship. How should she deal with the frustration?
2. It is easy to avoid confrontations in families. Have you procrastinated resolving a disagreement in your family because you think you will have time to fix it later?
3. Amy's mother is of Asian descent. Have you ever encountered culture differences in your interactions with people --- say for instance in school classes or as an adult with employee business workers?
4. What is the difference between culture clashes and prejudices?
5. Amy is not living in a nurturing environment especially considering her father is an alcoholic. What in your opinion is important to promote a nurturing atmosphere?
6. Have you met dated or recognized an addict whether it be drugs or alcohol in your life time? If you've been in an alcoholic relationship and how did it change your life?
7. How do economic standards, income levels, and social status affect life in child rearing? How did it affect Amy's?
8. Do you personally know anyone in your social contacts that have been abused in some manner?
9. When Amy feared for her life she overcame her fears of the darkness to retrieve the weapon that threatened her family. Was there ever an incident you can recall that pushed you out of your safety zone?
10. It wasn't until Amy met her true love Rob that she began to comprehend true family interaction watching his family in action. What other causes besides abuse would contribute to 'missing links' in life with regard to healthy relationships?
11. Do you believe one must have family to be happy? Or faith to be at peace?
12. Amy adopts her husband's children to raise them as her own. Have you ever lived in a mixed family arrangement?
13. Amy realized her worst fears and most joyous dreams in her life. What have been yours?
14. If you had to pick a 'word,' what would you as a reader pick to best describe the theme of the book?
15. What does the title **Spirit Unbroken: The Two Sides of Love** mean to you?

16. What is the "two sides of love" in Amy's life? Can there be more than two sides of love in life? How many?
17. How can Amy's examples of spirit best serve your life?
18. In recommending this book to others, how would you best describe its many messages of tragedy and of triumph?
19. Everyone has had misunderstandings in communication. How do you believe language barriers could disrupt messages? America has many English grammar syntaxes. How does this interfere with communicating in a foreign language?
20. Have you ever met a family member at a reunion for the first time? Did you connect immediately or did you have to make an effort to begin to feel like a family connection was made?
21. Amy lived in poverty during her child rearing. At one point her family lost all of their belongings when a landlord locked them out of their home due to delinquent rent payments. Would this experience be compatible to the loss in a house fire?
22. How does losing childhood momentums infringe upon child development?
23. Amy lived in several rental homes, never actually living in a purchased home. How does constant relocating alter or change a child's perspective in life?
24. At birth both of Amy's brothers begin suffering life threatening symptoms eventually uncovering a rare mysterious illness which eventually takes the life of her brothers. How do long term illnesses change the life in a family?
25. Have you ever interacted with someone who is so down they are suicidal? How did they finally come out of their desperate situation? Were you supportive or did you avoid them?
26. Does religion bring peace or does one find it within them to get by hard times? Have you ever experienced a situation that reassured you God was watching over you? If a Christian, does your faith ever wane?
27. Amy experiences her first earthquake while visiting her mother's home town. Did a natural disaster such as Hurricane Katrina rattle your warm security blanket?

Author Bio

Critical Praise

"...this is a book you are not going to want to put down... An emotional, heart-wrenching memoir, [that] also shows just how strong we are capable of being... I highly recommend this incredible story. "

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