



A Few Minor Adjustments: A Memoir of Healing

Cherie Kephart

Bazi Publishing (Sep 7, 2017)

Softcover \$15.95 (254pp)

978-1-947127-01-2

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A Few Minor Adjustments is a straightforward, mesmerizing account—with a dose of dry humor and wit—of one woman's struggles to regain her health and live a life without constant pain.

When Cherie Kephart experienced a sharp, wrenching pain in her neck while showering, she didn't realize it was the start of a six-year odyssey to uncover an actual diagnosis. A range of specialists diagnosed her at various times with ADHD, Epstein-Barr virus, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, and heart problems before getting to a correct answer.

The California native, who was thirty-two at the time of the injury, had already had her share of bodily trauma, but nothing prepared her for the onslaught of symptoms for which she ultimately sought treatment.

Told in a no-nonsense, self-deprecating style, unbelievable events balance evenly with humorous situations. Early chapters deal with Kephart's time as a volunteer in Zambia, and descriptions are fascinating and eye-opening: "Within the first month in my village, two locals were killed by [crocodiles]." She describes in vivid detail the results of contracting malaria and her nasty bout with a fly infection. The words are not a ruse to gain sympathy but are meant to inform and educate, which is the consistent pattern throughout.

Kephart is not alone in her quest to be healthy. Her love interest, Alex, is supportive, as are her friends, family, and fur babies. With an introspective touch, professionals are tagged not with their real names but with adjectives that depict how Kephart felt about the help she received from them. There's Dr. Enthusiasm, Dr. Know-It-All, Dr. Blurry, Dr. Loveless (who thinks it all may be in Kephart's head), and Dr. Genius.

Alternative medicines are also pursued; visits to a Russian healer and the frantic search for fertile farm eggs are a lighthearted chapter in a decidedly serious conversation.

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ROBIN FARRELL EDMUNDS (September/October 2017)

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