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AUTOBIOGRAPHY & MEMOIR

Don't Pull That Plug: The Intimacy of a Coma
Terrell L. Clima
Xlibris
978-1-4363-9993-7
Two Stars (out of Five)

Don't Pull that Plug: the Intimacy of a Coma chronicles the heartbreak and joy of Terrell Clima's marriage before, during, and after her husband, Ron, ends up in a coma as a result of a motorcycle accident. Early in the book, Clima alludes to the fact that, prior to Ron's coma, they fought addiction and relapse, as well as Ron's adultery. The bulk of the book, however, represents Clima's response to Ron's injury. With unflagging Christian faith and fortitude, she resists pressure from friends, family, and medical professionals who wish to remove Ron's life support systems. Aided by her visions of his accident and subsequent recovery, she becomes his advocate and caregiver. Through her persistence and her faith in Jesus, Ron makes a slow but sure recovery.

A first-time author and registered nurse, Clima sets out to prove to readers that miracles are possible for those who believe. Additionally, she exhorts relatives of comatose patients to ignore their nay-saying doctors, if need be.

Clima presents the couple's harrowing journey and her tireless faith in painstaking detail including their battles with insurance companies and prejudice toward disabled people. She does not shy away from relating the despair she experiences during this ordeal, describing her periods of depression with as much poignancy as she does her sadness. Moreover, Clima does indeed provide persuasive arguments that people in comas are more aware than medical professionals may believe.

Several flaws in execution dull the story's emotional impact, however. First, Clima writes colloquially, as though she was speaking to a good friend over the phone rather than writing a memoir for public consumption. The prose often gets bogged down in tedious repetition, and more details about Ron and Terrell's marriage and addictions prior to the coma would help the reader better understand their relationship. For example, it isn't until well into the book that readers learn what drug Ron was most addicted to (meth), and that he loved fishing and working with tools.

A fuller portrait of the Climas' familial relationships, personal traits, and addictions prior to Ron's coma would make the story more lucid. The memoir also lacks chapters, and enough typos exist to annoy the attentive reader. Huge paragraphs and a needless afterward about another couple's experience with coma and recovery are also overwhelming. While heartfelt, *Don't Pull the Plug* needs more detail and editorial help to fully engage readers.

Jill Allen