

Hidden Valley Road : inside the mind of an American family

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Abstrak

The riveting story of an American family with twelve children, six of whom were diagnosed with schizophrenia, that became science's great hope in the quest to conquer an elusive disease. Don and Mimi Galvin seemed to be living in the American dream. After World War II, Don's work with the Air Force brought them to Colorado, where their twelve children perfectly spanned the baby boom. There was a script for a family like the Galvins - hard work, upward mobility, domestic harmony - and they all tried to play their parts. But behind the closed doors of the house on Hidden Valley Road was a far different reality: psychological breakdown, sudden shocking violence, and hidden abuse. By the mid-1970s, six of the ten Galvin boys, one after the other, were diagnosed with schizophrenia. And the other six children stood by, horrified, with no way of knowing whether they would be next. What took place on Hidden Valley Road was so extraordinary that the Galvins became one of the first families to be studied by the National Institute of Mental Health. In a tour de force of narrative nonfiction, award-winning journalist Robert Kolker, author of the bestselling *Lost Girls*, tells the intimate story of the Galvins alongside the epic tale of science's quest to uncover the true nature of a mystifying disease. Each mentally ill brother emerges as wholly individual, with remarkably different expression of the same disorder. The two youngest Galvins, the only girls, are indelible characters: best friends, both victimized by their brothers, who make sharply different choices about how to cope. The Galvins' story crests in a breakthrough that, thanks to their unique DNA, offers hope of eliminating schizophrenia forever. *Hidden Valley Road* is a captivating medical mystery and a heartbreaking drama. But above all, it is an unforgettable lesson in what it means to be a family