



Mortician Diaries: The Dead-Honest Truth from a Life Spent with Death

June Nadle

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After 50 years in the funeral business, 80-year-old grandmother/undertaker June Knights Nadle has seen it all — at least all of what goes on before, during, and after life's ultimate challenge. In *Mortician Diaries*, she combines equal doses of charm, humanity, humor, and reality to tell it like it is on this taboo subject. A kind of *Prairie Home Companion* set in a mortuary, the book features memorable stories of regret — “I wish I had kissed him on the morning he had the accident” — and renewal, as the lesson of facing life's last great event is learned, or not. Some of the accounts here are funny, some sad. Some are haunting in their strangeness as they reveal the many ways in which people cope. Along the way, the reader is drawn into Nadle's own life story as an unconventional woman who devoted herself to the dead and to those they left behind.

Mortician Diaries: The Dead-Honest Truth from a Life Spent with Death Details

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Author : June Nadle

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Anyra says

you might think this would be gruesome, but in fact this was a really interesting diary from a wife & mom who spent her career as a mortician. Sure it's all about how people died and what happens in a funeral home, but she manages to pay beautiful homage to each and every client.

Megan says

It was an easy read, and it made me think.

Maria (Ri) says

This was a surprising little book. I'm not sure what exactly I was expecting, something more akin to *Stiff* by Mary Roach perhaps. What it actually turns out to be is a touching memoir of a grandmotherly type retired mortician recounting stories of grief, love and bits of humor from her long career. It made me think of my own mortality and what I'd like done when I die (organ donation, cremation and whatever type of funeral service would most serve those who survive me). It made me value my current relationships a bit more and recognize that there really is only this moment. Overall, a satisfying and touching read.

Lindsey says

Mortician Diaries was a beautiful book. Simple, short and poignant, June Nadle's stories really make you think about what is important in life.

Some of the stories left me in tears, some were simply moving and others were even comical.

This book was one of a friend's top 20 books that stuck with her. I'm glad she shared that list as I likely wouldn't have stumbled upon *Mortician Diaries* on my own.

However you may feel about life and death, give this book a try. It isn't morbid. *Mortician Diaries* is a celebration, and the pure love and compassion of June Nadle shines through on every page.

Beautiful.

Trisha DeBoer says

Read. This. Book. Seriously, though, it's 135 pages filled with stories that "demystify" what happens a bit. It's not a "how to" book or anything, but considering our culture's denial of death, this is a good book to start

thinking about death in less "out there" ways. The author speaks about her care of families in the midst of grief, and talks a bit on how she has hopes in the face of what is often perceived as just a pit of deep dark blackness. I have only had this book for a few weeks and I've already loaned it out three times. Each person has liked it, even though it was not what any of us expected.

Casey says

Such a beautifully written book. I think it's a great read for anyone, whether currently dealing with the loss of a loved one or not. The author breaks the book up into different short stories of instances of death that she's dealt with personally and professionally, which makes it for an easy quick read, that you can put down with easy bookmarking if needed. I felt deeply for the book and the people in it, within only minutes of beginning it. The only complaint I have about the book, is that I wish it was longer. I could've kept reading it for days.

Jennifer says

A very touching and well-written book encouraging the living to make a dialog with death, in order to accept it as a normal part of life. Both funny and heart-breaking. It really helped me better grasp the ideas of funerary traditions and the importance of accepting the reality of that which we all fear. We can only heal, when we are ready to face the reality that those we love as well as our selves will one day be gone and that life goes on now and after. Highly recommended.

Nikki says

I now have a completely different look on death and how the planning of what to do with a person's remains after they die can affect their whole family and friends. This book is a real eye opener about making sure you get the things done in life that you want to and that you let the people in your life know how you really feel about them. They could be gone tomorrow and you'll never have the chance to make amends if that is what you want to do.

The author grew up on a small farm in Idaho and death was nothing out of place there. When she got older she decided to go into mortuary services school since there weren't many other options for women at that time period. She has worked in many funeral homes, both small and large ones. This book is a collection of stories that she encountered along the way. There are stories of people that plan their own funerals, to ones that the deceased parents didn't realize until it was too late that they needed to make amends with their own children.

It is very moving and touching and at times I wanted to cry, but luckily I was able to hold back. I did have to put the book down a couple times to think about the section of the book that I had just read. Don't worry about there being anything really gory in it, the worst part of that is at times there are discussions of what a body looked like after death, nothing obscene.

Lori says

This book is very well written and touches on the subject of what happens after we die. She blends her side of the story in so well with what is going on around her in the funeral home and it just mesmerized me. I couldn't put it down and read it cover to cover as quickly as I got it!

Shelly says

Book #23 for 2012 - I really enjoyed this short book, written by a former mortician. She told several stories of "interesting" deaths that she has dealt with as well as shared her insights and personal experience with healing in the event of the death of a loved one. Very interesting and easy to read.

Rex Ross says

This was a decent little book filled with short personal stories from the author's experience as an embalmer/funeral director for over 50 years. The author demonstrates that not every death is experienced the same way and that not everything is always so clear cut and dried.

innae says

This is not what I expected. I guess I was thinking it would be funny/scary/what-have-you tales from a mortician, instead it was some heart-wrenching tales used to illustrate several basic topics the author wanted to get across (have a dialogue with those close to you about death, live for today, etc) I really enjoyed it, and yes I cried several times through-out.

Mrs. Nadle is a fascinating woman, and I am glad she published this book to share some of her life.

Quotes and such I liked:

pg. 17

"I remembered a Mark Twain saying, ' Let us endeavor to so live that when we die even the undertaker will be sorry.'"

pg. 52 (although it has been said many times before...)

"Funerals are for the living, not the dead."

pg. 133 (these two sentences had me crying -- this is so very true)

"I now know that there are some deaths we never get over. We only learn to live with them."

Leilani says

I liked this book so much that I looked up the author online to contact her and tell her what an awesome mortician she is, but sadly she passed away in 2014. There were some heart wrenching stories of loss (and one very questionable ethical decision). She brought up several situations that are very real yet no one wants to talk about them - being abusive to your children and then regretting it when they die, how when HIV was first diagnosed morticians turned away people who had died of AIDS, religious dogma influencing poor decision making, etc. Excellent storytelling.

jay walker says

It's like Hallmark published it.

Connie says

June has been a mortician for years which gave her a variety of experiences with death and seeing the different ways people have approached the planning for their own death and the services of those they loved. This book made me laugh, cry, and say "ah-ha!"
