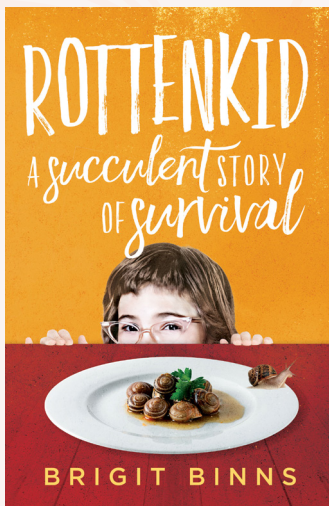


Rottenkid: A Succulent Story of Survival



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BY BRIGIT BINNS

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Prolific cookbook author Brigit Binns' coming-of-age memoir—co-starring her alcoholic actor father Edward Binns and glamorous but viciously smart narcissistic mother—reveals how simultaneous privilege and profound neglect led Brigit to seek comfort in the kitchen, eventually allowing her to find some sense of self-worth. A memoir sauteed in Hollywood stories, world travel, and always, the need to belong.

Binns takes the reader through Hollywood dysfunction against the backdrop of old California, as viewed by her small, insecure self through coke-bottle glasses. When her parents eventually divorce, her father flees and her mother sends Brigit off to boarding school so that she can more easily conduct her decades-long romance with a married California Governor. Brigit is thrilled to escape her mother's critical eye, racking up seven schools and a host of bad decisions before the age of 16 and finally decamping to college out of state.

Beginning with mom's "life-altering" cheese souffle, food was the only catalyst for rare moments of détente in what would become a lifelong destructive—and often incendiary—relationship (in one chilling instance, her mother briefly shoves a .22 rifle into 15-year-old Binns' belly).

Brigit was exposed early on to infidelity; her mother told her at age 11 that Eddie Binns was impotent, and thus she had taken a lover, a "Mr. X." Shortly afterwards, Mr. X was revealed as Brigit's own Godfather, the ex-Governor. In Brigit's late twenties, marriage to an Englishman took her across the pond—blessedly far from her emotionally abusive mother—and to professional cooking school. Later on in Spain, she catered expatriate yacht parties while said husband nursed his emotional wounds, then betrayed her. Heartbroken, she returned to Los Angeles eighteen years after vowing never to return. Her father dead and her mother fragile, Brigit cultivated some hope for their relationship, but it continued to implode. Against all glittering odds, Brigit thrived in Los Angeles, cold pitching herself to top chefs as co-author for their cookbooks and launching a successful career. Peppered with humor and unsinkable optimism, Brigit's story is a tribute to female resilience and an inspiration for all who must deal with the catastrophic damage that a narcissistic parent can inflict.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Brigit Binns is the author or co-author of 25 cookbooks, many of them for Williams-Sonoma, as well as ghost-writer (shhh) on many others.



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