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# Don't Leave Me This Way: Or When I Get Back On My Feet You'll Be Sorry



## Synopsis

Julia Fox Garrison refused to listen to the professionals she called Dr. Jerk and Dr. Panic, who—after she suffered a massive, debilitating stroke at age thirty-seven—told her she'd probably die, or to Nurse Doom, who ignored her emergency call button. Instead she heeded the advice of kind, gifted Dr. Neuro, who promised her he would "treat your mind as well as your body." Julia figured if she could somehow manage to get herself into a wheelchair, at least she'd always find parking. But after many, many months of hospitalization and rehab—with the help of family, friends, and her own indomitable spirit—Julia not only got into a wheelchair, but she got back out. *Don't Leave Me This Way* is the funny, inspiring, profoundly moving true story of a woman's fight for her life and dignity—and her determined quest to awaken an entrenched, unfeeling medical community to the fact that there's always a human being inside every patient.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Garrison, a 37-year-old Boston-area woman with a great husband and a fine three-year old boy, was busy at work when she suddenly felt "a throbbing pain in the right side of her head... a volcano erupting inside her skull." The next thing she knew, her family was gathered around her hospital bed, and she couldn't feel the whole left side of her body. She'd had a massive brain hemorrhage and had only survived thanks to some very risky surgery. Doctors were divided about why she'd had this stroke; indeed, Garrison spent the next weeks and months fending off a dire diagnosis, vasculitis, from the pseudonymous "Dr. Jerk." Most of the professionals she dealt with were negative, wanting her to accept that she'd never walk again or have a full, satisfying life. But

Garrison, with the help of her supportive husband, brothers, parents, friends and a few gifted therapists and doctors, managed an extraordinary recovery. By book's end, she is walking (albeit with difficulties), actively parenting again, trying to sue the makers of the cold syrup that triggered her stroke and giving motivational talks to doctors' groups. Her humorous, tear-jerking, struggle-to-recover-against-all-odds story is a lesson in finding silver linings. (June 13) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

At 37, Garrison, then the mother of a three-year-old boy, suffered a massive cerebral hemorrhage that left her with a physically devastated body and more spiritual resolve than she'd ever had in her life. Armed with a sense of humor that has a real edge to it, she overcame obstacles that would have killed lesser spirits. From the outset, she also knew much more about what it takes to recover than her attending medical professionals, whom she dubs with such tags as Dr. Jerk, Dr. Bleak, and Nurse Doom--monikers that seem deserved for such behaviors as labeling her "in denial" because she refused to accept tacitly the prognostication of total paralysis for the rest of her life. Not medical care's prettiest face, to be sure. Unsatisfied by Dr. Jerk's diagnosis, which would have required a lifetime of chemotherapy, Garrison sought a second opinion. What she got, after the most superficial review of her case, was rubber stamping. But eventually she walked again. Inspirational is too weak a word to describe Garrison's memoir. Donna Chavez Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I have a friend who is experiencing the life of someone being treated for aggressive cancer. Although Julia experienced a stroke, she went through many of the same things my friend is going through. The book helped me to understand some of my friend's frustrations and some of the horrors that come with being treated with chemotherapy, as well as just how numb some of the medical community can be to a patient's plight. I understand that there has to be a protective barrier for the medical personnel, but it can be sad to have a doctor, like Julia's Dr. Jerk, who are more concerned with his own opinion than looking for ways to help the patient. Although the topic is sad, sometimes horrific and often emotionally charged, Julia lives life as a optimist filled with humor. If you are able to laugh, why not laugh? I like that way of thinking. The chapters are short, often hilarious, and just what a friend or family member can read to understand what it might be like for someone who is traveling a long road to that place called "recovered." Outside of the story of recovery, this is also a story about a spiritual journey. The Spirit is not ignored in Julia's story, and I

understand that it is her intuition and Spirit which gave her fighting power and the guts to say no when needed. If you're on your own spiritual journey, this is a great example of the role intuition and a connection to something greater than yourself can play in a person's life and in healing.

I had the great fortune to meet Julia Fox Garrison last week. I immediately bought and read her book. She is a delight in person and on the page. Julia experienced a horrific medical event at age 37 but has persevered and is living a great life despite it all. She has a refreshing outlook on faith and illness that can teach us all a thing or two! She is inspiring me to reach for my best self in all that I do!

Julia did a wonderful job telling about her bumpy journey and how she always looked at the glass half full (or actually all filled up). I'm sure each step of the way wasn't an easy one but her bravery, commitment to getting stronger and proving to the doctors and her family she will get better and refused to give up were very powerful!! Wishing Julia and her family much continued progress!!

I enjoyed it but found the author's humor to be so sarcastic it bordered on mean. I don't know if that was a result of the stroke knocking out some compassion center in the brain or if she was like that pre-stroke. Her determination to recover was inspiring and I hope she's doing well and the family is intact. They went through hell with her. The take-away for me is to be very cautious about what meds you take and don't take anything unless you can't live without it--including a simple, one-time dose of an over-the-counter cold medicine Yikes! Thanks for sharing this life-changing experience.

Julia writes an amazing account from a wonderful humorous perspective capturing her true story of faith, strength, tenacity, and courage in the face of a terrible series of medical mistakes and lies that asks us all to become more aware of what we accept into our bodies in the forms of medications and treatments. It also honors full-time caregivers - the Angels among us.

An inspirational, personal look at overcoming the potentially devastating affects of a severe stroke at 37. Julia, who is a young wife, mother, and successful corporate climber, stares life down, spits in it's eye and declares she will fight and win. After battling doubting doctors, the medical system, and even some fearful friends and family, Julia does just that, she wins. Her comeback is not predictable or easy, but all the way she perseveres with humor, tears, perspective and the ever present support parents, siblings, friends and her husband. My book club was lucky enough to include Julia in our

discussion of the book via Skype and it doubled the pleasure of this book for me. She's a bright, twinkling star in a sometimes gloomy world.

One woman's humorous and insightful look at how it feels to be a stroke survivor. How the medical profession makes you feel. How insurance companies make you feel. How your family makes you feel. How people make you feel. How you feel in general, being a stroke survivor. I would recommend this book to anyone, especially the medical professionals.

A horrific brain bleed. Full-side paralysis. Such a young woman, Such a little child, her first. But such guts, humor, determination, her "denial" (diagnosed by so many) most significantly of their diagnoses, especially of what she'd not ever be able, again, to do. Much I read with tears almost brimming, even when punctuations of her epithet or affront to some specialist made me laugh. Anyone feeling defeated, downed, depressed, should read this book. But the juxtaposition derived should also be that Julia retained her mind, her speech, her vision, and was surrounded by such an astoundingly supportive family, especially husband. In many places I read, my brimming tears were my identifying with his emotions, his strength. This book is an account. It's a therapy. It's a lesson. It's even a sermon!!

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