

Books

Bipolar: An Insider's View

MANIC

by Terri Cheney | ★★★★★

REVIEWED BY MICHELLE GREEN

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Shedding her evening dress to walk into a riptide; flying 14 kites in a thunderstorm; waking up in restraints in a locked hospital ward: Cheney's chilling account of her struggle with bipolar disorder brilliantly evokes the brutal nature of her disease. It's a timely tale: Anyone transfixed by Britney Spears' tragic unraveling may well see her in Cheney, and perhaps come to understand why manic states can be so intoxicating that some patients are loath to let go. Formerly an entertainment lawyer in L.A., Cheney, now 48, takes the reader inside a seemingly inexorable decline that began with mood swings in childhood and led, in adulthood, to suicide attempts and electroshock therapy, which triggered a psychotic break. There is hope in the end, but no cure: "For this day, at least, I'm sane," writes Cheney, "... and that's a glorious thing." Edgy, dark and often cynical, *Manic* is not an easy book to read, but it has heart and soul to spare.

“The disease thrives on shame, and shame thrives on silence, and I've been silent long enough”

