

***A remarkable account that captures the horror of hardship and the power of charity.***

In this memoir, a humanitarian shares her journey from growing up in poverty in India to founding an esteemed charity that helps protect society's most vulnerable.

Haslam was raised in Kolkata, India, in the 1970s. Her parents were part of the Anglo-Indian community that remained in the country after the British government withdrew in 1947. The family was homeless for the first six years of the author's life. Despite her father's being employed full-time, they could not afford a permanent residence. Haslam became accustomed to squatting or staying in slums, during which time she witnessed the deaths of her twin siblings, who suffered from malnutrition. The author was determined to gain an education, and her first break arrived when she was offered a job with Bank of America, where she later became president of its Charity and Diversity Network in India. Devoting her life to charitable causes, including the founding of Remedia, a trust that helps educate hundreds of children in India, Haslam was honored with the Mother Teresa Memorial International Award in 2017. This is a deeply affecting, harrowing story that will remain locked in readers' memories. Haslam's delicate, descriptive writing style captures even her most distressing moments, including when she recounts how her deceased baby sister was placed in a tea chest rather than a coffin: "My mother began to seal the top of the chest in place—methodically, like an artist, dripping candle wax along the narrow edges." Always capable of pinpointing emotions, the author elegantly describes how her childhood shaped her later purpose in life: "I had never forgotten how much the small gestures of kindness in my childhood meant to me and what a difference they had made for my family." Drawing on her talent as a motivational speaker, Haslam delivers succinct words that have the power to both inspire and offer hope: "Light can come from darkness. My family's pain is not the entire tale." The author has lived an extraordinary life—her odyssey, which is skillfully recalled here, will unnerve, move, and inspire readers in equal measure.

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