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Books in Brief

By Patricia A. Kossmann and Regina Nigro | JULY 21, 2008

Redeemed: A Spiritual Misfit Stumbles Toward God, Marginal Sanity, and the Peace That Passes All Understanding

By Heather King

Viking. 238p \$24.95

A brutally honest, moving and heartfelt memoir, *Redeemed* is an account of ongoing recovery, conversion to Catholicism and a journey across terrifying borders into a new and previously unfamiliar world. Attorney-turned-writer and NPR commentator, Heather King, whose first book, *Parched*, detailed her two-decade-long alcoholic, drug-addicted, sex-driven and depressive life, turns a contemplative corner in this finely wrought, beautifully written sequel. "If there was one thing I'd always known about myself, it was that I was sick—soul-sick, weary." The Catholic Church, which "didn't sugarcoat or pretend everything was all right," provided her the needed self-affirmation and courage to embrace life and others in meaningful new ways. Through the eyes of fresh faith, she reflects on various chapters of her life—a failed marriage; a bout of breast cancer; making it through law school; her writing aspirations; family strife; her elderly father's painfully protracted death—and the road back, through steadfast prayer, to full and fruitful engagement with the world. Readers have much to take away from this insightful, gutsy and inspiring story. P.A.K.