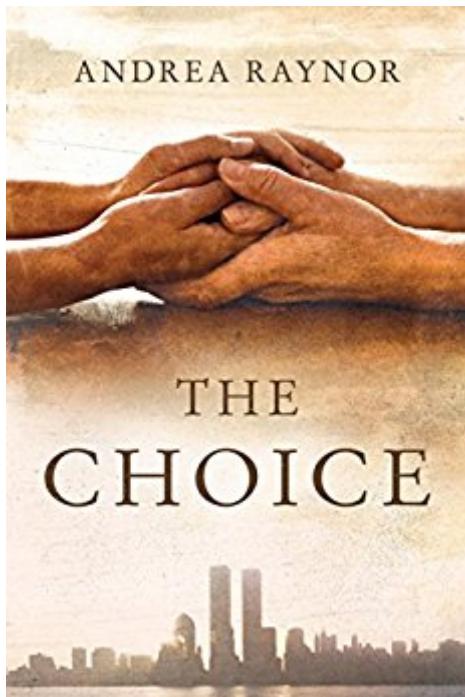


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The Choice (Kindle Single)



Synopsis

God can be found in the unlikeliest of places, even in the heart of deepest darkness. Andrea Raynor, a chaplain in New York, was a witness to this at Ground Zero in the immediate aftermath of September 11. She took regular shifts at the on-site morgue, the first stop for remains recovered from the wreckage. There, she blessed the dead while also ministering to the people who showed up day after day for the terrible work of cataloging the bodies. A Harvard Divinity School graduate, Raynor offered compassion and an ear to men and women suffering from guilt or post-traumatic stress or simply exhausted and overwhelmed by the task at hand. Every night Raynor also left behind a husband and two worried young children and had to contend with the toll her work was taking on them. In this moving and inspiring essay, Raynor explores the ongoing choice she faced while fulfilling this difficult duty: Should she return for another shift? Could she return without falling into despair? Through her faith, she was able to serve those who needed her most. And in the face of tremendous horror and heartbreak, she saw that hope and decency were not lost, as signs of humanity and healing continued all around her.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The words that come to mind are, "thank you". Thank you for taking me to ground zero again. For guiding me to uncover the thoughts and emotions I tried to store away in the attic of my heart. For choosing to serve and then choosing to share with friends and strangers alike. This is a must read for all!

After reading Incognito: Lost and Found at Harvard, I couldn't wait to read more from Andrea Raynor. The Choice gives the reader a small glimpse of Ground Zero after the September 11th attacks and leaves you wanting more. Raynor continues to write with such elegance and ease which reminds readers that God and his kindness is found anywhere and everywhere. Both pieces of work are for all types of readers who search for a meaning of life as well as give strength and inspiration to always find the good in people and to have faith everyday no matter what life brings you.

Andrea Raynor's elegant, uplifting prose recounts her deeply personal experiences as a chaplain blessing the recovered remains of those souls that perished in 9/11. This is a profoundly inspirational account of what it meant to not only honor the fallen but to minister to the many workers who dedicated themselves to the heart wrenching task of recovering victims buried in the rubble of Ground Zero. Andrea, thank you so much! On the fifteenth anniversary of 9/11, you remind us all of the very human stories at the heart of this national tragedy.

The Choice reads like a meditation on compassion, faith and what it means to be human. In recounting her time as a chaplain at Ground Zero, Raynor honors so well those who were lost on September 11 and those who worked so tirelessly to rescue and rebuild in its aftermath. I honestly cannot remember when I've read more beautiful writing.

This is the perfect piece to read in honor of the upcoming 15th anniversary of 9/11. Walk in Ms. Raynor's shoes as she beautifully explains what life was like days, weeks and months after the tragic event at the site. Her compassion for others and honesty with herself is beautiful to read.

The Choice is a stunning and emotional glimpse of what it was like after 9-11. Andrea is a gifted storyteller and beautifully paints a picture of the people who tirelessly worked at ground zero. Andrea honors those who died and those who made the choice to help in the aftermath. Thank you to all who made this choice and to Andrea for telling this story with compassion and grace.

On a personal note: I confine most of my reading to fiction, with occasional forays into works of history, which may be a different type of fiction. Every once-in-a-while I look at non-fiction. Sometimes it is by accident. I find it amazing that I downloaded this Kindle Single on September 11. I did not preview the book. I believe I clicked on the icon by mistake. If I had known it was about the attack on the World Trade Center, I would not have downloaded it. For me, there is just too much noise and repetition of horrible personal tragedies. This book is not like that. It is uplifting and hopeful about survival. It was an emotional read for me and the best that I have read about coping with a huge disaster (the event itself) and personal long-lasting grief (I can save only myself). As for the book: *The Choice* by Andrea Raynor is a short book of reflection on the choices made by people of all occupations on September 11 when the Towers came down in New York. The author is still making choices several months later, at Christmas. So are the workers working at Ground Zero. Raynor worked as a chaplain in the morgue at Ground Zero while the cleanup was going on. She talked with construction workers, police officers, firefighters, EMT personnel, soldiers, and other chaplains as all tried to come to grips with the realities they had witnessed. She reflects on how her life has changed and the effects on her family and daily routines.

Writing with unflinching honesty and gorgeous imagery, Raynor depicts a most improbable state of grace in the aftermath of 9/11. The rescue workers and chaplains who bore witness, and searched for remains. The haunting solemnity of the night shift at Ground Zero and the feeling of being amidst something sacred. Her tale reminds me of how it felt back then, how strangers cried with strangers, how we all felt lost but connected with each other. Brave and beautiful.

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