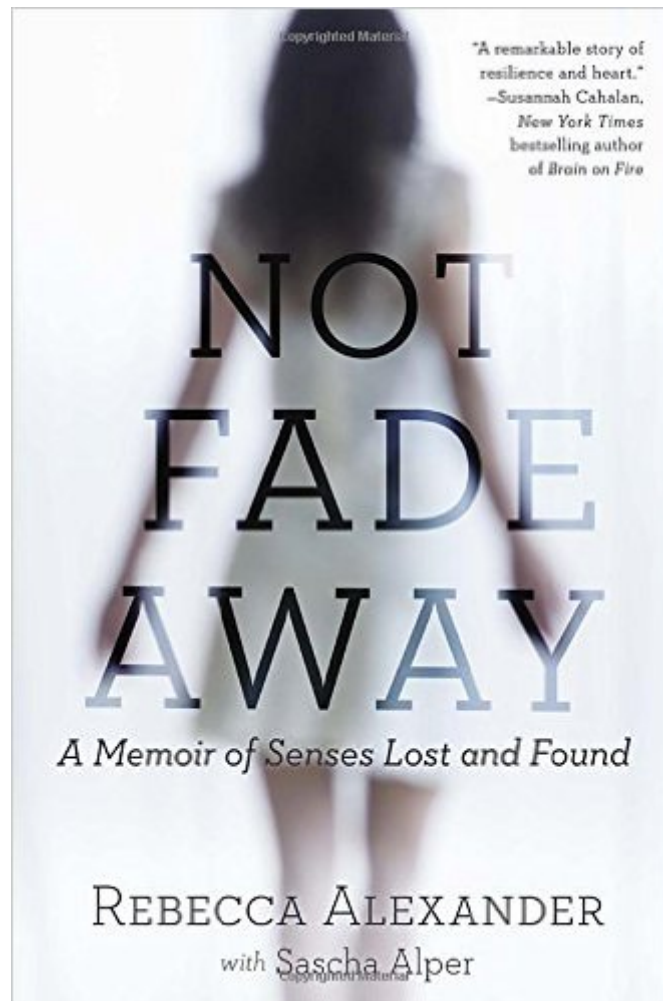


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# Not Fade Away: A Memoir Of Senses Lost And Found



## Synopsis

The inspiring and moving memoir of a young woman who is slowly losing her sight and hearing yet continues to live life to its fullest potential. Even a darkening world can be brilliantly lit from within. Born with a rare genetic mutation called Usher syndrome type III, Rebecca Alexander has been simultaneously losing both her sight and hearing since she was a child, and she was told that she would likely be completely blind and deaf by thirty. Then, at eighteen, a fall from a window left her athletic body completely shattered. None of us know what we would do in the face of such devastation. What Rebecca did was rise to every challenge she faced. She was losing her vision and hearing and her body was broken, but she refused to lose her drive, her zest for life, or her sense of humor. Now, at thirty-five, with only a sliver of sight and significantly deteriorated hearing, she is a psychotherapist with two master's degrees from Columbia University and an athlete who teaches spin classes and regularly competes in extreme endurance races. She greets every day as if it were a gift, with boundless energy, innate curiosity, and a strength of spirit that have led her to places we can't imagine. In *Not Fade Away*, Rebecca tells her extraordinary story, by turns harrowing, funny, and inspiring. She meditates on what she's lost from the sound of a whisper to seeing a sky full of stars, and what she's found in return an exquisite sense of intimacy with those she is closest to, a love of silence, a profound gratitude for everything she still has, and a joy in simple pleasures that most of us forget to notice. *Not Fade Away* is both a memoir of the senses and a unique look at the obstacles we all face physical, psychological, and philosophical exploring the extraordinary powers of memory, love, and perseverance. It is a gripping story, an offering of hope and motivation, and an exquisite reminder to live each day to its fullest.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I thoroughly enjoyed this book, and believe everyone - from high school students to elderly pensioners - can gain a great deal by reading it. I've read many books about inspiring people, but this one was better. Due to the distinctively genuine, open, warm and humorous voice in this book, the reader feels a closeness to the author. I felt like Rebecca was opening up to me, rather than talking down to or lecturing me. I also felt like I was on the same playing field as Rebecca, which is actually the case given that we all have disabilities. Perhaps Rebecca's disabilities are more visible and concrete than our fear of failure, social anxiety, or what have you, but we are all challenged to find ways to lead full, happy, loving lives despite our disabilities. Reading about how Rebecca has succeeded to work through her disabilities is interesting and enjoyable reading, but, more importantly, it gives the reader ideas, encouragement and hope. Lisa Katz Shimoni

Having the privilege of knowing author Rebecca, I could write for hours about her perseverance, how inspiring and strong she is and how to me she is essentially a superhero. But none of these things, (as related to her disabilities) define who she is for even a minute, nor do they define this book. What starts as a truly unique couldn't write this sh\*t if you tried kind of story, quickly reveals itself to be full of humor, humanity and the universal truths and questions we all face. I felt as if I was sitting across from Rebecca being happily bombarded by her contagious humor and zest for life. Her personality, honesty and relatable experiences jump off each page, prompting the reader to consider not only their own blessings and challenges, but the larger questions about being the best friends, sisters/brothers, lovers and people we can be. We all stand to learn so much from those like Rebecca who are brave enough not only to live life SO large but also to share each moment so honestly with the world. Every anecdote in this book is a reminder of how adaptable, resilient and downright loving we can all choose to be when given the choice. Not a light read to be sure, but as only Rebecca can, this book takes the scariest and loneliest aspects of our lives and creates space for laughter, love and hope. A GREAT read.

If you were to read only about the horrors of the disease that afflicts the author of this book, you would miss the point entirely! Rebecca Alexander is funny, smart, driven, yet totally realistic about

the challenges presented by her disabilities. The beauty of this memoir is that it's more a guide on how to navigate around your obstacles and to push towards goals and ambitions despite how much harder they might be to achieve. This woman is fearless and has told her doctors, teachers and more cautious friends where they can stick it, when they suggest that she might not be able to do everything she has her mind set on. I imagine it wouldn't be easy to tell Ms Alexander that she can't do something. Good luck! Read this book, soak in the message, and push forward. If you have a bad day, she reminds us that the sun rises tomorrow and presents a whole new opportunity to climb the hills in front of us. A fantastic reflection on life. Plain life. Not disabled life, not impaired life, but the life we are all challenged to lead, 20/20 vision or otherwise.

I've never been much of a reader, but I do know that when I pick up most books, it takes me a while to finish. Not in this case. *Not Fade Away* is an example of one of those books you just can't. put. down. Rebecca's stories are candid and detailed..almost as if she's personally speaking to you and only you. Reading this book makes me want to live life the way Rebecca does. She is so strong, determined, and quite witty. After all that she's gone through, Rebecca's message is clear--to live in the moment. To capture the moment. Be thankful for what you do have. Everyone has their own issues, and *Not Fade Away* is a reminder that you're not alone in this world. With great family, friends, and some good humor..you can conquer anything. I highly recommend this book--I know everyone will agree and love it as much as I did.

Imagine reaching a crossroads in life in which you learned you would be blind if you went one direction, or deaf if you went the other. Rebecca Alexander reveals what her preference would be if she had to make such a choice. For her there was no crossroads. She learned that she was losing both vision and hearing. In *Not Fade Away: A Memoir of Senses Lost and Found*, Rebecca takes the reader on a journey she has traveled since hearing that terrible news. She received the news when she was 19-years-old. Now she is 31, and still has some of both senses left. The time remaining until she reaches the unhappy end of not being able to see has been pushed out 10 years to the age of 40. In the meantime there is hopeful research underway that could result in some sight being saved. There is hope that she won't go totally deaf thanks to recent cochlear implantation. Rebecca was born with the condition known as Usher Syndrome Type III, a rare genetic disorder. Those who are born with it face a destiny of both deafness and blindness. Rebecca was born with good visual and aural capacity. The diminishing visual and hearing capacities have come gradually. Yet she has remained strong through all the adversity, and her

story is truly inspirational. This young woman tells of many other things that have happened in her life, some of which have been very difficult to endure. Through it all she has not given up. It is apparent that no matter what happens, she is going to be ready to meet the challenges. The story is one that is uplifting, and a real page-turner. Rebecca is moving forward with her life, and she is a shining example for all of us.

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