

# [PDF] After Long Silence

## Helen Fremont - pdf download free book

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### Books Details:

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Author: Helen Fremont  
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### Description:

In her mid-30s Helen Fremont discovered that, although she had been raised in the Midwest as a Catholic, she was in fact the daughter of Polish Jews whose families had been exterminated in the Holocaust. Fremont's tender but unsparing memoir chronicles the voyage of discovery she took with her older sister, ferreting out information from Jewish organizations and individuals and worrying about its impact on their angry, overpowering father and reticent, nightmare-plagued mother. Fremont has the courage to paint a nearly unsympathetic portrait of her parents' secretiveness and initial reluctance to have their children dredge up the past; as the narrative unfolds, readers comprehend the tormented roots of their behavior without forgetting the psychological problems it

created for their daughters. Fremont's re-creation of her parents' ghastly ordeals--her mother narrowly escaping the murder of nearly every Jew in her hometown; her father surviving six years in the Soviet gulag--is a triumph of dogged research and sympathetic imagination. Her book tells a deeply American story of identity lost and reclaimed, complete with Fremont coming out to her parents as a lesbian, yet it also achieves understanding of the dark European past and its icy grip on her family. --*Wendy Smith* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

**From Publishers Weekly** Fremont's memoir is an incredible tale of survival, a beautiful love story and a suspenseful account of how the author's investigation of her roots shattered fiercely guarded family secrets. Raised Roman Catholic in a Michigan suburb, Fremont knew that her parents had been in concentration camps. Her Polish mother, Batya, was interned in Mussolini's Italy, and her Hungarian-born father, Kovik, was sentenced to life in the Siberian gulag. But her parents refused to talk about their past, and they never let on that they had been born Jews. Fremont, a Boston lawyer and public defender, and her sister, Lara, a psychiatrist, pieced together their parents' hidden past by examining archives and tracking down Holocaust survivors. As Batya and Kovik gradually opened up to discuss their ordeals, Fremont was able to reclaim her Jewish faith and to make sense of a childhood marked by panic attacks and a hyperactive fantasy life. She also divulged a secret of her own when, at the age of 35, she finally told her mother that she is a lesbian. The bombshell coming-out story is secondary to the harrowing account of her parents' traumas: Batya's escape from Nazi-occupied Poland only to be arrested on the Italian border; the bizarre marriage of Fremont's maternal aunt to a government official in Fascist Rome who helped secure Batya's release from an Italian concentration camp; Kovik's escape from Siberia after six years of hard labor and his 1947 reunion with his fiancée in Rome, where they married as Catholics; the couple's emigration to the U.S. in 1950. Though the story is at times emotionally overwhelming, Fremont writes with an admirable restraint that enables her to turn her parents' life, and her own, into a triumphant work of art. Author tour.

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