



# The Woman Who Thought too Much: A Memoir

By Joanne Limburg

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**The Woman Who Thought too Much: A Memoir** By Joanne Limburg

**For readers of *A Year of Magical Thinking* by Joan Didion and *Bad Blood* by Lorna Sage comes an intensely honest and surprisingly witty literary memoir of one woman's life as a sufferer of Obsessive-compulsive disorder**

Joanne Limburg is a woman who thinks things she doesn't want to think, and who does things she doesn't want to do. As a small child, she would chew her hair all day and lie awake at night wondering if heaven had a ceiling; a few years later, when she should have been doing her homework, she was pacing her bedroom, agonizing about the unfairness of life as a woman, and the shortness of her legs. By the time she was an adult, obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviors had come to dominate her life. She knew that something was wrong with her, but it would take many years before she understood what that something was. This memoir follows Limburg's quest to understand her OCD and to manage her symptoms, taking the reader on a journey through consulting rooms, libraries, and websites as she learns about rumination, scrupulosity, avoidance, thought-action fusion, fixed-action patterns, anal fixations, schemas, basal ganglia, tics, and synapses. Meanwhile, she does her best to come to terms with an illness that turns out to be common and even—sometimes—treatable. This vividly honest memoir is a sometimes shocking, often humorous revelation of what it is like to live with so debilitating a condition. It is also an exploration of the inner world of a poet and an intense evocation of the persistence and courage of the human spirit in the face of mental illness.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"At times you want to close this book to protect its subject from your scrutiny. . . . She brings insight and a rueful wit to her story, which is interesting not only for her fellow walking wounded, but for writers and would-be writers." —Hilary Mantel, author, *Wolf Hall*

"Her prose . . . is disciplined, directional, and thankfully not without humor. . . . She presents a tale of self-acceptance, and that is something most of us could benefit from in an egocentric world that expects airbrushed perfection." —*Jewish Chronicle*

#### About the Author

**Joanne Limburg** is the author of two poetry collections. *Femenismo* was shortlisted for the Forward Best First Collection Prize and *Paraphernalia* was a Poetry Book Society Recommendation.

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