Her Name is Quintana Roo: Essays, Poetry, Memoir

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Abstract
Her name is Quintana Roo is a collection of essays, poetry, and memoir through the lens of the author's experience as a child, mother, wife, journalist, and librarian. The dominant thread is the establishment of a septuagenarian's enchantment with words and writing.

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She wrote this one after her daughter, Quintana Roo, passed away a year after she lost her husband. Words of Wisdom: "Fade as the blue nights fade, go as the brightness goes. Go back into the blue.” This masterful collection of personal essays grapples with feelings that we can all relate to, regardless of what behavior and events or nonevents led us to them. The first essay is particularly moving and resonant, as Chew-Bose begins the essay discussing an obscure, probably infrequently used emoji and its larger implications about the heart's will to continue beating against all odds. She talks about her childhood, her tendency to curl up in nooks, and what that tells us about her, and what it's like to long and love. In her memoir, Blue Nights, the author writes movingly about her daughter's death. But did she overlook Quintana Roo's alcoholism? Didion invests much more attention in the idea that Quintana was mentally ill than in the possibility that her daughter's alcoholism was her primary problem—or, at least, a health threat equal to that of her mental illness. Despite Didion's skill as an investigator, despite her admissions that Quintana "drank too much" and that she died of acute pancreatitis, the words "alcoholism" or "addiction" are not mentioned anywhere in the book. Neither, in fact, are they mentioned in the New York story. In this essay, Didion reports, or purports to report, on the murder case of one Lucille Maxwell Miller, who was convicted by the State of California of having killed her husband by dousing him with gasoline and allowing him to burn to death while he slept in a Volkswagen she had been driving. Until I sat down to write this essay, I could not, in fact, remember whether Lucille Maxwell Miller had been convicted or acquitted.