

Blue nights

Blue Nights



OK. I confess. This book sat for most of its check-out period on my night table. I had

read Didion's excellent book [The Year of Magical Thinking](#) but I knew that this new memoir covered another territory of loss--not that of her husband, John Gregory Dunne, but of her daughter who had the wonderful name of Quintana Roo (a state in Mexico.)

And yes, [Blue Nights](#) is sad. As would be any book about losing your only child. But it's also amazingly human, full of insights and many questions, some of which go unanswered.

First the title. It comes from those late June, early July nights where twilight seems to linger for hours until darkness finally comes. The light is soft; the world is warm and alive. Didion speaks of them as occurring only in the north, not far south in LA where she spent much of her life as a screenwriter, essayist, and novelist and where Quintana grew up. No, the blue lights happen in New York City where Didion now lives now and where Quintana died young at the age of thirty-nine from a massive infection. To make matters even more tragic, she first got ill only five months after her wedding.

The book covers other things as well adoption, meeting with biological family for the first time as an adult, parenting, the failures of parenting, and, in particular, aging. Didion writes with brutal honesty especially about this last topic. [Read more »](#)

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