



How We Got Barb Back: The Story of My Sister's Reawakening from 30 Years of Schizophrenia

Margaret Hawkins

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Margaret Hawkins spent her girlhood dazzled by her vivacious, high-achieving sister, Barb. Younger than Barb by eleven years, Margaret saw her sister as the star of her family. And no wonder. Barb's high school years were filled with achievement inside and outside of the classroom. After college, Barb married a charming young professor, Karim Shallal, and embraced living abroad with him, when he was offered a full professorship at Basra University in Iraq. That was in 1971.

In three years, everything changed. As Margaret Hawkins writes in her new book, *How We Got Barb Back: The Story of My Sister's Reawakening after 30 Years of Schizophrenia*, "On a promising day in 1974, my family's life blew up. That was the day my beautiful, bright, and very American older sister returned from Iraq. Something had changed during those years she was gone, and the Barb we knew never really returned. That Barb had vanished, and though her husband tried to bring her home, she was already gone."

Unimaginable as it might seem, for the next 32 years Barb went undiagnosed and untreated. *How We Got Barb Back* recounts the story of those years and the steps Margaret Hawkins took to bring her sister back from the depths of crippling mental illness. This story of sisterly love is both full of surprises and profoundly inspiring.

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