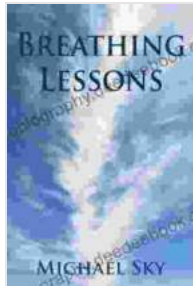


Breathing Lessons: A Novel by Anne Tyler

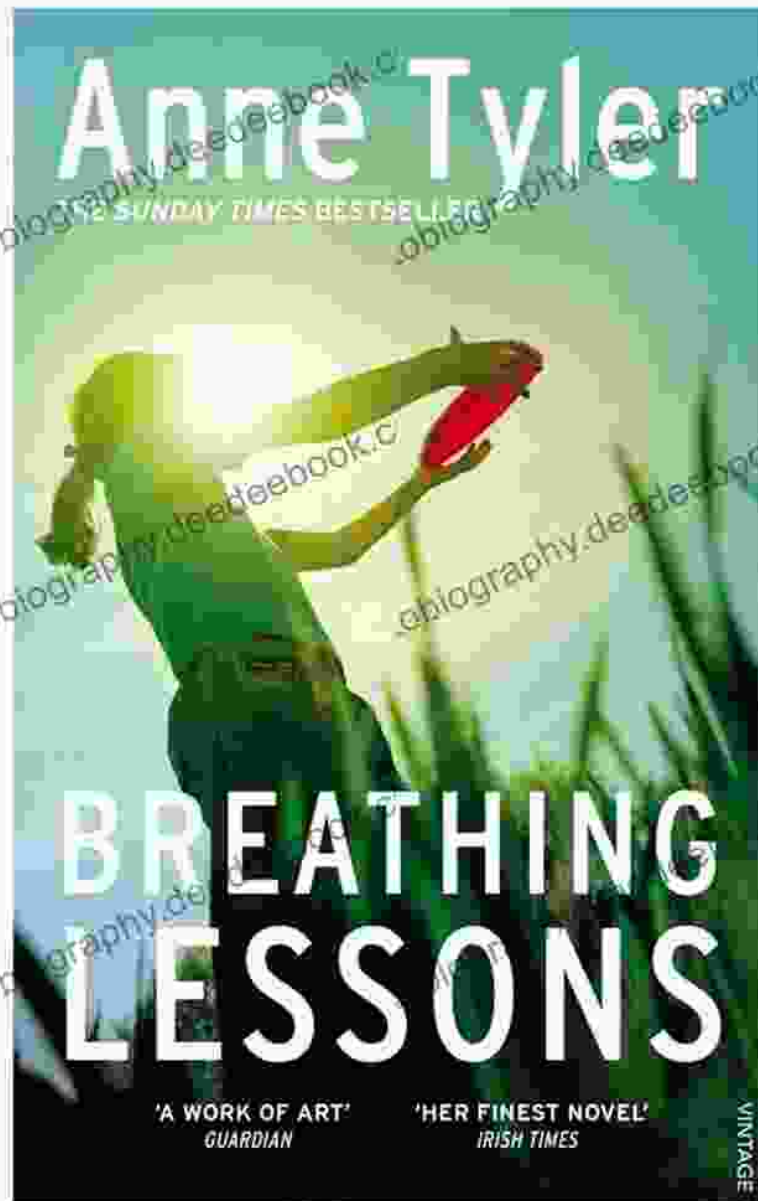


Breathing Lessons by Michael Sky

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

- Language : English
- File size : 360 KB
- Text-to-Speech : Enabled
- Screen Reader : Supported
- Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
- Word Wise : Enabled
- Print length : 148 pages
- Lending : Enabled

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Breathing Lessons is a novel by Anne Tyler that won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1989. The novel tells the story of Maggie Moran, a middle-aged woman who is coming to terms with her own mortality and the challenges of her family life.

Maggie is a devoted wife and mother, but she is also a complex and flawed character who is struggling to find her own voice and identity apart from her

family. The novel explores themes of love, loss, grief, marriage, relationships, parenting, coming-of-age, coming-to-terms with adulthood, midlife crisis, Alzheimer's disease, dementia, family secrets, family relationships, finding oneself, finding one's voice, finding one's place in the world, finding one's identity, and finding one's purpose.

Plot summary

The novel opens with Maggie Moran celebrating her 40th birthday with her family. Maggie is a devoted wife and mother, but she is also a complex and flawed character who is struggling to find her own voice and identity apart from her family.

Maggie's husband, Ira, is a successful doctor, and her children, Sarah and Jesse, are both bright and well-adjusted. However, Maggie feels like she is losing herself in her family. She has always dreamed of becoming a writer, but she has never had the time or the courage to pursue her dream.

One day, Maggie's father is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Maggie is devastated by the news, but she also sees it as an opportunity to finally take control of her own life. She decides to quit her job and start writing a book about her father's illness.

As Maggie writes her book, she begins to explore her own life and the choices she has made. She comes to realize that she has always been afraid to live her own life, and she has always put her family's needs before her own.

Through the process of writing her book, Maggie finally finds her own voice and identity. She learns to stand up for herself and to pursue her own

dreams. She also learns to forgive herself for the mistakes she has made and to accept herself for who she is.

Characters

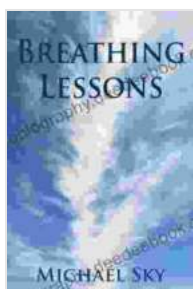
- **Maggie Moran:** A middle-aged woman who is coming to terms with her own mortality and the challenges of her family life. Maggie is a devoted wife and mother, but she is also a complex and flawed character who is struggling to find her own voice and identity apart from her family.
- **Ira Moran:** Maggie's husband, a successful doctor. Ira is a kind and supportive husband, but he is also a workaholic who is often absent from his family.
- **Sarah Moran:** Maggie and Ira's daughter, a bright and well-adjusted teenager. Sarah is a close friend to her mother, and she is often able to see things that Maggie herself cannot.
- **Jesse Moran:** Maggie and Ira's son, a bright and well-adjusted teenager. Jesse is a close friend to his mother, and he is often able to provide her with a different perspective on things.
- **Dr. Harold Miller:** Maggie's father, a successful businessman who is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Harold is a kind and loving father, but he is also a proud and stubborn man who is unwilling to accept his illness.
- **Celia Miller:** Maggie's mother, a kind and supportive woman. Celia is a loving and devoted wife and mother, but she is also a bit of a worrier and a fussy budget.

Themes

- **Love:** The novel explores the different types of love, including romantic love, familial love, and self-love. Maggie's love for her family is a powerful force in her life, but it is also a source of pain and conflict.
- **Loss:** The novel also explores the different types of loss, including the loss of a loved one, the loss of a dream, and the loss of oneself. Maggie experiences many different types of loss throughout the novel, and she must learn to cope with each one in her own way.
- **Grief:** The novel explores the different stages of grief, including denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Maggie experiences all of these stages of grief as she comes to terms with her father's illness and her own mortality.
- **Marriage:** The novel explores the different aspects of marriage, including the challenges of communication, intimacy, and commitment. Maggie and Ira's marriage is a complex and evolving one, and they must learn to adapt to the changing needs of their relationship.
- **Relationships:** The novel explores the different types of relationships, including parent-child relationships, sibling relationships, and friendships. Maggie's relationships with her family and friends are a source of support and strength for her, but they are also a source of conflict and pain.
- **Parenting:** The novel explores the different aspects of parenting, including the joys, the challenges, and the sacrifices. Maggie is a devoted mother, but she also struggles with the guilt and the fear of not being a good enough mother.
- **Coming-of-age:** The novel explores the different stages of coming-of-age, including adolescence, young adulthood, and middle age. Maggie

experiences many different challenges and changes throughout the novel, and she must learn to come to terms with who she is and what she wants from life.

- **Coming-to-terms with adulthood:** The novel explores the different challenges of coming-to-terms with adulthood, including the responsibilities, the choices, and the consequences.



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