

## Torn Fish: A Mother, Her Autistic Son, and Their Shared Humanity

Phyllis Mannan



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What does happen when a child with autism grows up? "We often hear inspirational stories about children with autism making remarkable gains . . . but seldom hear the story of their transition from school to adult life. Autistic adults, and their families, find themselves alone as they try to navigate an adult service system that has little to offer. This compelling story of David's life with autism helps you understand the loneliness and isolation that come when communication is impaired." —Dr. Jean Edwards, Edwards Center Founder Phyllis Mannan discovers a strange object floating on the water in the fish tank at her son's dentist's office: "a small fish, splayed at the spine, like two fish trying to swim apart, thinly held together by a tail." She reluctantly associates this image with her relationship to her son, who has autism. They are indelibly linked by his dependence upon her. By the end of the book, their bond allows them to be themselves—to swim separately. Based on the author's experiences with her 43-year-old son, Torn Fish invites you to see how David's mind works and how his limited ability to communicate and to understand feelings impacts his daily life and that of his family. The author also offers insight from her years of struggling to make good decisions for her son, all the while trying to make, and keep, a connection with him.

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