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## Preface

No parent ever expects to outlive his or her own child. Regardless of the circumstances, this type of loss can make their lives seem unbearable as they struggle to live each day without their sons or daughters.

Although I knew deep in my heart that I was not responsible for Michael's death, many of my days were spent reliving the painful memory associated with losing him. At least, until I had the good fortune of crossing paths with a Jewish Rabbi. He was visiting his family in Idaho and good friends with Bob Abrams, the private eye investigating our wrongful death claim. Rabbi Stigler was a man who possessed a warm spirit and a compassionate nature. He listened with great intent as I spoke about Michael and the people responsible for his death.

Although many years have passed since our initial meeting, I can still remember his keen insight, and his words have never been far from my thoughts

“Brooke, whenever a parent loses a child, they receive a gift. Once you discover what Michael’s passing has given you, you will be able to move on with a joyful heart.”

Before meeting Rabbi Stigler, I was afraid that I would not be able to adequately portray my son’s life or show the magnitude of his courage throughout his ordeal. However, thanks to his unique sense about grief and dying, I eventually realized that Michael’s death had nothing to do with my intelligence, profession, or anything about me personally. It came from a flawed system that had already existed for many years. In fact, the system we call “health care” had been extending inadequate care to anyone who had the misfortune of crossing paths with it for many years prior to me having to rely on it. Armed with this poignant and simple truth, I knew how important it was for our family to share the “gifts” we were given with the millions of people who will read this book.