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Author Suzanne Congdon LeRoy Launches Debut Memoir, “Nightingale”

Suzanne Congdon LeRoy’s debut memoir, *Nightingale: A Memoir of Murder, Madness, and the Messenger of Spring* was published June 5, 2014, by Kitai Press.

Nightingale is the astonishing true story of Elisabeth Mannering Congdon, heiress to a mining fortune and victim of one of Minnesota’s most notorious homicides. Entrusted with the burdens and joys of memory, her eldest granddaughter, Suzanne Congdon LeRoy, combines lived experience and meticulous historical research as she details a family legacy of love, loss, and perseverance. Elisabeth Congdon emerges not as heiress or victim but as the messenger of spring and the key to her granddaughter’s survival. Elisabeth Congdon’s early efforts to nurture a foundation of hope, optimism, and the power of possibility lead Suzanne to advanced education, a remarkable nursing career and the discovery of the ineffable relationship between healing oneself, service to others, and the connection to the spirit and beauty of the earth that makes her whole again.

“My grandmother was so much more than the ill-fated tragedy of the last day of her life. I felt compelled to immerse myself in her story and what she would have wanted people to know. For the first time, intimate details of her extraordinary life are revealed. A portion of the proceeds of the book will be used to support health and human rights initiatives that benefit women and girls with an emphasis on education, reproductive health, and violence prevention.”

—Suzanne Congdon LeRoy

“This powerful memoir tells the story of a young girl whose beloved grandmother provided security in the midst of an otherwise unpredictable and sometimes violent family. Many children in such circumstances would lose hope, but the author transformed her anxiety into passion for making the world a safer place for children and vulnerable adults. The book provides a rich source of information for those interested in the history of notable Minnesota families. The writing is compelling and worth taking to heart.”

—Harold D. Grotevant, Ph.D.
Rudd Family Foundation Chair and Professor of Psychology
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Suzanne Congdon LeRoy has been a nurse practitioner for 30 years with specialty certifications in Women’s Health (OB/GYN), Family Practice, and advanced practice HIV/AIDS. She completed her Bachelors, Masters, and Ph.D. in Nursing at the University of Minnesota, and executive education at Harvard Kennedy School. She is a member of the Junior League of Minneapolis, the Woman’s Club of Minneapolis, YouthLink Foundation Builders, and a Northside Achievement Zone Friend of the Future.

Visit <http://suzannecongdonleroy.com> for more information. High-resolution photos, interviews, and review copies available.
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