

The Burning Bed



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POLICE IN A SMALL MICHIGAN TOWN were startled when a young woman, her children with her, drove to the jail to surrender. " ! did it!...! clid itl " she screamed, and told them she had set fire to the bedroom in which her husband slept-then fled, leaving him to die in flames.

Her name was Francine Hughes. This is

the story, exactly as it happened, of her crime.

What forced this "ordinary" housewife to kill? What could justify such a horrifying act? This remarkable book reveals the helplessness of a woman trapped in an intolerable marriage; how she became the virtual prisoner of an ever more abusive and terrifying man.

At twenty-nine Francine had endured thirteen years with Mickey Hughes during which youthful romance and idealism turned to disillusion and daily fear—then escalated to terror as each outbreak of Mickey's violence brought her closer to death. Flight was impossible unless she abandoned her beloved children. This, she refused to do. Police, the courts, and social agencies blandly turned aside her pleas for help. "Every door was closed. Every time I failed I sank lower. Every day Mickey was coming closer to killing me. It was like living with a bomb—waiting for it to explode."

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