



Why I Left the Amish: A Memoir

Saloma Miller Furlong

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There are two ways to leave the Amish—one is through life and the other through death. When Saloma Miller Furlong's father dies during her first semester at Smith College, she returns to the Amish community she had left twenty four years earlier to attend his funeral. Her journey home prompts a flood of memories. Now a mother with grown children of her own, Furlong recalls her painful childhood in a family defined by her father's mental illness, her brother's brutality, her mother's frustration, and the austere traditions of the Amish—traditions Furlong struggled to accept for years before making the difficult decision to leave the community. In this personal and moving memoir, Furlong traces the genesis of her desire for freedom and education and chronicles her conflicted quest for independence. Eloquently told, *Why I Left the Amish* is a revealing portrait of life within—and without—this frequently misunderstood community.

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