
ALSO BY BRUCE ERIC KAPLAN

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No One You Know

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I Love You, I Hate You, I'm Hungry

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Cousin Irv from Mars

Meaniehead

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I was a child, but I wasn't very good at it. I'm not sure why. I think a lot of us are born waiting to be adults. I know I was. I Was a Child: A Memoir I just sat there, waiting. This is that story.

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MY MOTHER went into labor with me at the 1964 World's Fair, which was in Queens, New York. Every time I fly into JFK and take a cab to Manhattan, I look out the window at I Was a Child: A Memoir the old fairgrounds and I think, *That's where I began.*

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I WAS TAKEN home to 20 Sommer Avenue in Maplewood, New Jersey. On the I Was a Child: A Memoir front porch was a gray box meant for milk bottle delivery and pickup. When I was a baby, a milkman would come by once a week to pick up the old bottles and replace them with new ones. Then, of course, he stopped coming when all the milkmen stopped coming.

That box stayed on the front porch for the next four decades, empty. When something was put somewhere at my parents' house, it stayed there—long after it broke, or I Was a Child: A Memoir no longer served a purpose, or just wasn't used anymore for whatever reason.

• • •

I HAVE two brothers, Michael and Andrew, seven and four years older. I have I Was a Child: A Memoir no idea how they felt about me showing up.

I do know that very early on, I had the sensation that everyone was a lot bigger and they I Was a Child: A Memoir could hurt me.

• • •

MY MOTHER couldn't take having three boys. She was extremely jumpy, to say the least. Any noise startled her. The sound of a pot dropping on the ground could make her hit the ceiling.

"I'm getting discombobulated!" she would scream, when we were too loud or would be too much for her in some way.

She spent a lot of time being discombobulated.

• • •

WE HAD a hamster whom we named Hampy. One day, she somehow gave birth to baby hamsters and we clamored around her tank, looking I Was a Child: A Memoir at them. Then we watched in horror as Hampy ate all her babies. My mother told us it was because we scared Hampy.

I felt we were too much for Hampy, just as, apparently, we were too much for my mother.

• • •

ONE NIGHT I Was a Child: A Memoir when I was very little, I had a dream in which I saw a bee who started crying. I woke up very upset about the sad bee. I wish I knew why that bee was crying and why I was so sad that he was so sad.

I Was A Child A Memoir

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