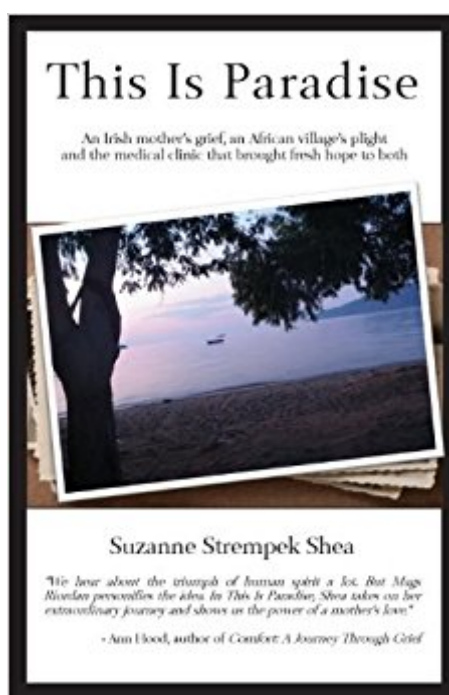


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# This Is Paradise: An Irish Mother's Grief, An African Village's Plight, And The Medical Clinic That Brought Fresh Hope To Both



## Synopsis

Your brakes fail and your car plunges from a pier into a February-frigid harbor. You are thrown to safety but your four-month old daughter, trapped in her car seat, drowns. Four years after that horror, you return from a trip to the shore and lift your four-month-old son from his carrier only to realize he's dead, too, a victim of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. Twenty-two years later, your 25-year old son drowns while swimming in a Malawi, Africa lake. How do you survive that first death, never mind the second, or the third? Ask Mags Riordan of County Kerry, Ireland. Only the blessing of her son Billy, the boy who later drowned, carried Mags through those first two deaths. Her reaction to Billy's loss caused Mags to do something beyond simple survival, though it caused her to do something transformative, and remarkable. Returning to Malawi on the one-year anniversary of Billy's death, she saved the life of a local boy who would otherwise have died from a simple infection, and realized the desperate need for a medical clinic. With virtually no relevant experience, medical or otherwise, Mags founded a clinic that to date has saved and transformed the lives of tens of thousands of Malawians. If any of us wonders "What can one person do?" we need only look to Mags Riordan as a living, breathing example of someone who put aside her despair, and her comfort zone, in an effort to help and heal, proving the world truly can be changed, even by just two hands, and one single broken heart. This Is Paradise is the story of an Irish mother's grief, an African village's plight, and the remote medical clinic that brought fresh hope to both.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This Is Paradise is the inspiring story of how an ordinary Irish woman transformed her grief over the loss of her son into good for others. Mags Riordan's son Billy accidentally drowns in a lake in the African country of Malawi. Initially moved to start a school in the village where her son died, Riordan visits and discovers a crucial need for medical services in the area. In this well-researched book, author Suzanne Strempek Shea tells the story of Mags--both in Ireland and Africa--and shows how she overcomes her grief to make a significant impact on her adopted nation. This is a must-read for all who hope to make a difference in the world.

I bought this because I am a fan of Suzanne's work, both fiction and nonfiction. In doing so, I learned about a courageous woman who has really made a difference in the world. In addition, I gained insight into the plight of the citizens of Malawi and their culture. I learned a lot and feel motivated to take action on things important to me.

A very interesting book -- the premise sounds tragic: an Irish woman who has suffered the loss of three children goes to Africa to visit the site where her young adult son drowned. And . . . she ends up starting a foundation and building a health clinic in this remote area. She spends most of each year in Africa, where she devotes her energy and expertise to the project.

Author has ability to make you feel she is in your living room telling this fascinating story of a regular person dealing with grief and making something positive. Interviews with friends, family, colleagues fleshes out and colors two different worlds, Dingle and Lake Malawi.

An engaging and enjoyable book I recommend whether you are Irish or not!

I liked the book as I know the woman personally

This is an interesting story of what one woman was able to accomplish out of the deep "wounds" her life has provided. IF you choose to read this book, you will learn much about life in a very poor village in Africa. Also, about the determination of "Mags", a mother of not only her own five children, but the people of Malawi. I will say in fairness, there were times while reading I thought it was "long" and "overdone".

Beyond inspiring!

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