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Nota di contenuto	Intro -- Half Title Page -- Series Page -- Title Page -- Copyright page -- Dedication Page -- Contents -- Acknowledgments -- Introduction: Out of the Closet to Bear Witness -- "Compulsive Memoirism of the Mentally Ill" -- A New Sub-Genre Largely Ignored or Mistrusted -- Understanding Memoirs Backward and Forward -- Creative Malady -- The Ambiguities of Mad Muses and Mad Memoirs -- Fake Memoirs -- F. Scott Fitzgerald: "The Authority of Failure" -- Sherwin Nuland: "I was an Impostor" -- The Wounded Storyteller -- The Difference Between Survival Stories and Triumph Narratives -- Writing/Righting Wrong -- The Plan of this Book -- Questions -- 1-"The Landscape Of Depression": William Styron and Darkness Visible -- "BEYOND EXPRESSION" -- "THE LANDSCAPE OF DEPRESSION" -- LIE DOWN IN DARKNESS -- A WRAITHLIKE OBSERVER -- A MIRROR OF STYRON'S CHILDHOOD LIFE -- SET THIS HOUSE ON FIRE -- THE CONFESSIONS OF NAT TURNER -- SOPHIE'S CHOICE -- "MALIGNANT DEPRESSION" --

STINGO'S RESCUE FANTASIES -- "A STUDY IN THE CONQUEST OF GRIEF"
 -- "MY WRITING HAD KEPT SERIOUS EMOTIONAL DISTRESS SAFELY AT
 BAY" -- STYRON'S HEART OF DARKNESS -- WHY MEMOIR? -- "THE
 FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION" -- READING MY FATHER -- A SCANDAL --
 WRITING MADNESS -- ALL THE FINEST GIRLS -- A SUICIDE LETTER TO
 HIS READERS -- A LIFELINE -- 2-"My Proclaimed Sanity and My
 Conjectured Madness": Kate Millett and The Loony-Bin Trip -- Sexual
 Politics -- The Prostitution Papers: A Candid Dialogue -- Flying -- Sita
 -- The Basement and Going to Iran -- The Loony-Bin Trip -- Millett's
 Reading of Other Accounts of Mood Disorders -- A Conspiracy --
 Interpreting Tape-Recorded Conversations -- Sleeplessness -- The
 Loony-Bin Trip in Ireland -- Another Version of the Story -- Mania or
 Hypomania? -- Ivor Browne -- The Language of Manic Depression --
 Talk Therapy -- Thomas Szasz -- "A Crisis to Die" -- Shame.
 "A Small Prophylactic Dose" -- Reviews of The Loony-Bin Trip -- Life
 After The Loony-Bin Trip -- 3-"A Strange and Driving Force, A
 Destroyer, A Fire in the Blood": Kay Redfield Jamison and An Unquiet
 Mind -- Touched with Fire -- What's in a Name? -- An Unquiet Mind --
 Drawing upon her Own Experience: The Two Editions of Manic-
 Depressive Illness -- "Severely Depressed. Very Quiet" -- Night Falls
 Fast -- The Contagion Effect -- Jamison's Psychiatrist -- Writing About
 her Family -- Exuberance -- Nothing was the Same -- Jamison as
 Therapist -- Grief, not Madness -- Robert Lowell -- Using Psychiatric
 Records -- A Textbook Diagnosis -- Two Biographers Writing About
 Madness -- A Study of Madness and Creativity -- 4-"For Better or
 Worse You Inherit Me": Linda Gray Sexton and Searching for Mercy
 Street and Half in Love -- Anne Sexton: A Self-Portrait in Letters --
 Manic-Depressive Illness -- A Suicide Letter Five Years Before the Event
 -- Between Two Worlds -- Chris Hastings -- Rituals -- Lily Sinclair --
 Oedipal and Pre-Oedipal Desire -- Proofreading -- A Father's War Story
 -- Mirror Images -- A Signature Daughter -- Twinning and Playing
 Nine -- Domestic Violence -- Mother-Daughter Incest -- "The Double
 Image" -- Points of Light -- The Kiss -- Reunion with the Dead --
 Private Acts -- Searching for Mercy Street -- The Meaning of the Title
 -- Writing as Rescue -- Half in Love -- The Limits of Disguises --
 Sexton's Psychiatrists -- The Legacy of Suicide -- Critical Reviews --
 Ghosts and Ancestors -- 5-"Truth is Bendable": Lauren Slater and Lying
 -- Welcome to My Country -- Prozac Diary -- A Traumatizing Mother
 -- Lying -- A Philosophy Professor without Ontological Existence --
 The Ethics of Lying -- "I Exaggerate" -- "Three Blind Mice" -- "Learning
 to Fall" -- The Supermarket Incident -- "Sincerely, Yours" -- A Corpus
 Callostomy -- "The Cherry Tree".
 "How to Market this Book" -- Breach of Narrative Promise? -- "Amazing
 Grace" -- Love Works Like this -- The 60,000 Dog -- Playing House --
 Opening Skinner's Box -- All in the Family -- Blue Dreams -- Leaving
 Readers with Question Marks -- 6-"I Cannot Separate Her Homophobia
 from My Own": Andrew Solomon and The Noonday Demon -- Training
 in English and Psychology -- A Stone Boat -- Homophobia -- Assisted
 Suicide -- The Noonday Demon -- Seeking Insights from Literature and
 Philosophy -- Poetic Prose -- The Timing of Solomon's Depression --
 The Internalized Mother -- "Curing" Homosexuality --
 Psychopharmacology -- ndeup: "You are Free of Your Spirits" --
 Acknowledging Father -- Far from the Tree -- Becoming a Father --
 Far and Away -- Writing -- 7-"Someone Acts Through My Brain": Elyn
 R. Saks and The Center Cannot Hold -- Saks and Millett -- The Hidden
 Personal Element Behind Scholarship -- "A Few Little Quirks" -- The
 Question of Confidentiality -- "Elizabeth Jones"/Martha Harris -- The
 Fundamental Rule -- Termination -- "Joseph White"/Stanley W. Jackson

-- A Psychoanalytic Researcher -- "Kaplan" -- The Lady of the Charts
-- Failing Fathers -- Capgras Syndrome -- Jekyll on Trial --
Interpreting Interpretation -- Terminating Analysis with Kaplan --
Refusing Care -- Doctors Freed/Fried -- Life with and without a
Regulator -- Dr King -- Hope for the Future -- Conclusion: The
Challenges of Reading Mad Memoirs -- Elizabeth Costello -- The
Contagion Effect -- Contagious Psychiatric Disorders -- "The AX for the
Frozen Sea Within Us" -- Reading Oppositionally -- Literary Detectives
-- A Lifeline -- Bibliography -- Works Cited* -- Index.

Sommario/riassunto

Mental illness can often be the driving force behind creativity. This relationship is never more apparent than in the memoirs of writers who have lived, worked and created with a mental illness. Mad Muse examines and unpicks this fascinating relationship, demonstrating that mental illness is often intergenerational while the story of mental illness is intertextual. The study begins with William Styron's iconic memoir *Darkness Visible*, moving through a succession of mental illness memoirs from some of the most important authors in the genre, including Kate Millett, Kay Redfield Jamison, Linda Sexton, Lauren Slater, Andrew Solomon and Elyn Saks. From memoirs that blur the boundaries between historical truth and narrative truth to a first-person account of schizophrenia, Berman discusses the challenges of reading books which inspire hope and courage in many readers but may also sometimes have unintended consequences. In so doing, it illuminates the complex, co-existing relationship between the arts and mental health and represents an invaluable contribution to the study of health humanities.
