



While the City Slept: A Love Lost to Violence and a Young Man's Descent into Madness

Eli Sanders

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A Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter's gripping account of one young man's path to murder—and a wake-up call for mental health care in America

On a summer night in 2009, three lives intersected in one American neighborhood. Two people newly in love—Teresa Butz and Jennifer Hopper, who spent many years trying to find themselves and who eventually found each other—and a young man on a dangerous psychological descent: Isaiah Kalebu, age twenty-three, the son of a distant, authoritarian father and a mother with a family history of mental illness. All three paths forever altered by a violent crime, all three stories a wake-up call to the system that failed to see the signs.

In this riveting, probing, compassionate account of a murder in Seattle, Eli Sanders, who won a Pulitzer Prize for his newspaper coverage of the crime, offers a deeply reported portrait in microcosm of the state of mental health care in this country—as well as an inspiring story of love and forgiveness. Culminating in Kalebu's dangerous slide toward violence—observed by family members, police, mental health workers, lawyers, and judges, but stopped by no one—*While the City Slept* is the story of a crime of opportunity and of the string of missed opportunities that made it possible. It shows what can happen when a disturbed member of society repeatedly falls through the cracks, and in the tradition of *The Other Wes Moore* and *The Short and Tragic Life of Robert Peace*, is an indelible, human-level story, brilliantly told, with the potential to inspire social change.

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