

APPENDICES

Synopsis of *Why She Left Us*

Mitsuo Okada and Kaori Sakamoto are immigrants from Japan. They live in America during the Second World War. They have three children named Will Okada, Emi Okada, and Jack Okada. The family leads a hard life after the bombing of Pearl Harbor because the Americans treat them as their enemies. Later, the whole members of the family are sent to the internment camp in Santa Anita racetrack.

The war very much affects their lives. Will, the eldest son, dies in the war. At the age of 12, Emi has to leave home and works as a maid in order to earn money for her family. Jack has to undergo hardship after he loses his legs in the war. Their life is getting worse after the Okada's business has gone bankrupt.

After leaving her family for several years, Emi returns home. Her family is shocked to see that she is pregnant. This brings disgrace to her family because she is unmarried. What she does causes a lot of conflicts to happen in the family. Her brothers hate her very much and they often quarrel because of her wrongdoings. Emi has also given up her first son, Eric, for adoption. Knowing Emi has abandoned her own son, Kaori tries to get him back and then she raises the boy herself.

Later, Emi has a new husband, George Hamada, and they decide to live in another city. Emi takes her daughter, Mariko, with her but she leaves Eric behind. Eric lives with his grandmother, Kaori. Later, Emi has a daughter called Kim Hamada.

After Mariko has grown up and has had her own family, she knows that she has a brother and she tries to know the truth why her mother leaves Eric. In the end, Mariko can find both her brother and her uncle, Jack. She feels happy because Eric does not hate her and accepts her.

Biography of Rahna Reiko Rizzuto

Rahna Reiko Rizzuto was born in Honolulu and grew up in Kamuela on the Big Island of Hawaii. She is half-Japanese and half-Italian.

Rizzuto was educated at Wellesley in Massachusetts. Later, she studied at Columbia College. She was the first woman who graduated from the college with a major in Astrophysics. However, she decided not to become an astronomer; instead, she enrolled in creative writing courses.

Rahna Reiko Rizzuto's first novel is *Why She Left Us*. It is based on her family's experiences in the Japanese American internment camps in Santa Anita racetrack during the Second World War. This novel enables her to receive high praise from the critics. Besides, the novel gets the American Book Award for fiction from the Before Columbus Foundation. Her other novel is *Hiroshima in the Morning*, which is not published yet. Besides being a novelist, she is an essayist, an editor and a journalist.

Rizzuto teaches in the MFA in the Creative Writing Program and she is a member of the Asian American Writers Workshop. She is now living with her husband and her two sons in Brooklyn.