

My Best Friend's Diary

Sheila's diary read like a Danielle Steel novel, but Mary Ann didn't know that. She had never read her best friend's diary. Mary Ann had no inkling that Sheila fantasized about seducing her husband at their annual Fourth of July picnic, leading him into the woods behind the house. Sheila's lustful gazes and impassioned descriptions of Bronson's biceps, abs, legs, and buttocks were lost to Mary Ann in a haze of child-rearing, pet-herding, and domestic activity. If Mary Ann had read Sheila's diary, she would've realized her best friend's only domestic ambitions included vacuuming in the nude, employing various refrigerated goods for sexual enjoyment, and sewing buttons back on the clothes she had wantonly ripped from her lovers' bodies.

Mary Ann would've done better, however, to stumble upon the hallowed pages of her daughter Mercy's diary. Like most teens, Mercy had begun to explore her sexuality, specifically where it involved other girls. Unlike Sheila, Mercy's handwriting did not brag of her exploits so much as it recorded what she did with whom, where, how it made her feel, and how close she came to being caught by which member of the high school faculty. Mary Ann, had she known of her daughter's struggle toward understanding and acceptance, might have at least had the option of offering Mercy a few words of sympathetic wisdom. As it was, Mary Ann flashed ignorant smiles across the dinner table and attributed Mercy's lack of reflected enthusiasm to the notion that she, as a teenager, found dinner with her family to be less than fulfilling.