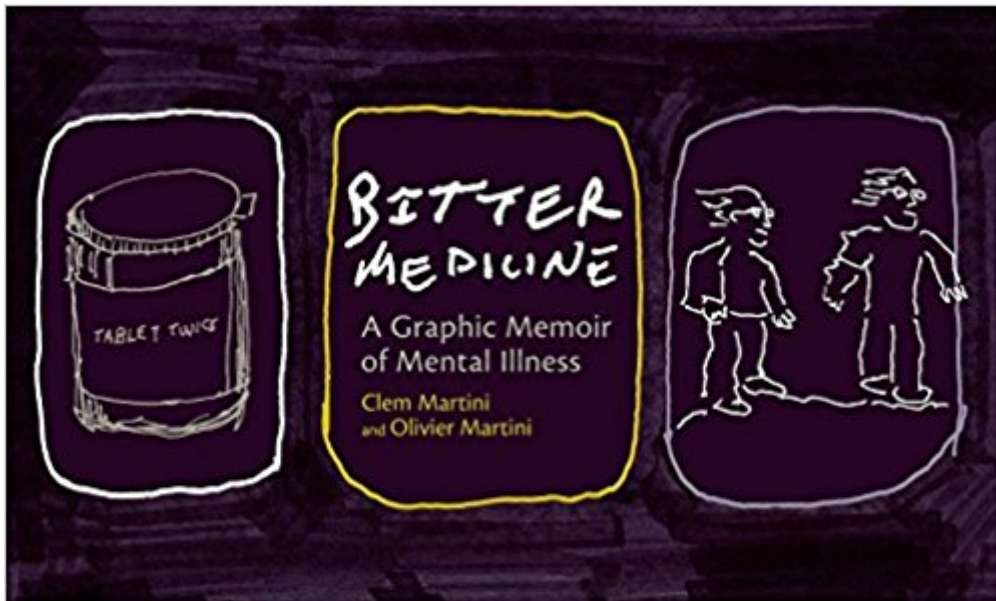




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# Bitter Medicine: A Graphic Memoir Of Mental Illness



## Synopsis

In 1976, Ben Martini was diagnosed with schizophrenia. A decade later, his brother Olivier was told he had the same disease. For the past thirty years the Martini family has struggled to comprehend and cope with a devastating illness, frustrated by a health care system lacking in resources and empathy, the imperfect science of medication, and the strain of mental illness on familial relationships. Throughout it all, Olivier, an accomplished visual artist, drew. His sketches, comic strips, and portraits document his experience with, and capture the essence of, this all too frequently misunderstood disease. In *Bitter Medicine*, Olivier's poignant graphic narrative runs alongside and communicates with a written account of the past three decades by his younger brother, award-winning author and playwright Clem Martini. The result is a layered family memoir that faces head-on the stigma attached to mental illness. Shot through with wry humour and unapologetic in its politics, *Bitter Medicine* is the story of the Martini family, a polemical and poetic portrait of illness, and a vital and timely call for action.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"This is a rare and powerful book. It gives the meaning of love without talking of love. It is both heartbreaking and truly victorious. It tells us clearly that mental illness is a dimension of the normal, the way that shadow is a dimension of light. And we should walk with our shadows." — Dragan Todorovic, author of *The Book of Revenge*

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The Martini brothers of Canada give a great account of the mental illness (schizophrenia) that runs in their family and cost the life of one of their brothers, by suicide. Then a second brother comes down with the same mental illness, and this account is the family's struggle to get him in therapy, keep him in therapy, and keep him alive. The writing is simple, straightforward and terrific, and the illustrations are often amusing and carry the story right along. This is a memoir, not fiction, but it is so smooth it reads like a great story. This book is no longer in print, but you can get it used at a reasonable price. I highly recommend this book for anyone interested in schizophrenia, in the US and Canada. It is the best of its kind I've read yet.

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