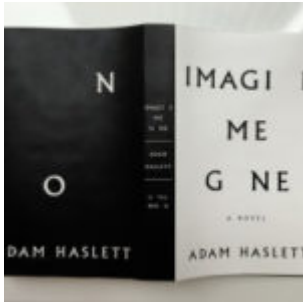


# Chapter 30 “Imagine Me Gone”-a can’t put down read



Imagine Me Gone

**“Imagine Me Gone”** by Adam Haslett is a novel about love, loss and the power mental illness has over every aspect of family life. It is poignant, terrifying and sometimes strangely funny. Within moments of closing this book I was in tears remembering life with my brother, a man who couldn’t think straight.

At an early age, unbeknownst to me, he was diagnosed as a sociopath, a person without a conscience. He was handsome, charming, smart and funny. He married, had a child, and lived with our Mother. When she died I inherited him and discovered she had used her life’s savings to keep him out of jail. And then it began: he involved our family in a mind bending fraudulent scheme. When he realized the game was up he signed himself into a hospital swearing he was suicidal. Ten days later he was discharged into the arms of detectives waiting next to his stolen car in the hospital lot. He did time in jail. On his release he went to a men’s shelter. When he called I offered to pay first and last month’s rent for an apartment but said he was never to contact any of us again. He assured me I would hear about him but not from him. A few days later he committed suicide.

Reading this beautifully written novel of how a family survives the turmoil when a member has a broken mind speaks to the universal family experience of having illness in the family and how we cope. To quote Tony Kushner: “It is a magnificent work of art that overwhelmed me and broke my heart”.