



# Never Leave Your Dead: A True Story of War Trauma, Murder, and Madness

*Diane Cameron*

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Was Donald a traumatized veteran? A victim of abuse in the mental-health system? Was he a criminal? Mentally ill? Or just eccentric?

Join author Diane Cameron as she unravels the true story of her stepfather, Donald Watkins, a former Marine who served in China from 1937 to 1939 during the Japanese invasion. After returning home, Donald's seemingly normal life took a sharp turn when he murdered his first wife and mother-in-law in 1953. As punishment for his crime, he spent twenty-two years at Fairview State Hospital for the criminally insane.

Donald's story traverses continents and decades. Years after his release from Farview, Cameron's stark examination of her relationship with Donald and her mother highlights the far reach of mental illness. Her in-depth research and keen insight will stir public debate about what is happening today and what we can expect as the impact of war trauma for veterans and their families unfurls and detonates.

**Diane Cameron** is an award-winning columnist. An excerpt from *Never Leave Your Dead* was first published in the *Bellevue Literary Review* and was nominated for a 2006 Pushcart Prize.

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