

# Margery Al-Chalabi releases her memoir titled: Like Two Saplings

*In Sickness and in Health, until death do us part.*

PITTSBURGH, PA, USA, June 25, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/  
-- "In Sickness and in Health, until death do us part."

She describes their last brief conversation tenderly – it began with Suhail directing her in a few words to name and save certain computer files such as "End of life" and "Well lived, loved." — excerpt from *Like Two Saplings* by Margery Al Chalabi.

Stand-out author Margery Al-Chalabi's poignant and well-penned [memoir](#) *Like Two Saplings* offers the reader an unflinching look at love facing death and the real-life fulfillment of the famous line from a wedding vow. This is a memoir clad with the perfect stash of captivating romance, a hectic year of uncertainty, a seesaw between hope and fear — mixed with relieving of long-ago beginnings, exotic travels and vacations, landmark victories and events, and the platonic intimacy of colleagues, family, and friends. "When a devoted couple faces the end of one life, there is much that should be done and much that can be said, as evidenced in this emotive memoir by Margery al Chalabi." — Pacific Book Review.

Margery was the first member of her family to attend college; after receiving a degree in Architecture, Margery went to Athens to study for a Masters' in Urban Planning and Regional Economics. There, in that beautiful scenic ambiance, she met the love of her life, Suhail al Chalabi, an outstanding young Iraqi with a degree in their shared field of architecture from MIT. Gradually, the two found themselves irresistibly drawn to each other, moved in together, and got married shortly afterwards.

Their life took a drastic turn in 2014 — the loving couple had been battling Suhail's chronic leukemia for more than one decade. Then they learned that the disease had become acute, an almost certain death sentence. Follow the couple's journey to acceptance, coping up, and spending their days years after they first met now, with visible physical and health changes but with the ever-constant unconditional love present 52 years prior until now. A love story that

*Like Two Saplings*  
*a memoir*



*Margery al chalabi*

Like Two Saplings: A Memoir

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*Margery Al-Chalabi*

transcends time and illness.

This memoir includes emails to family and friends chronicling her husband’s treatments, prognoses and plans, and testimonials from colleagues, family, and friends. Margery told part of their story in a series of black and white photos of the both of them as friends, newlyweds, world travelers, and sailors on the local waters.

All of these combined with her innate intellectual and detailed writing style and her sense of passion and

genuine care for the love of her life, Margery was able to capture the intimate details of how her husband Suhail faced death with the same courage, resoluteness, and grace with which he lived his life.

Like Two Saplings is skillfully and powerfully written. Couples of all ages will scoop out much wisdom from Margery and Suhail’s loving chronicle of a chapter in life that may be faced by many and can be met with the same kindness and courage.

Margery al Chalabi was born in a small working-class town in the Allegheny River Valley of Pittsburgh. The first member of her extended family to attend college, she put herself through with scholarships and part-time work, earning a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Carnegie Institute of Technology in 1961. She studied at Athens Technological Institute (ATI) in Athens, Greece, receiving an MSc in Urban Planning and Regional Economics, in 1965. In Athens, Margery met Suhail al Chalabi, a fellow student at ATI, an architect from MIT, and the love of her life. They married in 1965; returned to the U.S., and found interesting work in Chicago. Starting at the Chicago regional office of HUD and City of Chicago, Margery extended her work on renewal and redevelopment with private consulting firms, conducting landmark work on these issues for HUD and other federal agencies; and with architectural firms planning downtown development in major cities. Suhail worked for Chicago’s two regional agencies. Both of them worked in the administration of Mayor Jane M. Byrne. When Chicago won the 1992 World’s Fair, they collaborated on writing the City’s Comprehensive Plan, Chicago 1992. With Major Byrne’s election loss, in 1983, they began their work, together, as The al Chalabi Group; first saving the landmark Chicago Theater from demolition and restoring it; then years of work on major economic development and transportation projects. Margery is a Board Member of The Cliff Dwellers Club and former President of the World Society for Ekistics. She and Suhail have been season ticket holders for many of Chicago’s music, theater, and cultural events.

Like Two Saplings

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Kindle | \$37.00

Hardcover | —

Book copies are available at Authors Press, Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and other online book resellers.

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