

Reading, Remembering, Recovering: Therapeutic Narratives in Larissa Behrendt's *After Story*

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines Larissa Behrendt's *After Story* through the dual lenses of Bibliotherapy and Narrative Medicine, exploring how literature and storytelling function as therapeutic practices to foster healing and resilience. Bibliotherapy emphasizes the healing power of reading and identification with texts, while narrative medicine highlights the restorative value of sharing and listening to personal stories. Behrendt's novel *After Story* follows Jasmine, an indigenous lawyer, and her mother Della on a literary tour of England, juxtaposing Western canonical literature with Indigenous oral traditions. It demonstrates how both forms of narrative can foster empathy, cultural reclamation, and emotional healing. Jasmine's engagement with English classics reflects Bibliotherapy as a process of relocating herself through literature, whereas Della's reliance on Indigenous storytelling embodies Narrative Medicine's emphasis on shared narratives. By analyzing the key moments of grief, estrangement, and reconciliation, this paper

argues that *After Story* exemplifies how Bibliotherapy and Narrative Medicine intersect to expand the understanding of literature as a means of resilience.

Keywords: Bibliotherapy, Narrative medicine, Storytelling, Healing, Larissa Behrendt.
