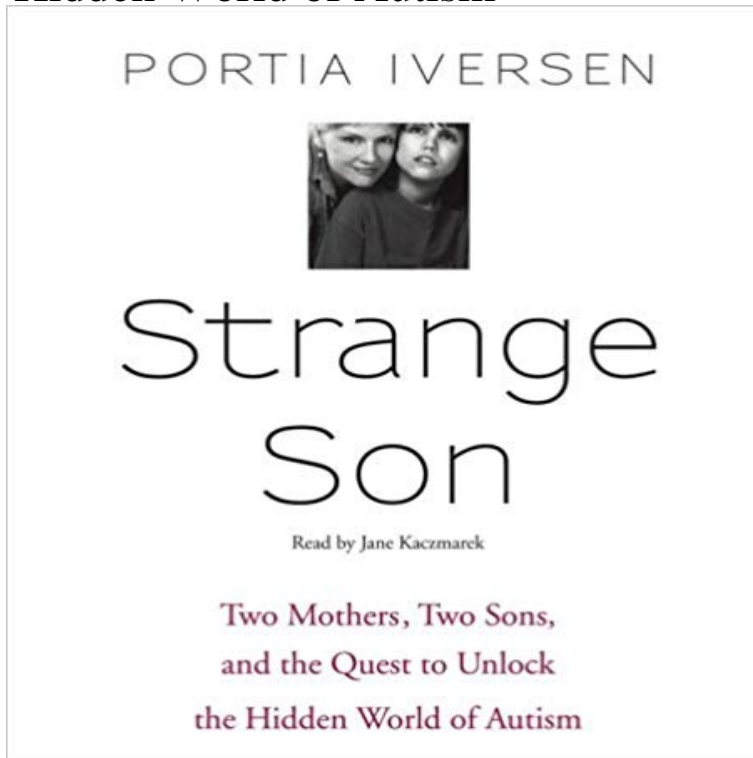


# Strange Son: Two Mothers, Two Sons, and the Quest to Unlock the Hidden World of Autism



Part memoir, part detective story, this is the powerful story of how two mothers from opposite sides of the world united in an effort to communicate with their severely autistic sons, discovering breakthroughs that challenged prevailing theories about autism. Tito Mukhopadhyay, an autistic boy from India who spends most of his time flapping his fingers in front of his eyes, has an IQ of 185. He favors the writings of Wordsworth and Ibsen. He loves philosophy, reads *People*, and worries about conflict in the Middle East. He also writes beautiful poetry. That Tito can communicate at all is due to his mother, Soma, who single-handedly developed a revolutionary method of teaching him in their one-room apartment in Bangalore, a classroom that lacked even running water. Portia Iversen, an Emmy-winning art director whose life was turned upside down when her own son Dov was diagnosed with autism, heard of Soma's miraculous story in the course of her own desperate search for a cure. Under the auspices of Cure Autism Now, the foundation she started with her husband that is now one of the largest funds for autism research in the world, Portia brought Soma and Tito to America to help researchers understand how Soma accomplished this amazing feat and to determine what can be learned from their success. Together, Soma and Portia have made remarkable progress in teaching their sons how to break through the walls of autism. And, in the process, they have assisted scientists in making astonishing discoveries about the nature of autism itself. *Strange Son* is the extraordinary account of two families who redefined how autism-and autistic people-should be treated, all the while helping to answer some of autism's most baffling questions and prompting new research. Iversen weaves the twin stories of Soma and Tito (and how Soma's methods mystified

experts) together with her own story of how she and her family came to understand Dov. The result is a book suffused with uplifting human drama.

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