ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

BIOGRAPHY

A Caribbean Tale
Rudy Gurley
Aardvark Publishing
978-1-4276-0535-1
Four Stars (out of Five)

Rudy Gurley quotes the famous Baptist Preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon "Many Men owe their grandeur of their lives to their tremendous difficulties." In author Rudy Gurley's memoir *A Caribbean Tale* that quote would be an understatement. If anyone deserves to have his life revivified in grandiosity Gurley is a prime candidate. Abandoned by his parents as an infant and raised in an impoverished Caribbean household by his aunt he experienced a near-fatal beating at the hands of a relative while he was a toddler. As a teenager he survived the full brunt of Hurricane Allen. In his twenties he suffered temporary blindness from a blow to his head. Gurley has had more than his fair share of difficulties his memoir provides sustenance to readers seeking inspiration of one that has risen above their hardships and station to become an unmitigated success.

A Caribbean Tale tells the story of how Gurley was able to pull himself out of poverty with the influence of Norman Vincent Peale the author of *The Power of Positive Thinking.* Leaving behind a life of juvenile delinquency he pursued an accountancy career in England and earned the respect and hand of his beloved Susanna. Gurley writes

> *But instead of taking in the landscape my mind played and replayed scenes of a veiled Susanna gracefully striding down the aisle in an immaculate flowing white dress arm-in-arm with her father taking their cool time marching slowly to 'Here Comes the Bride'… marching towards me as I stood in my three-piece suit at the front of the packed church waiting…waiting with a thumping heart.*
>
> *Every night since then lying in bed I would see my future unfolding before my mind's eye. Norman Vincent Peale had*

taught me…

Gurley's memoir contains all the ingredients to be an excellent book. Intelligent determined romantic he is a man with an incredible story to tell. His rags-to-riches story has echoes of Charles Dickens minus a Miss Haversham and Fagin. However Gurley's prose at times is awkward replete with run-on sentences and over use of commas that maybe intentional for his style but make *A Caribbean Tale* difficult for the reader to navigate. Some of his imagery is poetic but he has pet words and phrases that he tends to repeat. Gurley makes some wonderful observations but he grounds his writing with the obvious and clichés.

Lee Gooden