



A Peculiar Friend

Seun Rominiyi

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This spiritual memoir details one woman's approachable and heartfelt appeals to God.

Seun Rominiyi's memoir *A Peculiar Friend* details her journey of faith as she finds strength through God among her tribulations and uncertainties.

Rominiyi's book is a chronological account of her beliefs as they developed, related in essay form. Her stories come alongside particularly personal biblical excerpts and epistolary appeals to God.

During her childhood in Nigeria, Rominiyi was an unquestioning participant in religion, taking in weekly sermons and daily prayer to please her parents. She writes that she and her siblings "mostly farted and slept on [their] knees," though, making sure to shout "Amen!" at the end.

Her reflections maintain a sage and balanced perspective. While she appreciates that she learned to show her elders respect by not questioning their religion, she was frustrated with the discouragement of open critical thought about God. Stress about fitting in during adolescence led her to find guidance in her faith; it's fascinating to see her faith evolve.

As an adult, Rominiyi used her interest in religion to give her a sense of purpose and to find a community of strong women who supported one another. One particularly touching and inspiring story shows an initially standoffish young pregnant woman, whom Rominiyi invited to a meeting for women of faith, reconciling with her estranged family after being encouraged by her peers.

Though highly personal, Rominiyi's story rings with a universality that helps the book succeed, despite its uneven organization and pace. Rominiyi exposes her struggles with mental illness, her often low self-confidence, and even moments where she has all but lost faith. Her candidness and vulnerability are endearing, and they strengthen her message that God's mercy and omniscience carry her through the darkest of times.

Rominiyi's fervency—she describes herself as figuratively "on fire for God" and often speaks in tongues during prayer—may read as intense for some Christians. Her prayers and letters, written directly to God, more frankly detail the obstacles she faces when it comes to appreciating life; such moments are appealing and familiar.

This sincere tone makes the memoir accessible. Bible verses take up a significant portion of the brief book, having a jarring effect on its organization and pace, though they do speak to related moments in Rominiyi's story.

A Peculiar Friend is a solid and inspiring memoir that passionately explores faith.

PAIGE VAN DE WINKLE (April 18, 2017)

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