Clarion Review

General

Follow Your Dreams
Zoey Taylor
iUniverse
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Two Stars (out of Five)

Christie Simpson embarks on a wild ride of self-discovery after receiving a phone call from her husband's mistress. The call marks the end of her marriage and the beginning of a journey in which she dabbles in everything from angels and dreams to psychics and past lives in her quest to discover the true meaning of life.

In *Follow Your Dreams* author Zoey Taylor whose credentials include teacher and community counselor weaves a tale around Christie's myriad spiritual and metaphysical experiences. These speculative endeavors glow with enthusiasm but suffer from amateur writing techniques and a focus too broad to sustain the novel.

As thirty-eight year old Christie who is also a counselor learns the extent of her husband's betrayals and works her way through them she renews a vow she made in her youth to follow her dreams and listen to her intuition. This leads her to indulge in several treks to diverse destinations based on either intuitive feeling or actual dreams she interprets as a sign. Christie pursues short-lived careers as partner in a dating service and owner of a New Age store while maintaining her counseling job and raising her three daughters. Throughout the story her primary focus remains on self-growth as she heals and follows her dreams on the path to an enlightened life and a new love.

The author's interest in the philosophical and spiritual shines through clearly in the detailed examinations of Christie's many vacations most notably one she takes to the Light Institute in New Mexico. There Christie undergoes a past-life regression which spans three chapters. Regrettably these detours do little to engage the reader and the novel digresses into often irrelevant or disconnected scenes peppered with unnatural dialogue and shallow characterization. The story ultimately becomes lost amid the endless vignettes leaving the reader to wander back and forth through Christie's abundant soul-searching adventures.

The writing has a rather clinical feel reporting events rather than building scenes and action with the descriptive phrases expected in a work of fiction. Choppy sentences prevail as in this passage: "When the girls were old enough they joined Brownies. Their lives were busy and time went by quickly. Andrea Pam and Becky were good kids and brought joy to their lives. They acquired an adorable Bichon Frise puppy that they named Miss Mugs."

The author's true passion appears to lie with the spiritual subjects to which she devotes a significant portion of the novel rather than with the development of a compelling story. Taylor's thoughtful exploration into the areas of personal growth and self-actualization may find a wider and more appreciative audience in a nonfiction format.

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