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CLARION REVIEW ★★☆☆☆ BIOGRAPHY

Majestic Restoration: Taste of Hell, Glimpse of Heaven

Bryan Roscoe
Softcover $12.99 (221pp)
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Readers delving into *Majestic Restoration* in search of a memoir will not find a true-life story rendered in a literary fashion. Instead author Bryan Roscoe offers elements of memoir as the foundation for a religious testimonial. Unusual syntax and juxtapositions and improper punctuation provide evidence that *Majestic Restoration* is passionate rather than literary.

Roscoe himself is filled with passion—about his religious conversion his work for military veterans and his friends who have become virtual family. His religion presents itself as evangelical evidenced by Biblical citations sprinkled throughout the book with an element of underlying Calvinism in the form of predestinarianism.

“But you see God has a plan for each of us” he writes. “He knows us from the beginning to the end. We change—but our prearranged lives don’t.”

The author says he glimpsed hell in the midst of a suicide attempt. He also notes that heaven was revealed to him after he suffered severe smoke inhalation carbon monoxide poisoning and heart problems during his rescue of five homeless men from a burning building. Those two mystical visions are the impetus for the book and the central elements of his sermons.

Religion seems to serve as a much-needed anchor in Roscoe’s life. After an unhappy childhood he entered the US Army suffered a back injury during training and returned home to southern New Jersey after his two-year enlistment. There he signed on as a traffic officer for Atlantic City. His life story is then complicated by alcoholism a failed marriage and a subsequent unhappy relationship.

Sadly Roscoe’s *Majestic Restoration* suffers from deficiencies in organization poor punctuation and grammar and syntax rife with sentence fragments and run-on sentences. The author also tends to tell readers what he intends to say before he says it. He writes for example “Anyway the story I’m trying to tell you about is…”

Perhaps most frustratingly Roscoe does not sufficiently examine his relationship with Chrissy his girlfriend (or perhaps former girlfriend) and her daughter Genine. They met when the girl was thirteen but by the time *Majestic Restoration* goes to print Genine has become a virtual stepdaughter; she features prominently in Roscoe’s life story and has three children of her own.

Roscoe recognizes his failures and celebrates his accomplishments; he is proudest of his community work for Congressman Frank A. LoBiondo and of his dedication to the cause of Disabled American Veterans. This is an honest book albeit an uneven one.
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