

Miracle Warrior: Surviving a Shattered Life

Gigi Cramer

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Moving from privilege to perseverance, Miracle Warrior is an inspiring memoir about growing past challenges to find deeper meaning.

Gigi Cramer's testimonial memoir *Miracle Warrior* is about rising above challenges and moving forward with hope.

The book opens on Cramer and her second husband's car crash; he died, and her injuries were so severe that she was not expected to survive. She was forced to reevaluate and search for new meaning in the wake of her loss. The book looks back on her upbringing and education—all of the events leading up to the accident. It moves at a careful pace: at its midpoint, Cramer has graduated from William and Mary College and launched a career as an interior designer for celebrities including John Lennon and Yoko Ono; she recounts attending the Golden Globe Gala and meeting Dr. Seuss.

The book is structured via two distinct sections, starting with the anecdote-rich "Before I Died" and concluding with the poignant "What's it Like to Die?" This bifurcation means, though, that Cramer's glamorous, carefree experiences are kept separate from the book's more powerful, introspective content. Indeed, Cramer's story is one of contrasts: her life with her first husband, Raymond, in New York City was awash in money and chance encounters with the city's elite. This "seemingly perfect life" ended when Raymond abandoned her during the birth of their second child. The years following his desertion are described in reportorial style, creating new distance in the text. Cramer also dealt with a breast cancer diagnosis. On the opposite end of the narrative spectrum are sources of inspiration: Cramer fell in love again and resolved to thrive, giving to charities and securing a newfound sense of purpose.

Each section is also made up of anecdotes; individual chapters focus on episodes and observations, including some from Cramer's parents' lives. The reflections of others are worked in as well: there are insights from Cramer's children about their family life and from her doctors about obstacles to her recovery, adding context but diluting her own voice. Family photographs are included as well. Still, in its final form, the book delivers a clear sense of how a life of privilege can change in an instant; it argues that with perseverance and grit, it is possible to move past even the most dire circumstances.

Miracle Warrior is a triumphant memoir about moving past tragedies to focus on what matters most.

JEREMIAH ROOD (August 19, 2023)

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