Clarion Review

Biography

The Joy of Winning Against the Odds
Dave Parrish
Trafford Publishing
978-1-4120-1626-1
Two Stars (out of Five)

The self-guided journey from poverty to prosperity is a familiar one in the genre of memoir. While some people who are born into despair and oppression remain downtrodden their whole lives others rise above the fray and beat the odds to make themselves successful happy and sometimes rich. Readers enjoy stories about the underdogs the ones who worked hard and flourished. They remind people that they can be reborn of their own actions will strength and convictions.

Dave Parrish's story of growth and accomplishment *The Joy of Winning Against the Odds* begins in the dust of Georgia where he picks crops with his mother and siblings for very little money. His book ends in the same state with an impressive line of 100 new dump trucks all owned by Parrish's construction company. The author credits his mother whom he refers to as his "Strong Tower" with making his successful business possible by teaching him to believe in himself and God. Without her strength and influence Parrish believes he would be a much different person than he is today.

While Parrish is impressively strong in his convictions and has led an admirably active and faithful life his book falls short of inspiring readers to change their lives. Part of the problem is the structure of the book. The first part is an account of his childhood and the beginning of his journey toward success. The biography is an interesting read. However the second part falls into pedantic preaching on the evils of welfare the need for corporeal punishment for children Parrish's idea that attitude is everything and his heartfelt endorsements of the Republican political party.

In addition to an awkward structure and the possibility of alienating his more liberal readers Parrish's style of prose also tends to make his book difficult to read. The narrative has the cadence of a spoken sermon which in this case does not translate well to the written page.

His sentences tend to become jumbled and confused. For example he writes “They’re coming up now with these people saying they’ve got superior genes so they should survive a lot longer they should be a lot better and should make wiser decisions and stuff like that. This is all hogwash. Very Hitlerian.” What may be easy to follow if spoken from a pulpit turns convoluted on the page.

Parrish is a man who has worked hard and deserves any prosperity he has earned. The story of his life may be inspirational to those who’ve witnessed it firsthand but for readers the view never clears enough to be learned from.

Andi Diehn