ForeWord Reviews

AUTOBIOGRAPHY & MEMOIR

While I Was Learning to Become God
Roxana Jones
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"God squeezes but does not strangle" is the familiar saying the author believes best describes the life of Sybil Vaughan. From birth through her death at age forty-three, even though Sybil experienced many struggles, she always felt she had the support and care of angels along her journey. As a young child, Sybil knew angels were with her, protecting her. In this book, Jones chronicles Sybil's short life; interspersed amongst the stories are Vaughan's own words and remembrances.

At the age of three, Sybil fought off a disease that could have left her with permanent kidney failure by foregoing antibiotics for green coconut milk. As the years pass, Vaughan grows less and less aware of her angels, and for a time, completely forgets their importance in her life. She marries and has two daughters while living in her native Columbia. After twelve years of marriage, Vaughan begins to take steps to separate herself and her children from her wealthy, misogynistic husband. Her first effort, taken with her lawyer's advice, is to build her own self-esteem and secure money for her and her children's futures. As she works on her own opinion of herself, she begins to realize the power of the angels and unconditional love in her life and acknowledges what she felt through her angelic companions as a young child. Life continues to deal Vaughan blows of varying severity, but as she continues to pursue her own personal goals, she grows in her ability to know love and move steadily on the path ahead of her. Vaughan's diagnosis of cancer and her desire to share her journey brought her together with her scribe, Jones. She told her story to Jones, a trained energy healer, whose desire to discover the meaning of self-love made her a willing student who carefully wrote of Vaughan's life and learning.

This book will speak to those searching for their own way of loving themselves. Vaughan's story will resonate with women who may feel helpless in their marriages or at odds with their place in the world. Because it reads as a memoir, it will have broader appeal than simply readers of new age books, although angels are a dominant theme throughout.

To the reader, God often seems to strangle Sybil often, but her positive energy and

increasing self-awareness helped her take the gasp that would press her forward again on her journey. Jones shares that journey with us even after Sybil's death, and helps the reader realize what is ultimately the most important aspect of life—loving yourself.

Lynn Evarts