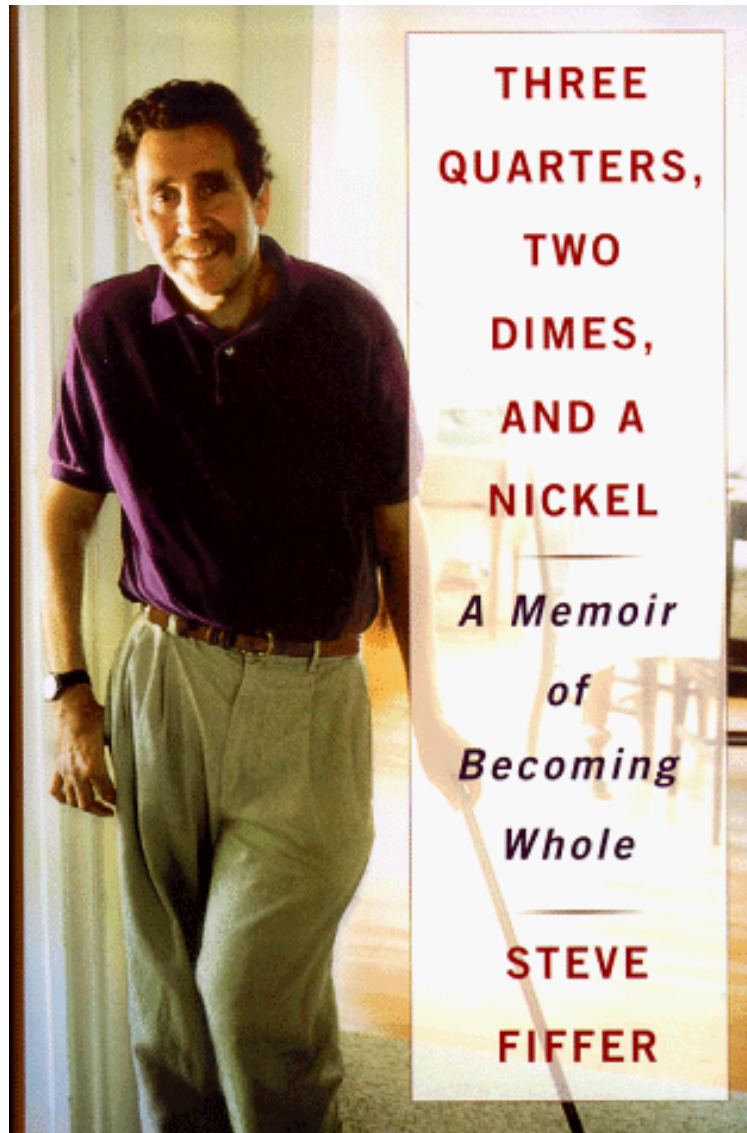


(Free download) THREE QUARTERS, TWO DIMES, AND A NICKEL: A MEMOIR OF BECOMING WHOLE

THREE QUARTERS, TWO DIMES, AND A NICKEL: A MEMOIR OF BECOMING WHOLE

Steve Fiffer

*ePub | *DOC | audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF*



DOWNLOAD



+

READ ONLINE

#2935323 in Books Free Press 1999-03-12 Original language: English PDF # 1 1.02 x 5.81 x 8.781, #File Name: 068485418X288 pages | File size: 16.Mb

Steve Fiffer : THREE QUARTERS, TWO DIMES, AND A NICKEL: A MEMOIR OF BECOMING WHOLE before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised THREE QUARTERS, TWO DIMES, AND A NICKEL: A MEMOIR OF BECOMING WHOLE:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Steve Fiffer: A Full Dollar Bill By Dan Weinberg An excellent memoir by an old friend of mine from fifty-plus years ago who I hadn't heard about since then. Steve had an accident I didn't know about and recovered far better than his doctors believed he possibly could. His strength of will and desire to live the life he had wanted to live before his accident are described beautifully in this book. He is the "full dollar" he always had been. I reached out to Steve after all these years on Facebook, and we have begun a new friendship. I especially loved Steve's description near the end of the book of how his day begins every day of his life; it is not "jumping out of bed to see the sunlight" but rather a difficult, step-by-step progression that none of us would choose but that Steve accepts and pushes through in order to live the significant life he has created for himself. I salute him and this wonderful book.

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. I laughed, I cried, I felt inspired. By Christine A. Wolf As a writer myself, I appreciate the finesse required to write a beautiful memoir (perhaps that's why I haven't written one yet -- it's much harder than it looks). A solid memoir not only talks about one's person's life, but it weaves a readable, can't-put-this-down story about that life. Steve Fiffer respects the thread of his unique story, providing a fascinating look into what it's like to suffer a traumatic spinal-cord injury, sharing important details from before his accident, his recollections of the injury itself, then recuperation, rehabilitation, and romance after. It's a story like no one else has ever told. I highly recommend it to anyone looking for insight, laughter, and an honest voice.

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. An inspiring, skillfully written account By A Customer I read this book aboard an airplane, not knowing the first thing about it, but being intrigued by its title. It turned out to be a coming of age story like none other I have read. The author's charmed, sixties' adolescence is drastically altered by a high school wrestling accident. The prognosis regarding recovery is anything but encouraging. The events through which Fiffer is led to his rehabilitation make a riveting account. Besides his own journey, we are also treated to a poignant look at a family -- especially a father -- coming to terms with an unforeseen challenge. This is all told from the unique perspective of one who finds he must adapt during a period when a society must also adapt to a dizzying array of upheavals. How Fiffer takes his first and then ultimate steps on that road is what makes such a compelling perspective. The writing is clean and skilled. At all times, I felt like I was in the hands of somebody who had an unfailing instinct for what needed to be delivered to the reader. I recommend this book for anyone who is in the mood for an intelligent, well-told story, free of cliches and without a hint of self-pity. That's probably due to the fact that by the end of it, Fiffer seems to have achieved the kind of strength and enlightenment of one who has looked tragedy in the face and told it to take a walk.

What would you do if you were seventeen years old and broke your neck? It's tough enough to stand on the verge of adulthood without the extra burden of not being able to stand at all. Steve Fiffer had his whole life ahead of him in December 1967 when he fractured his fifth cervical vertebra in a wrestling accident at school, shattering his dreams. The diagnosis was quadriplegia, and his parents were told that he would never walk again. Steve, however, was not content to accept such a fate. He had always been taught that he was a leader, not a follower, and he was not going to take this news lying down. Within five months he was out of the hospital, within seven he was on crutches, and within nine he was beginning his freshman year at Yale University. And most remarkable of all, he never lost his wisecracking sense of humor or his hunger for all that life has to offer. *Three Quarters, Two Dimes, and a Nickel* is Steve Fiffer's story of his coming of age, and of how he created a normal life for himself despite his injury. Steve refused to be consumed or defined by his physical condition; he may not be a dollar bill, he explains, but he's still "three quarters, two dimes, and a nickel." His battle to come back from his injury casts into sharp relief the drama of becoming an adult and wrestling with issues of identity, relationships, and ambition. We join him around the dinner table as he rebuilds his once-distant relationship with his father and gains a new appreciation of their bond; we agonize with him as he tries to find true love (or at least lose his virginity) despite his self-consciousness about his physical awkwardness, and we join him at the Lawson YMCA in downtown Chicago, where he rebuilds his body under the watchful eye of the manic physical-fitness coach Dick Woit, a retired football star who puts Steve through a sort of boot camp to raise his sights even higher and propel him off his crutches for good. Part guru, part drill instructor, Woit helps Steve to develop the mental toughness to put the injury behind him and to embrace adulthood and all its responsibilities. By turns poignant, darkly comic, and ultimately triumphant, *Three Quarters, Two Dimes, and a Nickel* is an affirmation of how the ordinary joys of life can win out even in extraordinary circumstances.

.com Despite the fact that it opens with a paralyzing wrestling injury, *Three Quarters, Two Dimes, and a Nickel* by Steve Fiffer is one upbeat memoir. After exposing the reader to the numbing psychological aftershock of the injury he suffered at the age of 17--"The accident had fractured more than my fifth cervical vertebra, broken more than my neck. It had fractured reality, broken time"--the book quickly gives way to a sincere and sustained optimism, free of self-pity and sentimentality. The horrific event is effectively turned into a defining experience rather than the primary focus of the rest of his life. Just seven months after being told by doctors that he would never walk again, he manages to enter his first class at Yale University on crutches rather than in a wheelchair. That he would someday walk again seems less a dream than an inevitability: "I wasn't supposed to walk again. I wanted to walk. So I did." But there is much

more to Fiffer's coming-of-age tale than his efforts to retrain his legs. In poignant descriptions of personal awakenings, sexual stirrings (and frustrations), and the common desire for acceptance, "becoming whole" extends far beyond the task of dealing with a broken vertebra. He may not be a dollar bill, he explains, but "three quarters, two dimes, and nickel" add up to the same thing in the end. Some of the book's more colorful and moving passages feature Dick Woit, a former pro-football player who subsists entirely on Cool Whip and whom Fiffer enlists for some tough love. In the manic guru-cum-trainer's first meeting with Fiffer, Woit refers to him as "Crip," promptly instructs him to hit the deck and perform some sit-ups, then declares his effort, and current physical state, "pathetic." Thus motivated, Fiffer begins regularly attending Coach Woit's gym to battle for control of his legs and his life. His struggle to walk makes his story intriguing, even suspenseful, while his grappling with larger issues makes it universal and inspiring. Told with candor and plenty of humor, *Three Quarters, Two Dimes, and a Nickel* beautifully defines the subtle differences between simply enduring an unimaginable twist of fate and actually making something good of it. --Shawn Carkonen

From Kirkus sIn these revealing memoirs, reconstructed some 30 years after the accident that changed his life, Fiffer (co-author, with Morris Dees, of *Hate on Trial: The Case Against Americas Most Dangerous Neo-Nazi*, 1993, etc.) shows what it is like to be different and recounts his long struggle to accept that difference and become whole. In 1967, a wrestling fall fractured a vertebra in the high school senior's neck, leaving him a helpless quadriplegic. Blessed with a devoted father with both the means and the influence to get him the best care then available, Fiffer also had good luck on his side: contrary to his doctors' predictions, feeling and control gradually returned to some of his body. After months of physical therapy, he was able to begin his freshman year at Yale in 1968, no longer in a wheelchair but on crutches. Fiffer's depiction of himself during these years is not especially flatteringhe seems as shallow and self-obsessed as your average adolescent. Again, he is fortunate in having people around to set him right: a mother to jolt him out of unnecessary dependence and smart-alecky behavior, a rehab colleague to put his injuries in perspective, a fitness expert to push him past the physical limits he had begun to settle for. A persistent theme is his longing for and fears about sexual love. Happiness in this department is a long time coming, and Fiffer's tales of one-night stands and unfulfilled affairs are poignant. In telling one reluctant young woman, "You may not be getting a dollar bill, but you'd be getting three quarters, two dimes, and a nickel," he both recognizes his difference and asserts his wholeness. Happily, he is now married to a fellow writer and editor, a union that has produced books (*Family: American Writers Remember Their Own*, 1996, etc.) as well as children. A generally satisfying but hardly spellbinding example of the how-I-overcame-my-handicap genre. -- Copyright 1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. Alex Kotlowitz author of *There Are No Children Here* and *The Other Side of the River* Steve Fiffer's moving story is told with frankness and verve. I found myself envying his gumption and humor -- and his friendship with Dick Woit, an old codger of a trainer, who ultimately pushes Fiffer to become whole again. -- Fiffer ... comments that his goal in this [book] was to give people with disabilities a voice. His memoir accomplishes that objective beautifully. -- The New York Times Book , Martha Beck