



From Saving Souls to Sequined Gowns: A Memoir

Joyce Wilson Hawley

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After her second diagnosis of lymphoma at 57 years old, Joyce Wilson Hawley began the process of "writing to survive" in her own memoir. Digging deep into the hallows of a childhood haunted by domestic abuse and neglect, Joyce uses her sharp insight to dissect her memories for clues as to what shaped and created her, while employing her unique and quirky sense of humor to keep herself buoyant during the frightening experience. As a multi-talented and creative Southern woman, Joyce recounts her life's journey from a lowincome, Pentecostal mill family in Wilmington, NC, to the "little, big city" atmosphere of Raleigh, NC, where Joyce became a local legend as a nightclub/event singer for over 30 years. Joyce writes about many of the interesting people that she has encountered in her sixty-plus years as a Raleigh native, including oddlycharming family members, famous artists who delighted or demeaned her, hilarious and wise politicians, and everyday men and women. Joyce rubbed elbows with, rocked-and-rolled with, or just lived a day-to-day existence with all kinds of folks as she herself rode an emotional roller coaster of celebratory highs and gutwrenching lows. At the end of her story, Joyce has done more than just survive her life and her illness: she has conquered them both to become a successful business owner, a close friend to many, and a passionate grandmother surrounded by a life filled with colorful friends, cherished family and creative energy to boot!



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