

Limp Forward: A Memoir of Disability, Perseverance, and Success

Libo Cao Meyers

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A motivational memoir that records striking accomplishments, Limp Forward is also a story about the invaluable support of families and communities.

Libo Cao Meyers's inspiring memoir *Limp Forward* is about eschewing other people's empty promises and achieving personal success.

At eleven months old, Meyers developed a high fever and became immobile. She was diagnosed with polio. Numerous trips to hospitals and surgical procedures followed, making her feel like "a slab of meat forgotten in a walk-in freezer." When she decided to stop allowing doctors to use her for experiments, she became able to focus on her own goals, leading to groundbreaking academic success.

The book is heartfelt in recording painful events, including the death of Meyers's childhood best friend, Dongmei, and the poverty that once prevented her from receiving treatment. Indeed, Meyers notes that when she was an infant, her family lived in tents; her parents worked as field surveyors in the mountains for long hours. She was moved between relatives while her parents got their bearings, and her extended and immediate family members made sacrifices for the whole family's good.

The importance placed on family and honoring ancestry in China is a recurrent theme; rich details vivify that place and its people. Meyers captures changing socioeconomic and political periods well, drawing on her father's insights as well as historical memories passed down from previous generations. The perseverance and innovation of people burdened by external and internal wars shine through her accounts.

Indeed, this is a people-focused memoir that includes striking examples of gratitude alongside its personal stories: Meyers shares memories of those who showed her unwavering support as she pursued her dreams and records various thoughtful gestures, including people slowing down to match her speed, defending her from mockery, helping to carry her bags, and offering her words of encouragement. And in addition to recording Meyers's impressive accomplishments, the book also makes sociological arguments: people with disabilities need to be treated and accommodated better by society as a whole, Meyers says. She notes that people with disabilities are not well considered when people are building infrastructure; she points to examples of where she faced systemic discrimination, as when she wanted to study computer science in China.

Limp Forward is a pertinacious Silicon Valley technology executive's raw, comprehensive memoir about persisting toward success despite her early challenges. Indeed, in every story Meyers shares, her determination is evident, and the plans that she made to achieve all of her goals are transformed into actionable steps that others can imitate too.

GABRIELLA HARRISON (July 28, 2023)

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