



The Fortune Teller's Prophecy: A Memoir of an Unlikely Doctor

Lally Pia

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Lally Pia was born in Sri Lanka and raised in Ghana. When she was a baby, a fortune teller told her father that she would be a doctor someday. Her memoir *The Fortune Teller's Prophecy* is a testament to the importance of resilience and hope.

Pia was set to move to the United States to live with her parents as soon as she finished her third year of medical school. Instead, a military coup shut down her university, and she was given the wrong visa; she wound up with no degree and no home. She stayed with friends in Wales for over a year. By the time she could join her family, she had fallen in love. After her hasty wedding, she spent a decade trapped in an abusive marriage and faced a torturous road back to medical school to fulfill the prophecy.

The book is unflinching about delving into Pia's successes and failures in equal measure. It highlights the difficulties she faced upon returning to medical school, such as finding it harder to study after years out of school; she ended up on probation for low grades early on. Self-deprecatory humor factors in, as when Pia recalls an exasperated official trying to process her entrance into the UK despite her not knowing key details, saying that he likely wrote "Moron trying to enter." Despite such painful and embarrassing events and some feelings of stagnation, Pia persisted toward eventual success. Keen metaphors are used to capture Pia's resilience, as with chiming bells accompanying steps toward self-improvement until bell sounds become inextricable from her triumphs.

The Fortune Teller's Prophecy is an inspiring memoir about refusing to give up on medical school, despite massive political and interpersonal obstacles.

CAROLINA CIUCCI (March / April 2024)

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