

*The
Triumph
Of
My Soul*

EDITED BY ELISSA GABRIELLE

Peace In The Storm Publishing

Praise for The Triumph of My Soul

“*The Triumph of My Soul* takes you on a journey, beyond the masks and facades we create in our “perfect little world” and forces us to move from relying on our own abilities to total trust in the Father.”

~Wanda B. Campbell,
Author, *First Sunday in October*

“Awesome, heartfelt and inspirational read. These incredible short stories will make anyone who may be going through a family crisis, abuse, health problems, heartbreak and whatever life dishes out, to feel a sense of relief, uplift and awareness. These stories prove how important faith in God is.”

~Tinisha Nicole Johnson, Author of *Searchable Whereabouts*

“What a testament of faith and the Grace of God. These stories moved me to tears...tears of joy!”

~Diane Dorce’
Author, *52 Broad Street*

“Inspiration is generously offered through the written words of each contributing author of *Triumph of My Soul*. Within its pages we become acquainted with an immutable truth; that truth being that He will never leave nor forsake us. It is a work that will most assuredly cause its readers to reflect upon their past and present views on life.”

~Dr. Linda Beed
Author, *Business Unusual*
Co-Host, Faith Based Arts Conference

“*The Triumph of My Soul* is a testament of the power of the spirit and prayer in our daily lives. Through these authors, we repeatedly see how God “shows up and shows out.” It can be illness, death, depression or lack of worldly goods; if you take His hand and let faith lead you, nothing can stop you. This book is uplifting for the mind, body and soul.”

~Sydney Molare’, Author

“Often we find ourselves feeling as though we just can’t win for losing. In *The Triumph of My Soul*, readers will find that they are not alone. This is more than just a book of short stories; you have been given a personal invitation to share in a journey. You will laugh, cry, and be utterly amazed by what these authors and/or their characters have had to conquer. Most importantly, you will be inspired to rise above your circumstances and press forward. Treat yourself and experience *The Triumph of My Soul*. You will be better for it.”

~Janet West Sellars, Author of *Quiet As It’s Kept* and the forthcoming, *Can’t Let Go*.

“Thought provoking, and inspiring. *The Triumph of My Soul* reminds readers that no matter what obstacles you face, you’re never alone.”

~Lacricia Peters, author *Girl, Naw!*

“Many times in life we face disappointments and pain. As women, feel alone because we learn early on who our friends are as we battle our self esteem issues. *The Triumph of My Soul* gives us hope as we are reminded we are never alone! God is always present.”

~Minister Nicole L. Warren
Vashti School for Future Leaders

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The Triumph of My Soul by Elissa Gabrielle; Julian's Grace by Jessica Tilles, Word on the Street by Jarold Imes, Death at a Church by Jacqueline Moore, The Ministry of Motherhood by Cheryl Donovan, Marathon by Bill Holmes, When You Least Expect by Dike Okoro, Breaking the Chains of Abuse by Casche Russell, A Stroke of Purpose by Keshia Dawn, A Mother, Her Son and The Father by Fon James, I'm Still Here by Kim Robinson, Doors by Ebonee Monique, Discovering the Joy Within by Allyson Deese, The Vanilla Room by Agnes B. Levine, One Woman's Journey by Linda R. Herman, He Loves Us, Always by Linda Wattley, A Test of Faith by Lorraine Elzia.

Bible Verses used in "Word on the Street" by Jarold Imes were taken from New Revised Standard Version.

Bible Verses used in "One Woman's Journey" by Linda R. Herman were taken from Exodus 3:20 from King James.

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FOREWORD

God speaks through our trials. Through Him, we find peace in the storm. Say that to yourself three times. Peace in the storm. Now, meditate upon the thought of souls finding tranquility in the midst of turmoil; it can be challenging, uplifting, and victorious at the same time. *The Triumph of My Soul* will enlighten your senses, feed your spirit, and nourish your soul with encouraging stories about faith, hope, love, redemption and inspiration of the human spirit.

You will take a journey into the hearts and minds of the storytellers and their characters and find spiritual rejuvenation. A successful writer must possess several natural abilities like perception, discernment, conception, imagination, and the will to be self critical. Sometimes one must respond to harsh disappointment, reject some opinions and accept others. Sometimes one has to navigate opposites to walk together through difficult situations in unison from time to time. A genius is one who can make those things happen. These storytellers demonstrate their genius in how they've incorporated a wonderful, everlasting message of conveying the awesome glory of God.

You will discover the joy within through these inspiring stories of victory over adversity with the turn of each page. You will laugh, cry, be moved and motivated to positive change. Walk away from this experience knowing that whatever tribulations you may face, whatever challenges comes your way, God loves you always. There are no trials that you cannot handle. Enjoy the

triumph because it is worthy of reading and all who do so will say, “It was well worth my time.”

Grace & Peace Always,

Elissa Gabrielle, Publisher
The Triumph of My Soul

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JULIAN'S GRACE

Jessica Tilles

In a heated rush, traffic barreled up and down Georgia Avenue, NW, in Washington, DC, going nowhere too fast. Julian Winters stood before the bay window, peering through the blinds, wishing he were amongst the traffic, escaping the sterilized smell that caused his stomach to flip about like a fish out of water. This wasn't one of his favorite days, but none of them had been lately.

"Life wasn't meant to be lived so hurried," he fussed between clinched teeth. "But then again, it's short as hell."

Pressing his palms against the cool windowpane, he lowered his head, desperately trying to suppress the inner pain. After all, spending so much time at Howard University Hospital, was difficult for him. As much as he wanted to scoop her up from her sickly bed and fly away to a destination where cancer didn't run rampant, he knew it was impossible and the inevitable was around the corner.

As he raised his head, he slowly opened his eyes and gazed up at the clear blue sky, challenging his once strong faith in God. Daily, Julian questioned God, not knowing what He was trying to prove by taking away the most precious life that meant the world to him. Was it something he did in his past to build anger

Jessica Tilles

in God? As far as Julian was concerned, God must have been harboring anger toward him and taking his beloved Grace was his punishment. All his life, he felt God was a forgiving God, so why couldn't He forgive Julian of his past sins, whatever those were?

"Sweet Heavenly Father," he prayed silently. "I'd give my life for Grace's."

He wasn't ready for her to go; he needed her there with him. There was still so much love and life to live with Grace. After fifteen years of marriage, he was still learning about Grace Winters, and each day brought on a different Grace, lively and intriguing. She never failed to amaze him. It was Grace's intent, from the first day she laid eyes on Julian, to keep the spice in their lives until death did them part. And she kept her word.

Too weak to toss and turn, she was having a good dream, although it was receding quickly. Her nose twitched at the familiar scent of Joop, forming a smile on her face. It was her favorite, and Julian always wore it for her. She stretched her eyes open and looked around the room until they landed on Julian's once strong statute. *This has taken such a toll on him*, Grace thought as she admired his broad shoulders that had permanently slouched.

An exhausting sigh escaped her. "What are you doing, fussing again, honey?" The soothing soft, angelic voice came from behind him.

A smile graced his face, for her voice was sweet music to his ears, a melody all her own, to never be replicated or duplicated. One he would have to get used to living without.

Julian's Grace

“You want slow pace, move to Idaho,” she softly chuckled, followed by a gut-wrenching cough.

With his back to her, Julian cringed at her cough. “Are you okay?”

She cleared her throat. “I’m fine, honey. How are you this morning?”

Turning to face the love of his life, Julian’s smile was wide as a piercing blue ocean and as bright as the sun. Walking over to the bed, he stood motionlessly, all the while maintaining the smile, although forced, that Grace loved so much. He didn’t want to be there and, above all, he didn’t want his wife to be there.

“I thought you would never wake up, Gracie. I’d be better if you weren’t in here. How are you feeling, sweetheart?” He gazed down at her as if seeing her for the first time, mesmerized by her beautiful baldhead and ashen pale complexion. Although he deeply missed her flawless pecan hue and flowing honey blonde ringlets that used to dance about her forehead—swiping them away from her face was the sexiest thing he’d ever seen—she was still beautiful in his eyes.

Grace tilted her head to the side and turned up the corner of her mouth. “Hmm. Fair to midland, I suppose.”

Julian reached for the chair that sat against the wood-grained double closet and pulled it up beside the bed. Sitting, he leaned forward, resting his upper torso on the edge of the bed. Clasp his hands together, he smiled, puckered his delectable lips and blew her a soft kiss.

Palms stretched open wide, happily she grabbed at the air, clutching his kiss, rather weakly, in her hand. Her strength had

Jessica Tilles

dissipated; she could hardly hold an ink pen between her tiny fingers. Slowly, and with shaky limbs, she brought his kiss up to her lips and savored it. Smiling, she closed her eyes and cringed a little from the pain that shot throughout her being.

“What’s wrong, Gracie?”

She pursed her lips and gave two shakes of her head.

“Are you in pain, honey?”

“I’ll be okay, Julian.” She patted his hand. “Sweetie, how long have you been here?” Her voice was weak and faint, soft like cotton, barely above a whisper.

Not confident in her assurance, Julian clasped her hands in his and lowered his head before responding. “Not long...about an hour. You were sleeping so peaceful. I didn’t want to wake you.”

“I appreciate you not waking me, honey. I’ve been poked and prodded all night long. The only time I can rest is during the day actually.”

“Well, I’ve taken the rest of the afternoon off. So, you have me all to yourself.”

“Wonderful! I’ve been missing you like crazy too.”

“Sweetness, *I’m* the one who is missing *you* like crazy.” He gently shook his head. “The house isn’t the same anymore. It feels strange without your presence. It’s too quiet.”

“Honey, please don’t do this to yourself.”

Tears welled in his eyes and danced on the rim, before diving down his cheek and streaming over his chin. He was so torn up; he felt it difficult at times to control his emotions in front of Grace.