

A Lucky Life Interrupted: A Memoir of Hope by Tom Brokaw

Tom Brokaw's memoir drew me in with its title in addition to the allure of his gift as a signature storyteller. Before the days of cable news networks, there were only three news networks with three anchors. Tom Brokaw was one of these making him a household name. To that end, Brokaw realizes that his successful career has afforded him a life that he could only dream of coming from South Dakota working class roots. So much so that people would comment that he lived under a 'lucky star.' That is until in his early 70's, when he was diagnosed with an incurable, but treatable, rare blood cancer called multiple myeloma.

This memoir is the story of that 'interruption.' With that said, he is quick to note that he realizes he has been afforded the best in care due to his high profile. However, he ultimately hopes that through his memoir, he can teach lessons to others on many topics from medicine to history to family. And he does. His medical journey, shepherded by his MD daughter, Jennifer, is interspersed with historical vignettes of coverage of events that shaped the world (fall of the Berlin Wall, release of Nelson Mandela, 911). Sprinkled throughout as well are tales about his family as well as of his love of baseball and nature.

But the real story is his medical journey, from sorting through his own medical maze with Jennifer to his personal views on aging in America and the state of the US healthcare system. And he saves the best for last.....the reason for his lucky life. But, you'll have to read the book to find out.

Jill Martin