



Only the Rats are Walking: Tales of a Female Tetraplegic

Nancy Smith

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In the confusing, fear-filled moments following the car crash, Nancy Smith pushed down her rising panic to ensure her four young passengers were safe. Only when Smith turned her attention to herself did she realize something was terribly wrong. She was motionless, unable to move, her face pressed against the airbag. Her spinal cord had been severed. She was paralyzed.

In *Only the Rats are Walking*, Smith offers an uncompromising portrayal of life as a tetraplegic, with no sensation or motor control in her torso or limbs. She recalls the initial despair in the ICU with unflinching honesty, while her depiction of people's attitudes toward the paralyzed is by turns comical and deeply frustrating. At the same time, she shares how family and friends rallied to help her adjust to her new reality.

Smith's tale provides insight into life with paralysis, making her story vital reading for anyone dealing with, or helping someone deal with, a severe spinal cord injury.

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