

## Reclaiming Our Stories: Narratives of Identity, Resilience and Empowerment



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*(Alexandre Cruickshank)*

## RECLAIMING OUR STORIES: NARRATIVES OF IDENTITY, RESILIENCE AND EMPOWERMENT



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City Works Press. Paperback. Condition: New. 168 pages. Dimensions: 8.9in. x 5.7in. x 0.6in. Reclaiming Our Stories: Narratives of Identity, Resilience and Empowerment gathers 19 powerful narratives written by members of the Reclaiming Our Stories Community Writers Workshop located in Southeast San Diego. These authors took great risk bringing these narratives to fruition, stories that pulsate with the kind of vitality that can only be constructed out of pain, love, and outrage. These authors, almost all of them emerging, reached deeply into their lives to excavate these offerings that, in the end, rise in triumph. Although it wasn't the intention of the project, most authors chose to write about some of the most traumatic events in their lives. In many cases, we find in these pages brutal reflections of ugly and painful realities confronted by these authors, often from a young age, and often the result of systemic racism and the consequences manifested by a society in which many do not have equal opportunity to thrive. These are stories of children who have suffered incredible trauma and who do not receive adequate and immediate assistance; of young people who have drowned their pain through the abuse of alcohol and drugs; of those who grew up in environments where the only role models were gang members and hustlers; of a criminal justice system that has, as Michelle Alexander reported in her groundbreaking book, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*: More African Americans in prison, jail, on probation or parole than were enslaved in 1850, before the Civil War began; of the human consequences of legal lynch codes, like the California Penal Code 182.5, that under their purview, allow people arrested, tried and convicted for offenses that everyone, including the district attorney, knows they did not...



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