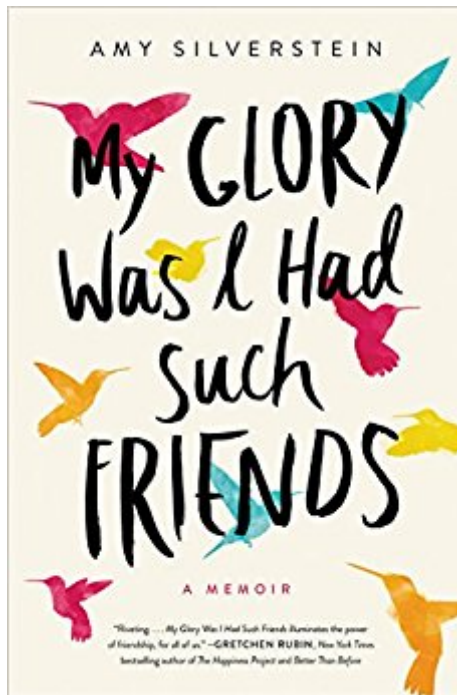




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My Glory Was I Had Such Friends: A Memoir



Synopsis

In this moving memoir about the power of friendship and the resilience of the human spirit, Amy Silverstein tells the story of the extraordinary group of women who supported her as she waited on the precipice for a life-saving heart transplant. Nearly twenty-six years after receiving her first heart transplant, Amy Silverstein's donor heart plummeted into failure. If she wanted to live, she had to take on the grueling quest for a new heart immediately. A shot at survival meant uprooting her life and moving across the country to California. When her friends heard of her plans, there was only one reaction: "I'll be there." Nine remarkable women—Joy, Jill, Leja, Jody, Lauren, Robin, Valerie, Ann, and Jane—put demanding jobs and pressing family obligations on hold to fly across the country and be by Amy's side. Creating a calendar spreadsheet, the women—some of them strangers to one another—passed the baton of friendship, one to the next, and headed straight and strong into the battle to help save Amy's life. Empowered by the kind of empathy that can only grow with age, these women, each knowing Amy from different stages of her life, banded together to provide her with something that medicine alone could not. Sleeping on a cot beside her bed, they rubbed her back and feet when the pain was unbearable, adorned her room with death-distracting decorations, and engaged in their "best talks ever." They saw the true measure of their friend's strength, and they each responded in kind. *My Glory Was I Had Such Friends* is a tribute to these women and the intense hours they spent together—hours of heightened emotion and self-awareness, where everything was laid bare. Candid and heartrending, this once-in-a-lifetime story of connection and empathy is a powerful reminder of the ultimate importance of "showing up" for those we love.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“If it were fiction, you’d dismiss it as over the top: Multiple devoted women collaborating in an emotional, cross-country support relay, struggling to keep an exhausted friend alive—a friend who is focused and willing to undergo yet another heart transplant. An endless wait leads to a medical miracle that makes it all worthwhile. But here’s the kicker: It’s all true, and it’s beautifully written, too.” (Ted Koppel, author of New York Times bestseller *Lights Out*) “Friendship is a key element to a happy life and, as Amy Silverstein’s moving memoir demonstrates, friends matter even more when we’re facing a big challenge. Nine remarkable friends helped Amy to survive while she waited for a life-saving heart transplant. This riveting account of what Amy endured—and how her friends supported her—illuminates the power of friendship, for all of us.” (Gretchen Rubin, New York Times bestselling author of *The Happiness Project* and *Better Than Before*) “There’s a special air around crisis that makes true intimacy possible in ways that daily life rarely does. Amy Silverstein has tapped into that moment with a cast of women who will make you pine for your nearest and dearest.” (Kelly Corrigan, author of the New York Times bestsellers *The Middle Place* and *Glitter and Glue*) “A tremendously moving story about the power of female friendship—the incredible way our bonds deepen with age, and a gentle reminder to all of us how important it is to show up for those we love. There is no doubt that readers will recognize their own friend circles in these pages and feel a new appreciation for the many miles they’ve walked together.” (Kathleen Grissom, bestselling author of *The Kitchen House* and *Glory Over Everything*) “An intimate celebration of the power of compassion.” (Kirkus Reviews) “Skillful | A brave, transparent look at the harrowing battle of a heart-transplant patient who, through the support of her friends, conquers unthinkable odds.” (Booklist) “In this inspirational memoir of sickness and health, Silverstein pays tribute to the many women who put their lives on hold when she needed them most.” (Real Simple) “Remarkable | My Glory Was I Had Such Friends is about the power of showing up for those you love, no matter the odds, no matter the distance.” (CBS Sunday Morning) “Memoirs written by people who have survived devastating health issues are common, as are books that celebrate the friend who is an angel-like presence in tough times. *My Glory Was I Had Such Friends* combines both elements, but in far

better fashion than the standard-issue memoir or the typical homage to girlfriends. A potent reminder of the importance of imperfect friends, for loving them for whoever they are. Silverstein proved her writing mettle. She seamlessly knits several important issues into one compelling package. (USA Today (3.5/4 stars)) “My Glory Was I Had Such Friends is, at its core, a book about friendship. Silverstein spares no words honestly describing the endless emotions she felt when friends from work, childhood and her community walked alongside her as she waited for a heart. As different as these friends were, they all had common goals that brought them together: a love for Amy and a desperate desire for her to get a new heart. As a result, friendships deepened in courage and perseverance, and a new understanding was born for what it means to say, ‘I love you,’ and truly mean it. (Associated Press) “An inspiring, heart-warming memoir...Amazing...You can wait for the movie or grab some hankies and start crying now. (Huffington Post) “Read, be inspired, and then go call up your BFFs to tell them how much you love them. (Women’s Health)

In this moving memoir about the power of friendship and the resilience of the human spirit, Amy Silverstein tells the story of the extraordinary group of women who supported her as she waited on the precipice for a lifesaving heart transplant. Nearly twenty-six years after receiving her first heart transplant, Amy Silverstein’s donor heart plummeted into failure. If she wanted to live, she had to take on the grueling quest for a new heart immediately. A shot at survival meant uprooting her life and moving across the country to California. When her friends heard of her plans, there was only one reaction: “I’ll be there. Nine remarkable women—Joy, Jill, Leja, Jody, Lauren, Robin, Valerie, Ann, and Jane—put demanding jobs and pressing family obligations on hold to fly across the country and be by Amy’s side. Creating a calendar spreadsheet, the women—some of them strangers to one another—passed the baton of friendship one to the next and headed straight and strong into the battle to help save Amy’s life. Empowered by the kind of empathy that can only come with age, these women, each knowing Amy from different stages of her life, banded together to provide her with something that medicine alone could not. Sleeping on a cot beside her bed, they rubbed her back and feet when the pain was unbearable, adorned her room with death-distracting decorations, and engaged in their “best talks ever. They saw the true measure of their friend’s strength, and they each responded in kind. My Glory Was I Had Such Friends is a tribute to these women and the intense hours they spent together—hours of heightened

emotion and self-awareness, where everything was laid bare. Candid and heartrending, this once-in-a-lifetime story of connection is a powerful reminder of the ultimate importance of showing up for those we love.

This book had me riveted from the get-go. I not only felt that I was living with Amy through her incredible journey, but also that of her wonderful friends. It truly is a book for the 21st century as it combines the account of the amazing medical advances which have kept Amy alive for so long but also shows the true cost of this extra shot at life. It is impossible to read this book without wondering if either you would have the courage to keep going as long as Amy does or to inspire the dedication and loyalty of your own friends. This is a book which will set book groups alight and I highly recommend it.

I haven't been able to put this book down since I got it. It is an incredibly compelling story about the power of friendship and a poignant reminder of how fragile life is. Whether you like memoirs or fiction, mysteries or dramas, you will enjoy the way the story unfolds and the extraordinary writing. It is rare these days to find a book that delivers both. Amy Silverstein has done just that -- thank you!

Wow! What a book! Over the years I have read or tried to read many biographies, autobiographies and memoirs. Not one of them has captured my attention like this one has. This is a story that hearing a synopsis of it, most would say that they couldn't relate to it and no wonder. Amy Silverstein, the author, found herself the recipient of a heart transplant in her early 20's. She outlived her doctor's prediction that she would last about 10 years with her new heart, by around 15 years. Around 26 years after the first surgery and many illness and hospital admissions later, her heart began to fail and the only thing that could be done, was another transplant. Her longevity placed her as an outlier when it came to heart transplants and with the seriousness of her case, the doctors felt her best chance to survive and have the best team possible for a second transplant was in Los Angeles. So she and her husband came to LA to visit the doctors and await a new heart and the surgery. However, when one of her friends found out that she would have to go away from New York City, they set up a schedule of friends who would fly out in rotation to stay with her a few days at a time until she got her new heart. Thus the name of the book: *My Glory Was I Had Such Friends!* (the exclamation point mine). Obviously most of us don't know anyone on a heart transplant donor list or to many folks in critical condition that need 24 hour care by friends to help us through a crisis. As someone that is chronically ill however, I know how appreciative I am of anything that someone

does to help my days pass easier. So while the health condition may vary, the need for friends and their help doesn't. If this book helps encourages some to be more receptive to helping out sick friends, it is worth it. It also helps some of us know we are not alone. At one point in the book she mentioned how people would tell her how great she looked when she was out in public. She had made a long standing rule to not live her life in pajamas but to get dressed decently, do her hair and makeup. People seeing her tended to think she wasn't as ill as she said she was. I have run into that myself. People telling me how great I looked as if I couldn't possibly be as bad off as I say. What they don't realize that I'm only out in public on my very best days. Come visit when I'm having a flare or day I can't walk or move without pain. Appearances can be deceiving. This book brought tears to my eyes at points. I learned a lot about heart transplants that I never would have known. I am old enough to remember the news when the first heart transplant was done. Hard to believe that some people now have had those surgeries and have lived long enough to need yet another one. One of the sad facts of life for many of us with spare body parts inserted whether a cornea, a titanium knee or a heart; all of those parts have a limited longevity. This book delves into friendships and relationships as well as the medical issues surrounding Amy's life. I would highly recommend it, especially if you know someone that is going through great physical trials or by a person themselves going through great physical trials.

What an excellent read! I did not read the author's previous book, so this was my introduction to her. She is so talented and has an incredible story to share. I will be passing this book along for as many people to read as possible...it is that good. Her amazing and difficult journey being a heart transplant patient and defying all odds the first time around to her second journey on the transplant list gives such a well-rounded look at the journey of life and what people learn about humanity and relationships over the years. I admired how candid she was about her spiraling negative outlook and shortness with those around her as it made her journey so believable. I felt so much compassion for her during her countdown to turning off medical devices (which kept her heart pumping). Her friends did amazing things for her and their uniqueness was clear through Amy's writing. Each relationship had a backstory, recent history and most of all their love shined through in their own unique way. I truly hope to have the kind of relationships Amy and her friends built in my life. What an incredibly supportive group! This is a wonderful read. Enjoy It!

I read it in 3 days!!! great story!

This was a great book about women's friendships.

What a touching memoir! Don't miss reading this one. This book is about the power of friendship and how few have been blessed with the sort of friends that Amy has. This is the story of her journey through a failing heart and the friends who put their lives on hold in order to support her, care for her and give her the love and reassurance that is so much needed during a scary time like this. These sort of friends are few and far between. Hopefully by people reading of this journey she took they will look around them and see who they know who might need this sort of love. There is always a need for love in this world.

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