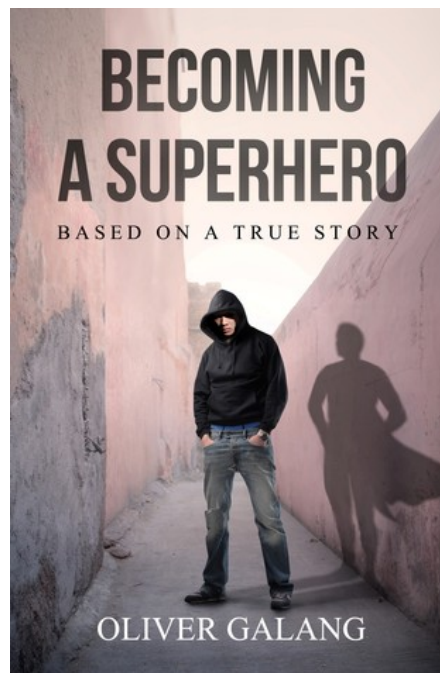




Becoming a Superhero: Based on a True Story

Oliver Galang

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Becoming a Superhero: Based on a True Story Oliver Galang

Oliver was a lost child. Even though he had a good background, he managed to screw up his life. He was a military brat. His father served 24 years in the US Navy. His mom was loving and kind, but very strict. Maybe too much discipline was too much for him?

He also had a good education. He was taught in DoDDs (Department of Defense Dependents Schools), similar to private schools, in Portugal and Panama. He even earned a bachelor's degree in Business Management from the renown San Diego State University. However, after all that, it was all downhill.

Oliver was a nerd. And he was determined to become a superhero to prove to all the bullies wrong. He worked out hard, even up to five hours a day. He told his psychologist that the reason why he worked out so hard was so he could become a triathlete. However, his real goal was to become a superhero.

Unfortunately, Oliver took a wrong path in life. He got mixed up in women, money, and gambling. He had a theory: To think like a criminal, you must act like a criminal.

See the adventures of our young superhero as he turns his life around....

Chapter 1: Background

I was born in the summer of 1974, in a small town near New Orleans, Louisiana. I had big ears, big eyes and a flat nose. I was a scrawny little boy. I'm sure if I was born from Spartan parents, I would've easily been thrown off a cliff, as I would've been denounced unfit enough to be a Spartan. Luckily, my parents decided to keep me.

My parents bestowed upon me the name, "Oliver." Like Oliver Twist? Yes. However, my name didn't come from a play. It came from a movie called Love Story. It was my parent's favorite movie back in 1974, and starred Ryan O'Neal and Ali MacGraw. In this movie, Ryan O'Neal played a character named Oliver. Oliver was an intelligent and handsome guy. Unfortunately, my story is a little different.

My dad was a cook or MS (Mess Specialist) in the US Navy. He was an enlisted man, not an officer. He always told me, "If you ever join the military, then become an officer. Don't be enlisted like me." He was rather intelligent. However, the only job he could get back then was a cook.

You see, in 1947, the US had a huge base called Subic Bay in the Philippines. The US signed a Status of Forces agreement which required the United States to hire Filipinos. Out of the thousands of Filipinos who took the test, my dad was one of the very few who passed it and was recruited into the US Navy. Of course, the only jobs the US allowed the Filipinos to take were cooks. That's why you will see a lot of old Filipino cooks in the Navy.

My dad had a hard life in the Philippines. He used to tell me every day how lucky I was to be born in America. He used to tell me how he collected coins in the ditches and cans on the street to support his family. He told me several times that if he hadn't passed that test, I would've been collecting cans too.

I knew I was very fortunate. However, I used to joke around with him all the time saying, "Did it snow in the Philippines too?"

He used to get mad at me all the time for saying that. He would always say that it was no laughing matter. Although I apologized many times, I still didn't believe he walked ten miles to school and back...barefoot! All joking aside, I knew he had a hard life in the Philippines. With that being said, I just wanted to say that I am truly proud to be an American. I couldn't imagine my life otherwise...much less collecting cans in the ditches.

However, although I am an American, I am also known as a Second Generation Filipino, meaning my parents were born in the Philippines and I was born here, in the US. Luckily I was born here, in the US, because if I was born in the Philippines, I would've been considered very poor. And even though I'm Filipino...I don't speak the "Tagalog" language.

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From Reader Review Becoming a Superhero: Based on a True Story for online ebook

Stephanie says

i really enjoyed this book. i actually won it in a giveaway and the author was so nice to take time to write me a personal note. i will look forward to reading more of his books.

Kalyan Panja says

On paper in an extremely relaxed tenor, it loan to the on the whole understanding as if we are interpreting the authors enduring individual diary. At the same time as keeping hold of to some extent adolescent yet appealing attitude all the way through, even whilst delineating a small number of fairly risqué dealings, the plot amble in the course of an existence of coming-of-age high points, inopportune blunders, and a lot of truly asinine instants.

Sasidharan M says

Overall the book was more than good...

Initially the book starts out to be slower than you would expect after seeing the title. But it makes up for it after you cross the 100th page. After that it was really nice. Even-though i haven't done half the stuff Mr. Galang had done, I was able to relate to the story. But the end was again a bummer. Still i liked the book. Would even rea it once more.

Jim says

Received a free copy through Goodreads First Reads.

Becoming a Superhero is quite an interesting life story. Oliver Galang is a great storyteller, and I really started to get into his life.

Unfortunately, the book is rather disjointed, and Galang tends to ramble. The book needs good editing to make it a more cohesive whole. It really reads like stream of consciousness, and if Galang were telling these stories in bars, he would have crowds around him, hanging on his every word.

But that can't translate directly into a publishable memoir. There needs to be someone to take an external view of the book and help Galang pull a theme out of it, and work toward that theme. The superhero idea would be perfect - but that seems to be hit and miss; he can go long stretches without relating anything to it.

Spoilers, below...

But even with the problems above, I probably would have rated it at least 3 stars (Goodreads translation: "I

liked it"), if it weren't for the ending. Galang ends the story completely abruptly with no real payoff. It's almost as if he got tired of writing the book and just decided to quit without a real ending. The last paragraph talks about how he always wanted to be a superhero - that might have been a great chapter summarizing the book. I was hoping that the book would wrap up as a good redemption story. Instead, after all the gambling, after all the strip clubs, the last chapter is all about how he likes to have sex with lots of girls, and his psychologist completely supporting him and telling him it's perfectly normal because he's "genetically programmed that way."

What started out with a lot of promise, with a lot of interesting stories (that I found myself laughing out loud several times at), ended up as a tawdry tale of sexual escapades.

I might suggest to the author that he gets some editing help, re-write the book, make it more cohesive, and change the ending. It could be something good.

Francis Casabuena says

Becoming a Superhero is a story of Oliver Galang, a story that tells us no matter how hard your life may get, just move on. He tells us his story growing up as a military brat, about his life living in different countries, he also tells us his ups and downs, his problem in gambling, relationships, and money, most of all his dream to become a superhero.

Everyone of us is a hero, we all have it inside, not a hero with supernatural powers or a hero with super-fighting extraordinary skills, we are a hero by means of saving others by helping, giving, and by caring. From his childhood dream of becoming a superhero Mr. Galang soon realized that he's a superhero by means of giving love to those who he thinks need it most, and most of all he's a superhero who needs to save himself.

I adore this book, it was simply written, it proves that you don't need a help of a great editor to let the people know your story. I adore Mr. Galang for being brave to let the people know his deepest stories. And especially I adore his parents for letting their children experience the culture of a Filipino, which many Filipinos who just stepped on a foreign country forget nowadays. I had fun time reading that. I definitely recommend this book.

Eliza says

I was very unsure about what to expect when reading this book. The title, Becoming a Superhero sounds like it should be a soldier fighting for their country, or a human being bitten by a spider and sprouting superhuman powers. I was caught off guard by the actual book. The author goes into detail about his life, his forays with gambling and prostitution and how he realized who he should be.

I found it interesting to read a nonfiction book about this topic, and such an honest portrayal of the depreciation of his life. Most books these days romanticize the downturn of life. Some even have similar depressing accounts of addiction to gambling and becoming broke by spending money on prostitutes in Mexico each weekend. However, this book tells an accurate tale of the negative aspects of this life.

Although it is apparent that the author is not a professional writer, the style of writing is easy to follow and relevant. It is written simply, and without extensive education in writing, I would assume. The writing style

bothered me at first, but as I continued, I became used to the simple and matter-of-fact portrayal of the story.

Overall, the story was not my usual pick, but I found it interesting to gain insight into the author's mind. The specific moans and praises for each family helped to relate to the book, making it more relatable to any human being. Four Stars.

Stephanie Wolf says

Oliver was one of 4 children born to parents from the Philippines. He was lucky to be born in the United States, or was it more unlucky? He was also a military brat, as his father was proud to be in the US Navy, even if he was only a cook.

All Oliver's life he was never the most popular, in fact, he was usually considered the nerd. But all his life he wanted to be a superhero and help people. Knowing he was not born with any superpowers, he likened himself to Batman, having to work hard to become a superhero.

His parents loved him and wanted only the best for him, as well as his sisters. Moving from one base to another, he never really made friends, but the relationships with his sisters was like any sibling relationships, some closer than others, but always together no matter where they traveled.

As Oliver grew older, he was determined to work out to build his body strength on his way to becoming a superhero. Unfortunately, he always seemed to make the wrong choices, or choices that would irk his parents, although he did attend college and did get a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management. But he never put his business sense to good work. Instead he did not succeed well in his jobs, but found gambling was very profitable, and watching strippers was something he loved to spend his money on.

His life continues in the same pattern, gambling and strippers, and bad relationships. Seems like some people never grow up. Sad to think it's based on a true story.

Very nice detail of the family and their relationships, along with nice detail of where they were stationed. Interesting mix of characters along his life, from bullies to strippers to shrinks. The story flows along nicely from his early years on through his life.

My one complaint is the conversion from print form to Kindle. It is very annoying to continually have page numbers from the printed version intertwined with the Kindle text.

Joni says

Got this book free from Goodreads giveaway

Nice easy book to read, written well. I gave this book to my 21yr old son; I think he would enjoy it more. It's about this young mans life, and all the trials he went threw before growing up, I mean really growing up.

I also love it when a free book comes in the mail, and the author takes time to write you a note, that's always a plus.

Heather Monroe says

This was a great novel that allows the reader to be drawn in by the similar experiences they share with Oliver. The diversity of the main character's experiences allows many to relate and feel bad for him. The story is great for anyone who wants to understand issues that a child has to go through as they come of age. More than that, it gives a new perspective to those who are "military brats" or from a culture that is not well known.

Oliver struggles throughout the novel seemingly unaware of the world. The fact that he is a second generation Filipino makes him an outsider and he constantly has to deal with diversity. Oliver also has a general lack of understanding of other cultures and social cues. Being a military brat does not help his cause as he is constantly moved from place to place. His stereotype of being a nerd and the bullying also follows him. No matter what situations and experiences he encounters he still believes that he will become a superhero. Oliver spent so much time and energy trying to become a superhero that he had unreal expectations from life. In the end he realized he was the one he could save himself from.

Paddy O'callaghan says

AWESOME.

Although there are many other facets to this magnus opus, the most striking aspect reminded me of a great poem:

"They fuck you up, your mum and dad.
They may not mean to, but they do.
They fill you with the faults they had
And add some extra, just for you."

by Phillip Larkin

Emily says

I'm generally a fan of biographies and stories where the author fictionalizes something to which I can relate. I was drawn to this story because it was the story of a person overcoming his past to become someone respected by others. I admit that I know very little about Filipino upbringing and was amused by the anecdotes the author shared about how his mother ran the household and what it was like growing up as the only boy in a household full of women.

His discussion of comic book characters and how he, as a superhero would fit in, was enjoyable. As in most coming of age/ self-improvement stories, he has a dark period, but eventually sees the error of his ways in his self-destructive tendencies and becomes a (super) man for it.

The story was a very slow read. I kept putting it down because while I liked the subject matter, the author jumps from the main storyline to the past and other timelines which made it hard to read more than a few pages at a time. The formatting on the iPad was also awful which really detracted from reading. It was every other line and only went about 3/4 the way across the page, so instead of being the 284 pages it said it is, it was 586 on my iPad.

Martha Chalé says

I thought for some time whether if this book was a 3 stars or a 4 stars... I realized I should give it a 3.5 stars (thing I can't do).

Oliver was a kid with a good family and really good experiences in life that somehow messes up (I know the somehow I'll just let everybody else figured it out by reading the book).

The main character is hilarious, he's a really confused man that somehow manages to think all things upside-down, he's so hilarious that even in the worst moments of his life you can't feel sorry for him. I enjoyed reading his life and how he lost it, how bad decisions made great changes. I was kinda disappointed with the ending, it was just like "I found it. The End.", I'm glad he found it but I wanted to know more. Also I kept on expecting the cape and the mask :)

Other thing I'm not quite certain is the title, there are parts of the history that the title seems wrong, or maybe was my idea of the cape and the mask.

As for the writer (Oliver ha!) he writes easy to understand, quick to read, and manages to tell a highly drama in a comedy (I guess that's what he wanted, to tell us a sad story in a happy way), you'll want to keep on reading. There were parts, though, I felt he wanted to tell us so much stories that some of them were quick and (kinda) left aside.

Enjoyed it. Thanks for the book (won it at a first-reads giveaway)!

X_x

Gail Richardson says

RECEIVED BOOK FREE FROM GOODREADS FIRST READS. It took me a while to get started, but, once i did, it became a fabulous read. Poor Oliver didn't have a clue. His jouney was both humorous and sad. In the end he saw the light all became clear. He will take you on a fine journey. A must read. Am looking forward to the next journey....

Rosa M. says

This book was very humorous, especially Oliver's childhood and his travels as a military kid. I especially enjoyed his family life and Filipino background along with his adventures growing up. It is a fast and enjoyable read until Oliver starts getting into trouble. At the end, when he finally makes his breakthrough, the book suddenly ends. It needed another chapter to balance things out. Since we knew so much about his dark times and problems, it would have been much more satisfying to have a last chapter about where he

ended up. I realize there may be a sequel, but I think there should have been more than an abrupt ending to this one. Nevertheless, I enjoyed Oliver's story and found it light-hearted and fun. Hopefully we will learn more about Oliver in his next book!

Claire says

Oliver Galang is hilarious. And the book was really interesting. One issue I had, though was that the book ended a bit abruptly and I wanted to know what happened next. But it was a very good book. Yup. I would totally recommend reading it.

PS I received the book for free through Goodreads First Reads
