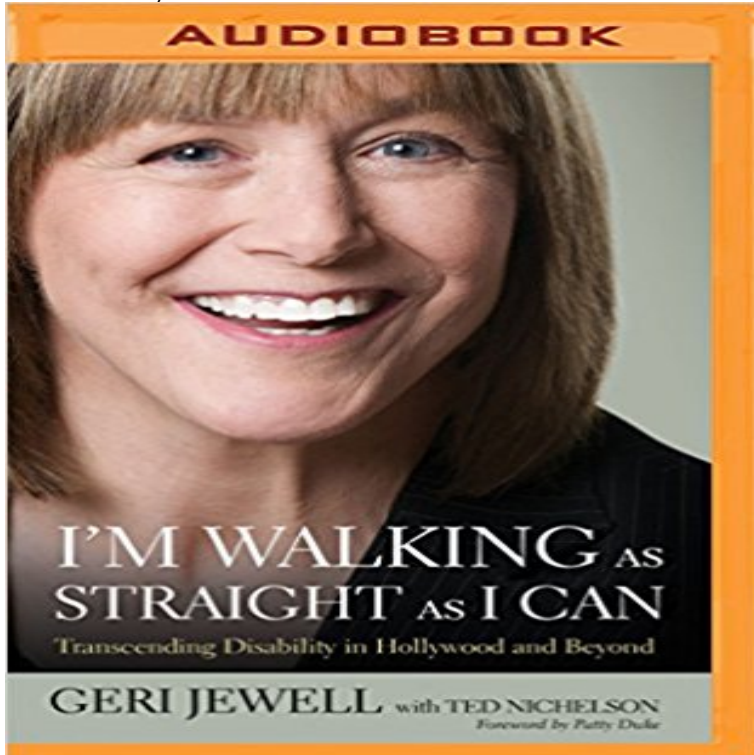


Im Walking as Straight as I Can: Transcending Disability in Hollywood and Beyond



Born with cerebral palsy, Geri Jewell inspired a generation of young people when she became the first person with a disability to appear in a recurring role on prime-time television, with her groundbreaking character, Cousin Geri, on the NBC sitcom *The Facts of Life*. The book's title, *I'm Walking As Straight As I Can*, has a double meaning, referring to both Jewell's sexuality and her extraordinary struggle growing up with cerebral palsy. This candid memoir details her experiences from her traumatic birth in Buffalo, New York, to her rise to stardom as a stand-up comic to becoming a television star. She documents the harsh realities of show business by recounting the relentless discrimination and abuse she suffered at the hands of people she trusted. Her experiences in the shark-infested waters of Hollywood led her on a journey from the Comedy Store to the White House, followed by a downward spiral, tax problems, drug addiction, marriage, and an accident that nearly claimed her life. When *Deadwood* creator David Milch recognized Jewell at a pharmacy, he offered her a role in his new HBO series on the spot, and she began to find hope and happiness once again. *I'm Walking As Straight As I Can* is an inspiring story, told with grace and self-deprecating humor, one that gives listeners a rare glimpse of true courage and perseverance.

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