



Apprehensions & Convictions: Adventures of a 50-Year-Old Rookie Cop

Mark Johnson

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What makes a fifty-year-old man quit a highly successful career in charity work to take on the low-paid, dangerous job of being a police officer? When Mark Johnson left the United Way to become the oldest rookie in the Mobile, Alabama, police department, he didn't just have to adjust to a new career—he had to adjust to an entirely new life of danger, violence, and stark moral choices. “Apprehensions and Convictions” is Johnson’s explosive memoir of his second career as a cop. Going from fund-raising with socialites to confronting armed suspects in the streets, Johnson found that poverty and crime were no longer social issues but matters of life and death. A civilized man whose first instinct is to help people in trouble, Johnson learned that some men can only be subdued with brute force and some chronic criminals refuse to be redeemed. Defying the skepticism of his wife, the derision of the younger cops who called him “Pawpaw,” and his own self-doubts, Johnson rose to become a detective and a highly decorated officer. “Apprehensions and Convictions” also tells a personal story of how Johnson overcame his own demons to find a new sense of purpose and identity in midlife. From a troubled drink- and drug-fueled youth, to dealing with both his birth and adoptive parents, to struggling to find a steady career path, Johnson’s story is of a man who found his courage and changed himself. An intense, sweeping narrative that explores the frustrations of an overprivileged youth, delves deeply into the dysfunction of the Mobile ghetto, and ends with an armed standoff between Johnson and an escaped cop-killer, “Apprehensions and Convictions” is a compelling new memoir of a remarkable life.

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