



# Genesis: A Portrait of Spinal Cord Injury

*Stephen Thompson*

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## **Genesis: A Portrait of Spinal Cord Injury** Stephen Thompson

Not long after Indiana University had won the NCAA championship in 1981, a young man of twenty was hurriedly riding his bicycle in order to make it on time for a tennis tournament. He had plans for returning to the game after having been sidetracked with the 'college life.' Although he expected to attend graduate school, he was hoping to play professional tennis one day. He never made it to that tournament. A head-on collision with an automobile had crushed his dreams and also his neck, resulting in a cervical spinal cord injury. As he lay in the intensive care unit unable to move, he listened to music on his Walkman to distract him from his terrible predicament. His favorite tape, *The Lamb Lies Down on Broadway* by Genesis, seemed to help keep his attitude positive and hopeful. The following months are torturous and frustrating and he prays for a miracle; near-death experiences that seem too mysterious to comprehend show him that there is life beyond human existence. Then, after finally making it to the rehabilitation unit, he meets other young men in similar situations and they all struggle together to increase their functional abilities. In this rare and candid memoir, Stephen Thompson shares his many tribulations as he experiences new beginnings, both physical and spiritual, and strives for the ultimate goal of any spinal cord injury victim: to walk again.

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