

# Foretaste

[outofmyallegedmind.com/the-foretaste-and-nearly-missing-it/](http://outofmyallegedmind.com/the-foretaste-and-nearly-missing-it/)

Nancy Franson

The last time I had seen these two women together, they had just met in an infusion center while undergoing chemotherapy. One was my rock-star diva girlfriend whom I had accompanied for moral support in her battle against breast cancer. The other had seen me sitting next to her and said she thought I looked familiar. We realized we had worked together years ago, in a university housing office where she had been a resident assistant (RA) during her undergraduate years.

As these two women began to talk, they realized they shared a passion for music. My friend, a suburban housewife, and piano teacher by day, is also lead singer for [a local Connecticut rock band](#). [Jolie Rocke Brown](#), the former RA, revealed she was a professional opera singer and vocal instructor and, at the time of treatment, was performing with a Motown group.

By the end of their conversation, both women had [removed their wigs](#) and revealed their scars to expose the toll cancer had taken on their bodies. By the end of their treatment regime, both women had joined their voices to sing encouragement to one another and to those around them still fighting their battles.

Last weekend, Rock Star Diva invited me to join her at a concert celebrating the release of Jolie's new CD [Rock of Ages: Hymns for the Soul](#). At first I declined the invitation, thinking I had much too much to do—leaves to be raked, words to be written; my house ever in need of cleaning. Somehow, however, I found time and space in my Saturday and said, "What the heck."

I'm ever so grateful I did.

There are moments, it seems, when heaven comes down and kisses earth with its promises; moments when my soul truly receives a foretaste of glory divine. This concert was one of those moments. It would be pointless for me to sit here and try to come up with adjectives to describe Jolie's voice. Trust me—she's good. Or, don't trust me—click over and listen to a sample of her music [here](#). Vocalists typically don't receive international acclaim unless they can sing.

Jolie Rocke Brown can sing.

It wasn't just the stellar quality of Jolie's performance, however, which spoke to my spirit, nor that her material was comprised of so many old-time gospel hymns which are near and dear to my heart. Rather it seemed throughout the concert, and in the hours my friend and I shared together afterward, our time had been spent on holy ground. During the performance, which took place in a stunning brownstone church in downtown Hartford, Connecticut, I sat on a pew next to my dear, brave friend, light sifting through glass images representing the Law to our left and the Gospel to our right—a visual call and response of the story of redemption.



At one point in the middle of the concert, Jolie invited the congregation to join her in an old-fashioned hymn sing. And, oh, how I love a good old-fashioned hymn sing. Together, my friend and I lifted our voices

together while surrounded by those old and young, and of skin tones both dark and light, representing the beautiful array of God's creative imagination.

I thought, "This is what it will be like, throughout all eternity, when all God's people finally unite to join their voices in song."

Perhaps what was most powerful for me about Jolie's concert was realizing it wasn't merely a concert. Through song she told a story, her story—a story of hope and healing, and the power of music to help her grip tightly to both. Jolie spoke of how this project was inspired through her journey of surviving breast cancer. Almost immediately after hearing her diagnosis, she began to hold onto the powerful words of hymns such as *His Eye Is on The Sparrow* and *Great Is Thy Faithfulness*, and she sang them daily throughout treatment. Three years later Jolie is cancer free, and this project and her CD bear witness to her tremendous faith in God's incredible power and mercy.

I am not a musician, though I am the mother of one. As I've watched and listened to him, and as I have watched the ways people like he, Jolie and my friend minister to so many through song, I can't help but think, "Where would this tired old world be without the gift of music?"

Think about it. Had mankind merely climbed out of the primordial ooze with only a need to communicate about things like food and shelter and those things necessary for survival, why would anyone need harmony and melody? Harps, strings, and the occasional African drum? Rock music and jazz; psalms of praise and hymns of lament?

Yet God has given us these things. He created us with the capacity to sing and dance and make music, and these things are so very good. He must have known how desperately his people would need them.

Music offers hope; music offers healing. Music lifts the eyes of my heart heavenward and offers me a foretaste of glory divine. Making the decision to join my friend and listen to Jolie's thank offering truly did nourish my soul. Lord, protect me from ever again thinking I'm much too busy for that.

*Thanks for stopping by! If you would like to receive future posts via email, [click here](#). And [click here](#) if you would consider "liking" my Facebook page. Thanks—I appreciate you!*

*Rock of Ages*, by Jolie Rocke Brown is available at CD Baby by [clicking here](#). (Note: I have received no compensation or other consideration for promoting this album. I just like it and think others will too)

Joining Laura, (late) Jen and the sisterhood, emily, and Jennifer:

[Share/Bookmark](#)



