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Jay's Journal



Synopsis

Jay was a sweet, bright high school student who cared about his grades and his friends. He had ambitions. He was happy. And he thought he could handle anything. He was wrong. When Jay falls in with a crowd that's dabbling in drugs and the occult, he finds himself in over his head and doing things he never thought possible. Fascinated by the dark arts and in love with a dangerous girl, Jay falls deeper and deeper into a life he no longer recognizes...and sees no way out.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 870L (What's this?)

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Simon Pulse; Reissue edition (August 17, 2010)

Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.6 x 7 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.4 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (148 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #63,362 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #14 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Drugs #29 inÂ Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Suicide #35 inÂ Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Drugs & Alcohol Abuse

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

When I first read this book, I was blown away. That was because I was 12. After a few years, when I happened to pick it up again, a lot of things about this "true" story seemed a little.. well... false, so I decided to do some research on the net. This is what I found out: The real "Jay" was a young boy named Alden, who grew up in Pleasant Grove. He was quite depressed and involved with drugs, and he committed suicide, but he was never involved with the occult. Mrs. Sparks came to Alden's family when they were still greiving, and received Alden's journal under the guise that she wanted to help other people with "his problem". She then took a bunch of supposed accounts of other teenagers involved with the occult, and combined them with entries from Alden's journal (which never mentioned the occult). She also didn't bother to hide some very identifying details about Alden

very well. The result of all this was that people in Pleasant Grove figured out who "Jay" was, and not only did his poor parents have his death to deal with, but vicious rumors of their deceased son being a animal-sacrificing Satanist. His grave was desecrated several times, and his parents ended up divorcing under all the strain. Why was this book passed off as a journal? Well for one thing, any book about Satanism sold really well at the time this was published (more bucks for the renowned Beatrice Sparks). Another reason might be because Mrs. Sparks is a devout Mormon, and if you write a book that basically shouts "Hey! See, this kid strayed from Christianity and started exploring other religions, and look! He got mixed up with Satan and died!" and direct it to teenagers, that's a great way to evangelize your religion. I find this book completely disgusting.

To all of you people from Utah that claim "Jay's Journal" is a true story, well, let's just say that Beatrice Sparks has convinced you, once again, that her self righteous fantasy view of the world is fact, and teenagers can gain some sort of phenomenal "powers" by killing cats and drinking cow's blood, and only by obeying your parents and going to church will save you from the evils of the real world. Some of you claim to have known members of my family when you have no idea what we have gone through since the publication of this book. Right now I have Alden Barrett's original journal in my possession. I am here to tell all of you the facts. My brother, Alden Neil Barrett, died of an apparently self-inflicted gunshot wound to the right temple on March 13, 1971. He was posthumously diagnosed with clinical depression after his psychiatrist, (NOT Beatrice Sparks) read his journal, which sporadically detailed the last six months of his life. Exactly 21 of 69 entries from Alden's journal were used by Beatrice Sparks in "Jay's Journal"; some of which include, "The Joys Of the Theater", and "The Joys of Debate." She has several different accounts as to where she received information that Alden was involved in occult activities, none of which I believed when I interviewed her for my book. She was vague and apologetic, and would not reveal her "sources." Side-by-side comparisons of "Jay's Journal" and "Go Ask Alice" reveal suspiciously similar writing styles. (Entries that repeat words three times for emphasis, for example.) No where in Alden's journal is there any mention of drinking cow's blood, or any of the other alleged occult or satanic activities mentioned in "Jay's Journal." The letter at the end of the book was actually written by my mother, Marcella.

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