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Spud



Synopsis

It's South Africa 1990. Two major events are about to happen: the release of Nelson Mandela and, more importantly, it's Spud Milton's first year at an elite boys only private school. Cursed with parents from well beyond the lunatic fringe, a senile granny, and a dormitory full of strange characters, Spud has his hands full trying to adapt to his new home. Surrounded by names such as Gecko, Rambo, Rain Man and Mad Dog, Spud takes his first tentative steps along the path to manhood. (The path, it seems, could be a rather long road.) Armed with only his wits and his diary, Spud takes us from illegal night swimming to the red-hot furnace of the cricket pitch, from ghostbusting to a catastrophic family vacation. He also invites us into the mind of a boy struggling to come to terms with a strange new world; a boy whose eyes are being opened to love, friendship and complete insanity.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I bought this book for my 10 year old son (5th grader) who reads on a 7th grade reading level. I read the first couple of pages of the book but wish I had completely read it before letting my son read it. It has language, sexual innuendos, and moderate typical boyhood violence. I thought it expressed more male/female interactions than I wanted my son to read at this time but much to my horror, it is not anything he hasn't heard from the other kids at school or on the bus. I read it in full after my son finished reading it. It is a hilarious book that my son loved. Also, the writing in diary form held his attention since it is a rather thick book.

This book told a story from the point of view of a 14 years old boy living in a all boys dormitory in South Africa by the time Mandela was just released. I totally loved it! Being a female adult, I had no idea this diary of a teenage boy would be so entertaining. Funny and easy to read. A very nice summer reading. Thanks to my book club for recommending it! My husband saw me laughing so hard every time I open this book, he is reading it now.

This is my all time favorite book. I read it in high school and enjoyed it because of the humor. I've read it over and over again since and find more and more depth to it each time. This is the kind of book I want to share with everyone I meet.

If you are looking for laugh out loud funny this is the book for you. Spud by John van de Ruit is one of the funniest books I have read in a while. The story comes from John "Spud" Milton who attends an all boys boarding school in South Africa set in 1990. His tale is written by way of journal entries which relate his various adventures, trials and humiliations. John rooms with a group known at school known as the "Crazy Eight" and they never fail to live up to their name. These 13 year old boys are full of schemes and trouble galore. He deals with feeling home sick, the insecurities of not fitting in and being marked as a lowly freshman. Not only is John dealing with the insanity at school but on his breaks he puts up with his crazy family at home. Which includes his paranoid, bottle loving father, his always on the edge mother and stark raving mad grandmother he calls the wombat. We follow John through his first year of boarding school where he bonds with his crazy roomies, has his first crush, deals with power hungry upper class men and drunken teachers. I found this book hilarious, honest and surprisingly tender. I'm happy to say that this is the first book in a series featuring John "Spud" Milton. I can't wait to catch up with him and the rest of the crazy eight again. I would recommend this book for readers 14 and up. It's about thirteen year old boys so know that the topic of sex will be brought up, there is crude humor and some rough language. Excellent

Book!

This book was lent to me by a grandson who had enjoyed the tale. After the first few pages I began to wonder why the setting seemed so familiar and so checked-out the author to realise that the school was the one that I had been to in 1945! The author has captured so many of the activities and features of the place that I remember so well and had enjoyed. It is seldom that I laugh out loud when reading but I did quite often here. In one year of school life he had included most of the incidents that had taken place over the five years that I had been there. Because of WW2 I was very fortunate to have been sent there from Rhodesia along with a great number of fellow countrymen; he could have incorporated many of the excitements that took place on the three/four day train journey at the beginning of terms

Having worked in South Africa most of my adult life, and having sent my sons to a school, not unlike Spud's, I thoroughly enjoyed the book and am looking forward to getting the sequels and then passing them on to my son. The language is raunchy, but pretty authentic to boys that age. But what made the book special was Spud's humanity and the way he discovered the humanity and learn to value the people he met at the school.

Loved it as it followed the book closely. Besides who can resist John Cleese when he is being himself. Troy Sivan proves his skills in acting and singing. If you like the movie read the book.

This is a fantastic book....was able to get it incorporated into the summer reading program where I teach English near Gettysburg, PA. While it is proper to categorize it as brilliant YA fiction, I especially enjoy all of the ways that the author brings in the classics as part of The Guv's attempts to educate the precocious protagonist, John "Spud" Milton alongside the silly pop mainstream allusions. There is some method to his scatterings. Read and enjoyed the sequel every bit as much but am wondering about the follow-ups since they seem to be sold only in South Africa. And the film with the great John Cleese has never made it here yet. What gives?

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