



Being Flynn

Nick Flynn

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Nick Flynn met his father when he was working as a caseworker in a homeless shelter in Boston. As a teenager he'd received letters from this stranger father, a self-proclaimed poet and con man doing time in federal prison for bank robbery. *Being Flynn* (previously published as *Another Bullshit Night in Suck City*) tells the story of the trajectory that led Nick and his father onto the streets, into that shelter, and finally to each other.

Being Flynn Details

Date : Published February 6th 2012 by W. W. Norton Company (first published November 1st 2010)

ISBN : 9780393341492

Author : Nick Flynn

Format : Paperback 351 pages

Genre : Autobiography, Memoir, Nonfiction, Biography

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From Reader Review Being Flynn for online ebook

Lucy King says

I liked the movie, but the book is so, so much more. I really enjoyed all of the back history and the poetry in this novel. Definitely recommend.

Ellen Taylor says

Personal story. You can feel the author seeks closure by writing his story down. Difficult to understand sometimes though.

Lisa Karr says

This book was an interesting look at how our parents shape our future and how much of our choices are based on their choices in the past. I found it really captivating.

Marion says

It took me about 50 pages to get into the book, and then at the end I felt like I couldn't finish it, I had lost interest.

All in all, it wasn't a bad book; but some of the chapters were quite confusing and I have to admit I skipped through a couple of them (the one which basically is 4 pages of two-word sentences, and the one which looks like a script of a conversation between a girl and fake Santas oo).

The ending is also quite weird, as I feel like there is none. I turned the page expecting to see a new chapter begin, but no, it was the end. OK then.

K.K. says

At the start, it seemed a little avant-garde, and I was not in the mood for it. But sticking with the unexpected narration style in present tense, the book opened up and drew me in and completely enveloped. Such a moving story.

Phil says

The movie of this memoir just came out on DVD starring Robert DeNiro in a return to form after several bang bang shoot em ups squandering the talent that made him an actor to watch. After watching this film every time you see a homeless person sleeping out, wandering, lost, unshaven, un-cared for, ignored by

governments and people who turn away you will forever more think "that is somebody's father, someone's son, daughter etc." I wanted to read the memoir the movie was based on. So far it is an absorbing account of a life gone wrong. Rent the movie, check out the book

Steve says

It's a book about two things, and aptly titled.

Powerful, intimate recounting of growing up the child of two very damaged, selfish people and finding, almost impossibly and essentially unaided, a way through it to a hopeful and productive adulthood. Also a revealing, multi-layered portrait of the descent of a badly troubled alcoholic into homelessness and dementia through the empathetic eyes and heart of his biological son, a poet.

Makes you want to pray really hard for all children whose parents get so absorbed in or by their disorders or dependencies that they aren't the mature adults their children deserve.

Kind of a modern-day Oliver Twist. Quite moving.

Maxanna Lucas says

The book leaves you haunted with both hope and despair. I was struck at the humbleness of the author as he tells his story- and the story of his father- with both truth and empathy.

I reflected on how different this book moves versus the self righteousness of the author of "Hillbilly Elegy".

Deyth Banger says

Notes:

"If you are asking me... am I ready to read one more work...

...

Yes I am fucking damn ready to check out one another work... my mind is fresh."

- SO far I can say this work is a difficult one and I don't think everyone can take such a big punch...

but still looks like the title has been changed.

"This is an amazing story, if somebody is into autobiography...

This is a story which should be spread..."

"That's the truth... nobody knows what's happening behind the corner... if you dare... go and see by yourself... but don't think that I didn't warn ya."

"The thoughts flow... and flow... and flow... what can you catch?"

"Everyone wants something better... everyone sees an opportunity..."

...

A father didn't have the chance to be with his son... a life which by each page gets more miserable... and can't be lived...

The words have never been proper...."

"Slow down... slow down... with this drugs... ain't good for you..."

"What's for sure... that's a lie!"

"Illusion... paranoia... delusion..."

"Madness.. anger....

...

Craziness...."

"Little bit early... but still here!"

"You think fight is going to come... you see the suspense... but.... but ain't fight gonna come ..."

Paul says

This is a depressing but dogged story of a man trying to trace the paths of his homeless father. The author works at a homeless shelter in Boston, one in which his father sometimes spends the night. The father is an alcoholic with grandiose dreams: He's writing a memoir that will be one of the best three books ever written in America. He is already a recognized poet, with the recognition consisting mainly of two letters, one from Teddy Kennedy and the other from Patty Hearst, both of which he posts on the door of his subsidized room--

when he has one, which is a small fraction of the time.

The father lives on the dream of his greatness as a writer. He can write about his life so well because he has a "photogenic" memory. Through almost the entire book he is homeless, and the author finds him on park benches under a layer of snow or in doorways or other semi-hidden spots in the city. The book is an excellent narrative of the lives of homeless people, those who are willing to ride the van to the homeless shelter, and those who just want another blanket over their stiff bodies or want to be left alone entirely.

The son is more responsible for his father than his brother is, who hasn't contacted him for 25 years. It seems that the son is trying to figure out how his father possibly ended up in the situation he's in and if it's possible to get him out of it and restore him to a more normal life. It's a sad, depressing, but well-told story if you can endure it to the end. It seems like the author's father lives in an endless loop of self-delusion and self-righteousness, and it's impossible to get him to change.

Amy Brown says

I liked this a lot more than u thought I would. ironically, I could relate to both characters.

Linda Montgomery says

I did not totally love this book, but It remains in my thoughts weeks later. Bravely written.

Sim Carter says

I've just finished Another Bullshit Night in Suck City by Nick Flynn. It was a difficult book; and hard not to wonder how Flynn survived his 'upbringing'. Such as it was.

The film version starring Robert DeNiro and Paul Dano, was released as Being Flynn

I imagine Another Bullshit Night in Suck City would be tough to put on a marquis, I've seen plenty of internet mentions of the book where they clean up the title.

What you can't do is clean up the lives that the book is based on.

Some people have clean, organized, orderly lives, successful and happy lives. Jonathan Flynn's life is not one of them.

Flynn, the father is basically a fuck-up, an acoholic with grandiose visions of himself as America's greatest living writer. In truth, the book he has been working on for almost all his adult life is a gathering of notes and scraps, possible beginnings which dwindle down into nothingness. And yet it is the one constant which sees him in and out of prison, in and out of homeless shelters, in and out of his own life.

I can only imagine how difficult it must have been for Flynn to see his father - which he did only on a couple of occasions while he was growing up - in this condition. But he heard about him and received letters from him over the years. He knew he lived on park benches, that he pretended to have business at an ATM so he could stay in the warmth of the lobby, wrapped himself in plastic bags to keep out the cold and damp. It must have been incredibly painful as well as shameful. He talks about not helping his father for fear of spiralling down in the same direction. Reading about his father, it's easy to see how he could suck the life right out of

you.

Flynn, the son, barely escapes the sins of the father. He drinks, does drugs. His mother, also an alchoholic, after leaving Jonathan and taking Nick and his brother Tad, goes through a string of men and seems mostly to be barely in the picture. Flynn says she works at various night clubs and restaurants, almost always seems to find some guy, married or not, to help her out. From an early age it doesn't seem like anyone is helping him chart a course so it's understandable that he drifts. I wonder if he drifts into working at a shelter because it's his only option or because he unconsciously is seeking out a relationship with his father?

Reading this memoir was a little like being a looky-loo at an accident. I found myself morbidly fascinated and also horrified. I personally prefer stories that unfold in a more traditional narrative and at times found his manner of revealing the story a bit confusing but I liked it enough to keep going.

Finally, knowing that after everything, Flynn is a real writer who teaches a course every year at the University of Houston, is a relief. I was comforted to know that he broken free of his family's curse but looking at his face I can see the scars; they're still there in his eyes. If you don't mind a bit of heartbreak, you might give this gritty true story of a man finding his way to his father a try.

Don says

Over the last few years I have listened to well over 100 audiobooks. I have never rated or commented on one.....until now. I picked this book because it is read by Scott Brick, my favorite reader. Well, I powered through it because of the reader, but the story was aweful, in my opinion. The book was built on fragmented thoughts and memories that just continuously shifted from past to present, not to mention there was not one happy story or even thought in the book. Unless you have the goal to listen to all audiobooks by Scott Brick, I recommend bypassing this one.

Crystal says

This was a difficult book to get through for many reasons. First, it is a difficult story about son and negligent father. Next, the story lack little if any real positive or bright spots. The relationship that Flynn had with his mother might be counted as positive. I am used to reading difficult memoirs but this one I found to be bleak without much redemption (and I know that life doesn't always provide redemption) so reader be warned. A few of the chapters and some of the structure is difficult to follow. Finally, I continue to be dismayed at the use of profanity I find in almost every life story I read.
