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When a call from his estranged mother brings him home, actor Wally Day is forced to confront his dark past and his relationship with his family, which leads him on a powerful journey of self-discovery, self-acceptance, and salvation.

All American Boy Details

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From Reader Review All American Boy for online ebook

Smith Barney says

Intriguing..impassioned voice..taking the reader through a whole slew of gripping emotions. Impossible not to appreciate Mann's writing regardless his plot mechanism. Great writer.

Kim says

There's a lot going on in this book and most of it isn't good. Mann does an excellent job of describing Walter's dysfunctional relationship with his mother and I wish he'd stuck with that plot rather than introducing so many other plot lines with Luz, Regina's past, Kyle, Rocky, etc. It all became overwhelming.

Carlos says

Surprisingly I finished the book. I think I was interested to see where the story would lead. Maybe I thought the ending would be intriguing. I was disappointed. I've read Mann's work before, I especially like Men from the Boys. So Mann's has entertained me before. Unfortunately not with this book.

Ricardo says

I know a lot of people really like this author but I have to say I didn't find anything incredible about the book. It was simply okay for me

JOSEPH OLIVER says

If nothing else this book would make an ideal film with a cast of characters - good, bad and indifferent. Personally I found the book just as much about Regina,his mother, than about Wally the protagonist. We are part of her interior world, listening to her voices and seeing what really isn't there. Wally knows none of this. He only sees the apparent disintegration of his mother but we are on the inside looking out and can understand where she is coming from. Wally admits that they never knew one another nor had the least desire to do so. Regina stands out as a really 'done by' woman as they say, who suffered far more than her son. There are a lot of other characters in the book who are just as interesting - if not more so - than Wally and the latter chapters take a counter cultural stance as the 'boy now man' cannot bring himself to emotionally accept that the 'relationship' he had with a man when he was fourteen was detrimental to his emotional developement. He does realise that he was coming from such an emotionally dysfunctional and cold household that any glimpse of emotional warmth would have been jumped on and seen as a lifeline - which Wally did. You must make your own mind up on that issue. It is a great read though and some of the chapters make hard reading and the focusing in and out of Regina's mind can be difficult to follow but never impossible. Totally absorbing and more than you think it will be.

Anthony McGill says

Probably my favorite William J. Mann novel which is high praise indeed as I have read and enjoyed all of his work.

An exciting and extremely erotic novel with an absorbing storyline featuring a fascinating array of well etched and colorful characters. The story of Wally; his relationship with his parents, his sexual and tragic encounter with Zandy, his involvement with his wonderful saviour Miss Aletha and his "escape" from Brown's Mill to NYC and his subsequent return to face the ghosts of his past. A great read and one you won't find easy putting aside.

Soapykitty says

This was a great book and I read it in two days. Every other main character was so interesting that they deserved their own book, especially Regina. I'd give it 5 stars if there weren't so many cliff hangers at the end!

Lyle says

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Mr Kowalski's eyes bear down on her. "Might I see her? You let me see her, won't you?"

"All right," Rocky says, turning to walk back into the flat, leaving the door open for Mr Kowalski to follow.

"My dear," he calls after her graciously. "First you must invite me in."

Kevin says

Awkward start but makes sense in the end.

This is a story about a son and his mother. We are "inside" their heads as they have flashback to other times, and frankly it's confusing, but in the end it's a story about growing up, for both the son and the mother, and connections are made that tie the whole thing together.

It was a really difficult read in that I didn't care too much for either the son or the mother, they both seemed dreadful people that made a lot of bad decisions. I'd read a couple of pages, then set the book aside for another time, repeating often. Somewhere around page ~200 – it started being a more interesting book.

Again, once I completed the book, I found enough interest to make the whole thing worthwhile, but the first 2/3rds was a slog

It contains several triggers: underage sex, mental illness, runaway children and child abandonment. It may or may not include a murder; it's a mystery if it actually happened, but plays a major role. Acts occur "off screen" in the characters past and are brought up from time to time: Suicide of the boy's father and the mother's husband, parental violence directed at children.

"Would you come home, Walter? Please?" With these desperate words from the mysterious, distant mother he hasn't seen in ten years, Wally Day finds his carefully constructed world falling in on itself. For years, the handsome actor has made denial his own particular art form. But now, faced with this sudden intrusion from his past, Wally must confront the reasons he left his hometown of Brown's Mill in a cloud of anger, shame, and guilt. But Wally isn't the only one who's confronting ghosts. His mother Regina had dreams too once, dreams corrupted by fate and circumstance. With her own world unraveling, with strange, confusing memories of a murder that may or may not have occurred, she turns to the son she barely knows for help. As Wally unravels the dark side of his all-American family, he has a chance to make peace with the boy he was in order to become the man he needs to be. He is once more the 14-year-old living at Miss Aletha's house on the wrong side of town, the music of "Saturday Night Fever" providing the charged, erotic soundtrack to his life. The world was on the exuberant edge of change in those days, and Wally relives the thrill of discovery, the promise of forbidden sex--"and the mistake that cost him everything.

Mark says

I like William J. Mann's novels because they tell stories that I don't hear anywhere else or give me perspective on people or communities that I'm not familiar with. Also, he does plot very well. This one is much darker than the others I've read. It's largely about abuse (mental, physical and sexual) in families and how that spirals out into communities. There's also a lot of emotional and mental illness here and many secrets. Despite its occasional emotionality, sometime clunkiness and high quotient of personal tragedy, I was completely absorbed in it. I was thoroughly engaged in the characters and their struggles and was impressed by the author's vision of the dark side of life in small town America. He does a more effective job than more renowned writers like Edmund White and Andrew Holleran because his characters are more recognizable and he's not effecting a lofty prose style. I also liked the pieces of the puzzle he left for us to assemble ourselves.

Chris says

Author William J. Mann invites us into the world of Wally Day, former small-town-boy turned big-city-(albeit unemployed)-actor, who returns home to visit for the first time in ten years. All the left-behind elements of the past are suddenly in the present again for Wally, including his complacent and seemingly delusional mother, Regina; memories of his heartless, decorated-then-later-disgraced war hero father, Robert; Aletha, a transsexual mother figure who takes in Wally after the family is ravaged by scandal; and Alexander (known to Wally as "Zandy"), the statutory rapist and former object of Wally's affection.

Mann's ability to weave the past with the present is brilliant, which helps the reader to overlook some of the predictable plot twists. His accessible, conversational writing style allows us to bear witness first-hand to the heartbreak and disturbing events endured by both Wally and his mother (the story is just as much about Regina). The characters and circumstances in Mann's classic, *The Men From The Boys* (and its sequel, *Where The Boys Are*), were also a predictable yet frighteningly accurate portrayal of the gay-male-centered culture. With *All American Boy*, he tackles family dysfunction, mental illness, and small-town-mindedness. Regardless of the reader's familiarity or prior experience with such matters, Wally's story makes for a compelling read.

Leonel says

<http://luhathoughts.blogspot.com/2013...>

Sometimes you just don't connect with a book. I started reading William J Mann's "All American Boy" a while back and it took me the longest time to finish it (I think I finished three books in the course of reading this) Walter Day gets a call from his mother asking him to come home, and he does, and he is forced to face a lot of things when he does, like his mother's declining mental state. Plus, he has to face his first love, whom he wronged many years ago. It's a great set up for a story, but I just did not like any of the characters, starting with Wally. He treats his own mother like shit, and that just did not sit well with me, as I come from the school of always treating your parents well. I kind of wish his reunion with his first love was a little more heartening, but I guess this is not that kind of book. The writing style here is a bit muddled. he changes from dream to reality in a sentence, so it can just a bit confusing. I totally lost interest in the characters at some point, and I just went through the motions of finishing this without caring.

Rick Baver says

The book is an interesting read, full of emotion.

It is supposed to be about All-American Boy Walter Day, but is as much (if not more) about his mother, Regina, and also about their relationship.

Definitely a tale of several dysfunctional lives, and an effort of Walter and Regina to try to get things functioning.

Some heartstrings get pulled, and as the book winds down to its inevitable ending, there is hope for the future for Walter and Regina. Maybe their lives will get on a good path, and their mother/son relationship will also become healthier.

Scott says

It's a purposely disjointed at times which makes it difficult to figure out whether things are present or past. There were a couple of chapters that were eerily so close to my teen years that I had to put it down a couple of times. Overall, good read, but can be challenging at times.

Mymymb says

This was my first Mann novel and I was enjoying it fine, despite both Wally and his mother being intentionally unpleasant characters. But the ending - very disappointing.

