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We All Fall Down: Living With Addiction



Synopsis

In his best-selling YA memoir *Tweak: Growing Up on Methamphetamines*, Nic Sheff shared a heartbreakingly honest account of his days as a teenage crystal meth and heroin addict. At the end of *Tweak*, listeners left Nic checking in to a rehab facility in Arizona. *We All Fall Down* is about what happened next... In this powerful and immensely engaging follow-up to his first memoir, Sheff picks up where he left off and reveals his first-person account of stints at in-patient rehabilitation facilities, devastating relapses with alcohol and marijuana, and hard-won realizations about what it means to be a young adult living with addiction. In *We All Fall Down*, Nic voices a truth that many addicts understand: not every treatment works for every addict. By candidly revealing his own failures and small personal triumphs, he inspires young people to maintain hope and to remember that they are not alone in their battles.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When we left off with Nic Sheff in *Tweak*, he was in rehab, and it sounded as if it was working this time. The thing with rehab is we never know how many times it's going to take. A lot of addicts give up after a couple of tries, and everyone else gives up on them also. But you got to keep trying. You can't stop trying after four attempts if the fifth time is the one that's going to work. Anyway, I thought Nic was going to make it this time, but in his follow-up memoir, *We All Fall Down*, we find out that he's just faking it, he's playing the "therapy game." He says what he knows they want to hear, and they believe him...until he gets kicked out for making out with a female client. What I liked about Nic

in Tweak was his humbleness, his honesty, and his insightfulness. But this is a different Nic Sheff in *We All Fall Down*. He's grandiose, he's an egomaniac with an inferiority complex, and he's got a severe case of terminal uniqueness. He thinks he's better than everyone - hipper, smarter, cooler, but, paradoxically, he thinks he's nothing. I didn't like this Nic Sheff at all. I was thinking, what a low-down, spineless wimp, know-it-all. Then I realized these are things I don't like about myself. I remembered that this is exactly how I was when I was in my twenties. It's ugly. Well, of course he relapses, though he doesn't sink as low as before - no hard drugs, mostly pot and alcohol. This book is a good study of what goes through an addict's head as he relapses. There's all the rationalizations, minimizations, and justifications - the twisted logic. And it all proves that it's not the drug that's the problem. It's our inability to live life on life's terms that the problem.

I admit I was shocked when I saw that Nic Sheff's latest autobiographical offering about his struggles with hardcore drug addiction was classified as a "book for young adult readers." That designation tells me more about life among young adults than I care to think about. *WE ALL FALL DOWN* --- a sequel to his first book, *TWEAK*, in, if I may say, a similar vein --- is anything but youthful in its underlying theme. It speaks blandly of suicide and throws its author/narrator into scenes of degradation that we wish never to see our young adult children in. It is written in the four-letter lingo of the street and is a necessary dose, as it were, of reality about the sickness, self-loathing and repeated flame-outs that characterize the life (if it can be called that) of a serious user. In *TWEAK*, we were right up against the lowest, most horrifying physical basics of the meth/heroin sub-subculture. In *WE ALL FALL DOWN*, things have improved somewhat for our hero, as Nic finds himself in a restrictive treatment center, sent there by his caring journalist father and author of *BEAUTIFUL BOY*, a parent's anguished take on the desperate, criminal, self-destructive lifestyle of his son. In the treatment facility, Nic's life is greatly curtailed with many heavily enforced rules: no touching allowed, for example, except under the eyes of a staff witness. Nic is trying to simultaneously fake out his therapists and, on some saner level, agree and comply with their rules and their philosophy. This includes renouncing his supposedly former ex-girlfriend, the drug-hag he has nicknamed Zelda. This he does at first to fool his keepers, but gradually with more conviction. He soon falls afoul of the system anyway by falling in love with a fellow inmate, a girl who is screwed up but not an addict.

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