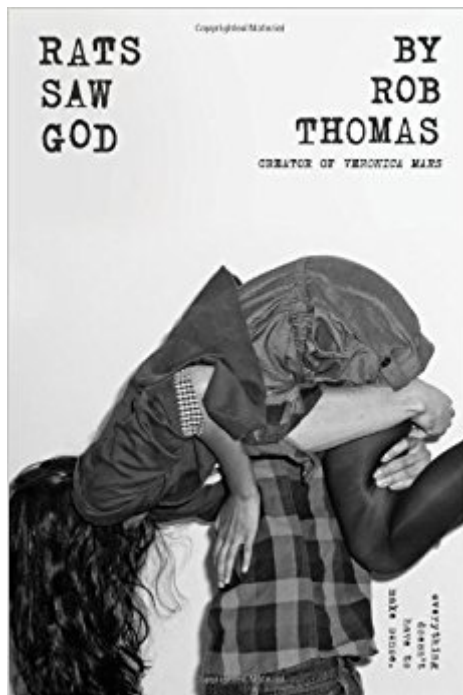


The book was found

Rats Saw God



Synopsis

Steve details his descent from bright star to burnout in this newly repackaged edition of the definitive, highly acclaimed novel from the creator of *>and >*. Houston, sophomore year: Steve is on top of the world. He and his friends are the talk of the school. He's in love with a terrific girl. He can even deal with the astronaut—a world-famous hero who happens to be his father. San Diego, senior year: Steve is bummed out, drugged out, flunking out. A no-nonsense counselor says he can graduate if he writes a 100-page paper. So Steve starts writing, and as the paper becomes more and more personal, he reveals how a National Merit Scholar has become an under-achieving stoner. And in telling how he got to where he is, Steve discovers how to get to where he wants to be.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 900 (What's this?)

Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers; Reprint edition (March 5, 2013)

Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.7 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 114 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #385,955 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #55 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Drugs #150 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Drugs & Alcohol Abuse #182 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Marriage & Divorce

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

In order to pass English class and graduate, 18-year-old Steve York has to write a 100-page essay about his life. What sounds like a run-of-the-mill writing assignment, however, becomes an excuse for Steve to reflect on the last four years (from Texas freshman to California senior), and figure out where it all went wrong. Maybe it was when he discovered that he really couldn't relate to his father, the Famous Astronaut. Or it could be because his "heart had been run through frappé, puree, and

liquefy on a love blender" by his ex-girlfriend, Wanda "Dub" Varner. No matter where the finger of blame ends up pointing, it's a wild ride of self-enlightenment as Steve discovers that not all relationships are permanent, and that some--like the one with his dad--can be mended with a little work. With *Steve*, author Rob Thomas has taken a teenage outsider and given him a funny, intelligent voice: "There are those males who merely fill ear holes with tiny studs hardly big enough to offend a Marine. Not me. Most days I wear big hoops. When I combine the look with a doo rag, I'm a regular pirate." As with his other novels--*Doing Time* and *Slave Day*--Thomas proves his thorough grasp of young adult issues and emotions. Teens will appreciate the author's empathy and humor, and teachers and parents will examine his work for clues to the mystery of adolescence. (Ages 13 and older) --Jennifer Hubert

In his first novel Thomas lays bare the pain, awkwardness and humor at the heart of one teenager's search for identity. Steve York has always lived in the long shadow cast by his too-perfect astronaut father. When his parents divorce just before he begins high school, Steve blames his father for the family's break-up, even though he doesn't know all the facts. Life with "the astronaut" (as Steve insists on calling him) is okay for a while as Steve juggles straight-As with a part-time job and hangs out with a wise-cracking crew of artsy, nonconformist cronies, one of whom, Dub, becomes his first love. But Dub's eventual betrayal causes Steve to flee his father's home and take a dive from scholar to stoner. His last chance for academic redemption lies in writing a 100-page paper for his new guidance counselor, a narrative that becomes the framework for this novel. Thomas, a former high school teacher, nails his setting with dead-on accuracy. The sharp descriptions of cliques, clubs and annoying authority figures will strike a familiar chord. The dialogue is fresh and Steve's intelligent banter and introspective musings never sound wiser than his years. Readers will likely enjoy the quick pace of Steve's journal-style flashbacks; on a deeper level, they will be moved by his emotional stumbles and impressed by his growing maturity. Ages 12-up. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Thomas' voice is already evident in his YA novel. Some elements from *Rats Saw God* will later appear in his cult-favorite and critically-acclaimed television series, *Veronica Mars*. The structure of the novel is faintly reminiscent of John Green's *Looking for Alaska* - there is a clear "before" and "after" in this novel, too, although Thomas tells his story in flashback, rather than in a linear narrative. Surprisingly (or maybe not, given Thomas's ongoing interest in parent/child and sibling dynamics) it's the narrator's relationship with his parents and sister that is really at the center of this

novel. The ostensible love interest turns out to be little more than a catalyst for the narrator's eventual growth and coming to terms with what happened to his family. I like that family is front and center in this novel - too often YA books ignore families or mention them only as necessary plot devices. But I was disappointed that the love interest ended as it did. Thomas revisits a similar plot-line in *Veronica Mars*, and handles it with greater sensitivity and maturity. I won't say more because I don't want to spoil the book. It's a worthwhile read for adults who enjoy YA fiction, and I think teens would find a lot to like - and a lot to connect with - in its pages.

I read this book shortly after it came out and I was in high school; my best friend suggested it. It changed my entire world view, in a similar way "*Catcher In The Rye*" has for others. Steve became my literary hero and I followed in his writing footsteps when my own situation deemed it necessary to graduate. It may seem over the top, I know, but *RSG* changed me deeply and may have saved the course of my life. It's amazing the power that lies in 224 pages of fiction.

What did Rob Thomas do before *Veronica Mars*? He wrote this book. I like *VM* a lot, so it makes sense that I'd like a novel by its creator. (Bonus: a character name from "*Rats Saw God*" appears in the show.) This read like a real high school experience. Nothing too flashy or crazy, just a story about a high school kid trying to figure things out. Wouldn't exactly call it a bildungsroman, but the narrator certainly does some growing up. And *GOD* (dada-ists, not a deity) made me laugh out loud.

I've read this book twice now and it is probably one of my favorite books, and trust me, that's saying something when you look at the lists of books I've read over my short life time. *Rats Saw God* takes place between two sort of realities - current time in San Francisco where Steve York is writing novel-length essay for his guidance counselor who in turn will waive an English credit he is missing for Graduation. Steve is told to write what he knows, so he does. The second reality, is a year or so earlier when he was living with his father "the astronaut", in Austin Texas. He meets a lot of people, in particular his best friend Doug, and his girlfriend, Dub (Wanda), who in turn breaks his heart and sends him packing to 'Frisco to live with his mother and younger sister where he gets mixed up in drugs, and cutting class, scraping by with passing grades. Like I said, I've read the book twice, and have also read a few others by Dave Thomas, but neither are as good as *Rats Saw God*. Check it out, and I'm sure it will at least strike your interest in some way.

Great book for young readers. I read it years ago and now my daughter is reading it and she loves

it. Thomas writes with a quick wit and a unique charm that makes you wish he was still writing young adult novels.

I love Rob Thomas as an author and this, as usual, was a great book to read again and again.

This is a really well written and interesting story but it includes descriptions of sex that may not be appropriate for younger readers. It also includes the very real heart ache of lost love. Veronica Mars fans will recognize character names from this book (Wanda Varner and Remy DeMouy). This book highlights the early genius of Rob Thomas that is later realized in his excellent TV shows.

Bought this because I loved Veronica Mars. Had heard this was a great story. Was actually less great than expected. I wouldn't be likely to recommend it to anyone else to read.

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