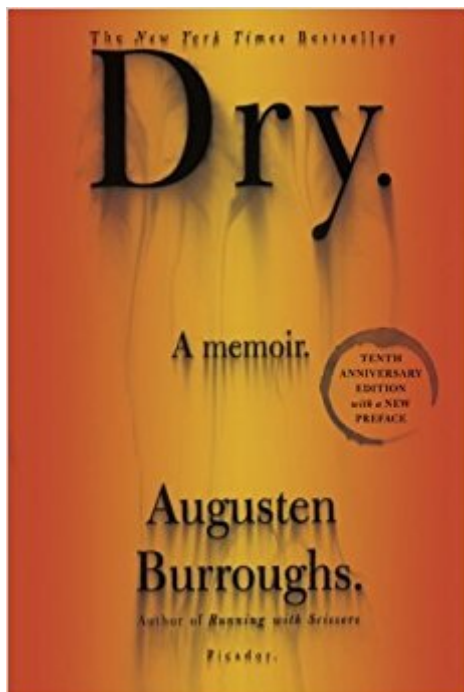


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Dry: A Memoir



Synopsis

The Tenth Anniversary Edition of the New York Times bestselling book that has sold over half a million copies in paperback. "I was addicted to "Bewitched" as a kid. I worshipped Darren Stevens the First. When he'd come home from work and Samantha would say, 'Darren, would you like me to fix you a drink?' He'd always rest his briefcase on the table below the mirror in the foyer, wipe his forehead with a monogrammed handkerchief and say, 'Better make it a double.'" (from Chapter Two) You may not know it, but you've met Augusten Burroughs. You've seen him on the street, in bars, on the subway, at restaurants: a twentysomething guy, nice suit, works in advertising. Regular. Ordinary. But when the ordinary person had two drinks, Augusten was circling the drain by having twelve; when the ordinary person went home at midnight, Augusten never went home at all. Loud, distracting ties, automated wake-up calls and cologne on the tongue could only hide so much for so long. At the request (well, it wasn't really a request) of his employers, Augusten lands in rehab, where his dreams of group therapy with Robert Downey Jr. are immediately dashed by grim reality of fluorescent lighting and paper hospital slippers. But when Augusten is forced to examine himself, something actually starts to click and that's when he finds himself in the worst trouble of all. Because when his thirty days are up, he has to return to his same drunken Manhattan life and live it sober. What follows is a memoir that's as moving as it is funny, as heartbreaking as it is true. Dry is the story of love, loss, and Starbucks as a Higher Power.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Fans of Augusten Burroughs's darkly funny memoir *Running with Scissors* were left wondering at

the end of that book what would become of young Augusten after his squalid and fascinating childhood ended. In *Dry*, we find that although adult Augusten is doing well professionally, earning a handsome living as an ad writer for a top New York agency, Burroughs's personal life is a disaster. His apartment is a sea of empty Dewar's bottles, he stays out all night boozing, and he dabs cologne on his tongue in an unsuccessful attempt to mask the stench of alcohol on his breath at work. When his employer insists he seek help, Burroughs ships out to Minnesota for detoxification, counseling, and amusingly told anecdotes about the use of stuffed animals in group therapy. But after a month of such treatment, he's back in Manhattan and tenuously sober. And while its one thing to lay off the sauce in rehab, Burroughs learns that it's quite another to resume your former life while avoiding the alcohol that your former life was based around. This quest to remain sober is made dramatically more difficult, and the tale more harrowing, when Burroughs begins an ill-advised romance with a crack addict. Certainly the "recovered alcoholic fighting to stay sober" tale is not new territory for a memoirist. But Burroughs's account transcends cliché: it doesn't adhere to the traditional "temptation narrowly resisted" storyline and it features, in Burroughs himself, a central character that is sympathetic even when he's neither likable nor admirable. But what ultimately makes this memoir such a terrific read is a brilliant and candid sense of humor that manages to stay dry even when recalling events where the author was anything but. --John Moe --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Imagine coming home to find hundreds of empty scotch bottles and 1,452 empty beer bottles in your apartment. This is what Burroughs (*Running with Scissors*) encountered upon returning from Minnesota's Proud Institute (supposedly the gay alcohol rehab choice). "The truly odd part is that I really don't know how they got there," admits Burroughs in this autobiographical tale of being a prodigy with an extremely successful career in advertising and a drive to get as wasted as possible as often as possible. Burroughs's telling of the tale alternates among hilarious, pathetic, existential and hopeful. It is an earnest and cautionary tale of calamity, brimming with Sedaris-like darkly comic quips: "Making alcoholic friends is as easy as making sea monkeys." Burroughs's slight Southern accent and gentle yet glib delivery should summon empathy on the listener's part that may have been lost with another reader. From Minnesota, Burroughs returns to New York and participates in Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. Like James Frey in the similar yet very different book, *A Million Little Pieces* (see audio review, below), Burroughs believes that when rehab is over, he must walk into a bar to see if he can resist the temptation to drink. Though not a technique condoned by A.A., it certainly makes for a fascinating listening experience. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information,

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This book was phenomenal. As someone with a background with a very different addiction, Burroughs memoir was tugging at my heart strings from the first chapter. I found myself stumbling around Manhattan with him and being sent off to rehab to save my job, and life. I love how flawlessly he brings us through his everyday actions, and makes the most mundane thing, such as cleaning his apartment or going to work, have life and carry an energy with it. He is a terrific writer who has no shame in discussing and admitting the most personal and embarrassing details. I have already read *Running with Scissors* and *How To*, I find myself an even bigger Augusten Burroughs fan than I already was. I highly recommend this book to anyone who has struggled in their lives with accepting themselves, and the difficult things life has in store for us.

I love Augusten Burroughs' books. He and his brother were raised in the most disturbing of households, yet their books are funny and make you identify with the author easily. If you have ever not understood the mentality of an addict, this story gets you in his head during his times of drinking and going dry and helps you understand exactly how he feels. I know have a grasp on how hard it is to be in crisis and feel a drink will so easily numb the pain of the moment. He writes in a way that makes you want to reach out and hug him, be his friend, and help keep him on the right path.

I'm glad to find books in the genre such as this which shine. Anyone who read *Running with Scissors*, Burrough's first memoir, and enjoyed it well past the hilarious "and then there was the antique ECT machine under the stairs" line into the ups and downs of that life...well, you'll also want to read this book. It's not a 'follow up' any more than *Time Regained* is a follow up to *Swann's Way*; *Dry* stands related but on it's own merits. Nor is the book a 'rehab' book because it transcends that kind of labelling as well. The author doesn't have to resort to edgy posturing. Burroughs privileges us with an honest look at his life and so tells us a bit more about what it means to be human. And check out his website...: from his bio you just know there's more to come, which is pretty amazing for someone who isn't 40 yet.

Enjoyed reading his point of view. When he explained that drinking alcohol felt right, like his own physiology, I understood what he meant in a way I had not understood before. My experience with alcoholics is that they believe no one knows they stand before the rest of us inebriated. Glassy eyed and congenial to mask the intoxicating lunch break, then returning to work with more talent and

knowledge than I could achieve and I am the sober one. Appreciated this memoir for giving me the side I was missing while trying to communicate with a functioning drunk.

As a sober alcoholic (34 yrs), I related to this book. It was funny and honest, and enjoyable; and I must say, tragic at the same time. Even non-alcoholics would relate to the situations, and probably would learn a lot about their friends and/or family members who have addiction problems, or maybe themselves. The book covered his struggles quite well, but it would have been nice to hear more about the author's self-revelations once he finally sobered up and stayed that way. At that point, the book ended.

Augusten takes us on his journey from dysfunctional childhood through young adulthood and his addiction hitches a ride along the way. He is an excellent writer and paints the picture of active addictions in living color. In the end this is a love story that helps him find his center and then his decision to stay sober.

The author's story of his struggle with alcoholism is engrossing reading. Funny, yet heartbreaking. Getting dry is a long hard road. Quite a story.

A wonderfully rendered story delving deep and raw into a very dark period of time in an amazing life. A pure and unfiltered telling of the horrible up hill battle of addiction. Also, how early trauma in ones life can fuel said addictions.

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