



I Just Hope It's Lethal: Poems of Sadness, Madness, and Joy

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I Just Hope It's Lethal: Poems of Sadness, Madness, and Joy From HMH Books for Young Readers

The teenage years are a time filled with sadness, madness, joy, and all the messy stuff in between. Sometimes it feels that every day brings a new struggle, a new concern, a new reason to stay in bed with the shades drawn. But between moments of despair and confusion often come times of great clarity and insight, when you might think, like the poet Rumi, “Whoever’s calm and sensible is insane!” It is moments like these that have inspired the touching, honest, and gripping poems found in *I Just Hope It’s Lethal: Poems of Sadness, Madness, and Joy*. After all, what’s normal anyway? This collection includes poems by Charles Bukowski, Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton, T. S. Eliot, Edgar Allen Poe, W. B. Yeats, Dorothy Parker, Jane Kenyon, and many more, including teenage writers and up-and-coming poets.

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I Just Hope It's Lethal: Poems of Sadness, Madness, and Joy From HMH Books for Young Readers **Bibliography**

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up—The poems in this diverse collection range from classic (Shakespeare, Lord Byron) to modern (by the compilers themselves). While some of selections might be too complex and antique for reluctant readers, most of the pieces are powerfully written and easy to understand. Sylvia Plath, Dorothy Parker, and Rumi are among the poets included. Two short introductions explain the inclusion of many of these selections and the significance of each of the book's five sections. A biography section gives interesting summaries of each poet's life. This efficiently organized, concise, and interesting collection is an excellent choice for libraries serving teens. However, as November states in her introduction, This book is for everyone and anyone.—*Jessi Platt, Auburn Public Library, AL*

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 9-12. Rosenberg and her former university student November have both struggled with debilitating depression, and in this personal project, the poets have brought together poems that, as Rosenberg writes, address "various aspects of sanity and madness." The organization is loose and a bit chaotic. Categories include moods, the madness of love, the "deranged" world, and the relief of finding stability. There are works by famous writers, such as Shakespeare, Sylvia Plath, Emily Dickinson, and Rumi, as well as contemporary poets, such as Naomi Shihab Nye, whose poem "Kindness" is unforgettable. Many selections extend the dark humor of the collection's title, and there are contributions by young writers who, in the words of a 19-year-old autistic poet, view "the world called normal" with "a mind called abnormal." These raw, honest words from peers may speak most directly to teens. Comprehensive poets'biographies close this deeply affecting, sophisticated collection, which will resonate with readers in all states of mental equilibrium. *Gillian Engberg*

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Review

"Includes poems of great intensity . . . alongside verses with humor-tinged darkness." —Publishers Weekly
Publishers Weekly

"The wide range of styles, from poets both famous and lesser known, from various time periods, also adds interest. . . . Good biographical notes and indices of authors, titles, and first lines conclude the volume."
—Horn Book Horn Book

"[A] deeply affecting, and sophisticated collection, which will resonate with young people in all states of mental equilibrium." —Booklist Booklist, ALA

"Powerfully written and easy to understand. . . . This efficiently organized, concise, and interesting collection is an excellent choice for libraries serving teens." --School Library Journal School Library Journal

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jodi Dauphin:

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Daniel Young:

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Charles Howell:

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