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Fifteen-year-old Brett Gerson is a real-life S.R.K. (spoiled rich kid)—the guy you love to hate. Yep, Brett's pretty much got life in the bag—until his dad is jailed for insider trading, and the family money swirls down the drain.

Brett wishes things could go back to the way they were—until some dirty swimming pools change everything.

Pool Boy Details

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Author : Michael Simmons

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From Reader Review Pool Boy for online ebook

Terry says

For early high-school or middle school, this isn't a bad book. Brett Gerson is a spoiled rich kid who has to adapt to a much-reduced level of income while his father serves time for securities fraud. This first-person narrative alternates between Brett raging about his father's failures, ranting about his unfortunate circumstances, and drooling over the girl of his dreams. He quits a job, gets another, learns to drive, throws a party, yearns for a girl, grows up a little, and comes to detente with his imprisoned pop.

There are some clever lines and some earnest attempts at seriousness, but "Pool Boy" barely skims the surface. Alfie is great as Brett's Pool-man boss, but all the other characters - including the wacky aunt - aren't memorable. Brett's whining overwhelmed whatever else was going on. Perhaps this is because there isn't all that much going on. By half way through the story, I wanted shake Brett. Maybe slap some sense into him. When he gets some sense (on his own - I did not slap a 16 year-old fictional character; that's my story and I'm sticking to it) I didn't much care.

If the description on the back cover or inside sleeve entices (Oh! Wait. My library's Perma-Bound copy doesn't have either. Dang and Blast and why do they do that with YA anyway? It is the kiss of circulation death) perhaps a moderately skilled reader will like this PG read (light profanity). I'd recommend The Summer I Got a Life or Notes from the Midnight Driver before this one.

Niden says

This book is about a kid named Brett whose parents are very rich until one day his dad is arrested for fraud. He loses everything; his house, his car, his pool, his games and everything else he relied on. He moved with his mom and his sister into their weird aunt's house. Things are very hard on their family, they went from having everything to having nothing. One day an old man who still loves to work, offers him a job cleaning pools. This is funny to me because he used to have his own pool to have cleaned. Eventually he even has to clean his old pool and other people's pools that he knows. Brett is also having trouble forgiving his dad for what he did. He doesn't like to visit him in jail or when he does he just swears at him. I really like this book because it is written well and has a good lesson. It teaches Brett how to work for things he wants because you won't always get everything you want. The character is developed very well from the beginning of the book to the end of the book. He starts off as a spoiled kid who receives anything he wants to a kind kid who works for what he wants. At some points the book can be a little slow but overall it is an excellent book.

Elke says

What a beautiful, beautiful book! Not Shakespeare, but what an honest, down to earth, well-written read! Finished it in one go.

Robert Lambregts says

2.5 stars. Close to three, but for that the book was lacking too much depth in the story. This was clearly written for a young adult audience and even though the story to me was entertaining enough to keep reading, it could have been worked out a bit better and felt a bit forced. There was not enough genuinity in the story to make it really believable. And I do understand why people just dislike the main character, but this was created a bit out of proportion just to give the reader this feeling, or at least that's what I think. All in all it was a quick and entertaining read, but to be fair, you wouldn't miss anything by not reading the book. For that it just is too thin in more than one way.

Becky Wagoner says

Had I read this book as a teenager, my views might be quite different. For a teen, I think this is a decent quick read with some very valuable lessons that teens NEED to hear about more often. If a teen doesn't like to read much, gets bored reading, etc. this might be an alright starter book. However, the attitude of the main character is so annoying! Again, probably my view because I am an adult. As an adult, the writing was very choppy, and hardly detailed. But, even with the poor writing, the message was still the same, and that really hit the heart. It was ok, but not something I'd recommend to anyone over the age of 18. It is definitely a book written for a high school aged audience.

Ava Roe says

This book is about a boy who lived rich until one day the police came to his house. His dad was in trouble and was getting arrested when he tried to run away. The cops caught him and it was so stupid because then he was in even more trouble. Now his family is known all around town and they don't have much money. They are very sad until he starts getting into the fun with pools. This book was pretty good and I recommend it to someone who just likes a fast read (not a lot of pages).

Haylee smith says

This is a great book for someone who wants to read just for fun! It gets the point across while still telling the story of a 16 year old with a jail dad, who went from 5000 dollar stereos to bologna sandwiches for a meal. When all his money goes to waste he has to get a job that he thought he would never have to get. He became a poolboy. He still hates his dad in the end but knows that he always will have room for his love.

Haley Mikulenka says

Pool Boy is an amazing book. I love it and I can't put it down. It teaches you not to take anything for granted because anything could be gone instantly. The book is basically about a teenage boy and his family. The teenage boy's dad got arrested because he owned about ten million dollars to the government. Once his Dad was arrested they got everything they had taken away from them. They went from really really rich to having

nothing. The teenage boy now has to take care of his Mom and his sister. He gets a job at Fast Burger but soon realizes that he dislikes working there. One day a older man that use to clean the teenage boy's pool walks by him and tells him that he is looking for a person to assist him in pool cleaning for the summer. Now the teenage boy has a new job as a pool boy. Although he is so embarrassed because he has to clean his rich friends pools, he sucks it up and does it anyway to support his family. I highly recommend this book because it happens in real life.

Erin says

Brett Gerson is a 15-year-old spoiled-rotton rich kid; he spends his days lounging by the pool, playing videogames on his big-screen tv, and basically doing anything he wants. One day there is a knock on the door and everything changes, Brett's father is arrested for insider trading. Brett's family loses all their money and their home, they must move into Brett's Aunt's house on the "other side of the tracks" as he puts it. Brett is completely miserable and hates his father for what he has done to his family, but most of all he hates him for losing all their money. When Brett gets a job working as a pool boy with an eccentric old man named Alfie, he couldn't be more miserable, cleaning the pools of the rich families he once was just like is humiliating. Brett continues to condemn his father and swears he will never forgive him for what he did to his family. When Alfie dies, Brett finally begins to appreciate the smaller things in life.

This book was a little hard to get through, mostly because of the constant complaining of the main character Brett. However, Brett's reactions to his father and losing all his family's money are probably pretty realistic to what most spoiled rich 16-year-old boy's would be. The reader might actually feel a little bad for him if it weren't for his bratty resentful attitude through most of the book. Luckily, nearing the end of the story Brett finally begins to turn around, especially after his 70-year-old boss and friend Alfie dies. I think many teens could relate to how Brett's feeling, especially his feelings toward his father. All in all, the story was touching and thought provoking in the "what would you do, how would you feel" sort of way. With fewer than 200 pages this is a good pick for reluctant readers, especially teen guys.

France says

I decided to read this book because I was looking for a book that was like a real life story, even better from a teenagers point of view. Also after reading what was on the front cover it made me want to read it more.

Brett was a character I found interesting because he was your typical teenager, stubborn. Michael Simmons did a great job as Brett's character developed well from beginning to end. He was challenged to forgive his father which really tested his character, being the stubborn kid he was he wasn't going to give in. After a real tragedy Brett realizes that what he has been doing is wrong and in the end he gives in.

Something I have learnt from this book was to never take things for granted. Brett took his families wealth for granted then he found himself and his family broke.

"The best way to get over one disappointment or hardship is to find a bigger hardship" This is a quote from Pool boy that I quite liked. This really tied into what was happening in Brett's life. He thought that not getting the love of his life was bad, he was never going to get over this until Alfie his best friend died.

Although this was really bad for Brett it made him become a more responsible and understanding person.

This book covers the book with a male main character. This category was quite challenging for me. It got me out of my comfort zone a bit because I enjoy reading books with teen female main characters rather than teen male main characters.

TheSaint says

Brett Gerson's family was fabulously well-to-do: mansion, mercedes, pool -- the whole package. Then one day Brett's stockbroker dad is convicted of insider trading and the Gersons lose everything. They move in with a great aunt; Brett and his mom actually have to get jobs, and dad winds up in prison.

And Brett is furious. Wouldn't you be?

But man, is he a whiner: it kind of gets on a reader's nerves to hear his whining on every page of *Pool Boy*, by Michael Simmons. Luckily, the author is skillful enough to make us care. Brett winds up with a job cleaning pools with Alfie, an old guy with a lot of history, and who can handle all that anger.

Rebecca McNutt says

A two-star rating... What can I say? I liked the deep turquoise color of the pool water on the front cover. Sometimes I have the worst judgement when it comes to books, and I think that *Pool Boy* is an excellent example of that - I mean, I was expecting so much from this book, but it just wasn't all that great:

-The main character was quite annoying and unlikeable

-The. Sentences. Were. Very. Choppy.

-Unrealistic dialogue

-No imagery

This is one of those books you read in an hour or so and then quickly forget about, enough said.

Arminzerella says

Brett was a spoiled rich brat until one October day when 8 cops showed up and arrested his father for insider trading. Then his family lost their money, their house, their possessions, and the man responsible for the mess they were in. And Brett promises that he will NEVER forgive him for it. Living on the wrong side of the tracks for once in his life does give Brett some new insights, and his friendship with Alfie, the 70-something pool cleaner he ends up working for gives him something else.

I loved this book. Brett has the perfect angst-ridden teenage boy voice. He's smart, disaffected, and royally pissed off at his dad and his situation, yet still manages to be a good person. With deceptively simple language and structure, Michael Simmons really gets at the marrow of some hard issues - a dad in prison,

feelings of hurt and betrayal, and a fall from grace. It made me laugh, it made me snigger, it made me hurt, and it made me cry. Brett is a tough nut to crack and he's definitely not one who wants his emotions out where anyone can see them, but we glimpse them anyway and know how much of a struggle it is for him.

Excerpt:

"A guy can do something stupid and ruin your life, but you still love him for no reason. No reason at all...But if there is a reason, it might be because the guy who messed up your life also happens to love you and to need you, and if you stab him in the back, he's finished. You don't have many people like that in the world - people who need you and whom you need - and the ones you do have can disappear with no warning at all..." (pp. 162-163)

Caroline Carmichael says

The book "Pool Boy" by Michael Simmons is very entertaining and inspiring. It's about a young boy who's father is very very rich. His father is later charged with fraud and goes to jail, leaving his family with nothing much because all of his money was taken from him. The young boy then has to get a job and he finds out what a harsh world it is out there. The author's purpose for writing this book is to show that sometimes life may come easy, but you have to work for things that are really worth it.

Galen Mansoor says

I think the book pool boy by Michael Simmons was an appropriate read for my level. Pool boy is about a teenager named Brett Gerson who has to start living his life with barely any money because his rich father got in trouble with the government. This story takes place in California. Also the main theme of this story is forgiving people no matter what they do. The protagonists in this story are Brett's sister, Brett's mom, Nicole, Frank, Brett's father and Alfie.

I thought this was an excellent read because the author shows many feelings and actions that would relate to how people act and feel in reality. An example of this would be Brett living his new life. When Brett has to live with little money or fancy things, he acts how someone would in real life. His emotions are depression, anger and often mean. The author also added, Brett not wanting anything to do with his father after what happened. If I had to rate this book out of five stars, I would give it a 4. My reason for this is because the author did an excellent job, other than the part of Brett always being a complete jerk to his father which made me sad for Brett and his father. If I was to recommend this book to someone, it would almost be anyone I can think of because this book really shows love, internal and external conflict and so on. So hopefully if you read this book review you will read Pool Boy someday as well. Trust me, you will love it.
