



Priority

Aaron B. Powell

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As mankind inches closer to self-destruction—corruption, greed, religious zealotry and intemperance—Patrick Mitchell struggles to find purpose and order amidst the growing chaos he's witnessed in the world. As a former Marine serving in the Middle East, then as a college student, Patrick sees the mounting ignorance of mankind. He is distraught by the moral deficiencies and surrendering of principles he has observed. Patrick ignores the temptation of blissful ignorance, instead choosing to pursue wisdom, feeling that a life without examination is not a life worth living. Reflecting on his personal tribulations, Patrick Mitchell considers the future of mankind and has determined one thing alone to be his priority.

Priority Details

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Author : Aaron B. Powell

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J. Michel says

I read this book in one sitting, and I literally couldn't put it down. I was actually holding my Kindle in my left hand while eating dinner with my right hand. This gem of a book is about a former marine named Patrick Mitchell who struggles with the direction in which his beloved country is heading. I think many Americans feel the way the main character feels about the consumerism that's swallowing our country, and I'm glad that the author had the guts to point out the issues that are plaguing the youth of America.

Even though the messages in this book are serious, there are some lighter moments in the story. The way that Mitchell interacts with his son is quite touching, and it allows the reader to get to know a softer side of the protagonist. The story is told in first person, which I really enjoyed. Like I said, "Priority" is a fast read, and you won't be able to put it down once you start.

Aaron Powell is a talented writer, and story flows very well. This is the first book that I've read by this author, and I will definitely be reading other works by Mr. Powell. I look forward to reading more of his witty, deep writings.

Edward Wolfe says

I just finished reading *Priority* and I'm pissed off at Aaron Powell. How dare he write something so well and only let it last such a short time. I want more, dammit!

This book not only pulled me from the beginning, it had me at the prologue. That alone was like a great piece of flash fiction. Then the story started. (And it ended too soon, but I understand there's more of this character in other works, so I'll forgive the author - a little bit.)

The story is divided into two parts, the first of which consists mainly of a former marine's experience with his wife and child at home and the park and in a college class with other students and a professor. So there's not a lot of action, but the dialogue and observations of the protagonist are what make the book great. The second part is based in Iraq. I won't go into more about what the book is about since its own description does that. But I do have to say that I don't see the connection between the two parts. Each part made for very interested reading, but I felt that there was only a thin connection between the two. I'd like to see more of each part - Patrick at home and Patrick abroad. I'm sure many people are like me in that we don't know what it's like in the Middle East except for what we're fed by the lamestream news media. It's rare to be treated to a view from a soldier who was actually there - and lucky for us - a soldier with a gift for narrative.

Reading this book made me feel like I found my literary brother from another mother. As with other works that I've read by Powell, I find we're in total agreement on things - which is really odd. I don't fit into any ordinary category when it comes to politics and religion, etc., and it appears that Powell is in the same odd non-category that I'm in. On a spiritual level his characters (whom I assume echo his own ethos) exhibit a strong sense of ethics and morals without a religious foundation. And politically, they are non-zombies with an eye toward right and wrong, and able to see cause and effect without being blinded by partisan filtering. Perhaps many more of us belong in this non-category than we've been led to believe.

As for its brevity, it made me think of when people complain to me about my short stories being too short and how they wished they were longer. I can only hope that they do so with the same feeling that I had when reading *Priority*. I was actually mad at the author because I wanted more.

If that's how my readers feel, then I'll have much more empathy for them when they complain, now that I know how it feels to reach the end and feel that mixture of being high on a good book and suddenly crashing because it's over already.

Overall, I'm satisfied though and more determined than I was before to read more of Powell's writing. If you haven't read him yet - I can't recommend him highly enough.

Bea says

Rating: 3.5 stars

Big thanks to the author for giving me a copy! :D
Short story - not my usual type of genre but it was a good read.
Will review later.

Michelle Benavides says

This was different from his other books, something new. I'm glad he did, it kept my attention and left me wanting more. Well done!

Camilla says

What are your priorities? What do you want?

Once when I was visiting a Buddhist temple in NYC, there was a saying by one of the Dalai's... along these lines:
Why so much is done in our cities today? And why so many people do it heartless? Why heart and feeling has taken such a small part in our lives? What is the rest for?

Of course the saying was bigger and more meaningful, but it is what Aaron is trying to say in his wonderfully beautiful and absurdly dreamily real book.

Sit. Read it in a hour or so. But don't do it before bedtime. Do it in the morning, because it will lead to many hours of thinking.

As always, applauds for Aaron Powell.

Mindy says

This was a very short read, since I read it in about an hour.

I really loved this book. It showed what the character really feels and how he copes in his daily life. He was a service member in the Marines and he still has nightmares about his service.

This really brought home to me how people are so careless of one another. They do not take into account another person's feelings anymore and they certainly don't have respect for each other.

I believe everyone should read this book since it highlights so much of what is wrong with our society today.

Yaritza says

Received this book from the author. I really liked how the book starts with a dream that feels real. I could relate because every night I have bad dreams and I remember them that at times I just can't figure out if its reality or a dream. It was a quick book to read. The break down of the book was great. Highly recommend you read it.

Gigi Tous says

Review coming soon...

Poet Gentleness says

Very good. review to come soon...

DJ Harris says

Priority by Aaron Powell

Strap in as the author of this book drops you down the *Rabbit Hole*! If you ever do manage to climb out and see the *sun* again you are sure to *never* see the world through *rose colored glasses* again! *Patrick Mitchell* has his priorities straight, but what good does that do when everyone around him is so oblivious? Will he ever “*wake up*” from this nightmare? Will they?

Excerpt:

“*As Americans gradually become less involved and turn a blind eye to the degradation of our Constitution and civil rights, we allow ourselves to be manipulated for the sake of security and comfort.*”

The author will draw you in from the first sentence. From family, to politics, to our tainted food supply and obesity, to the media, to gun control, to morality, to flat out ignorance, and more watch as the question of *why an entire generation has been lost* becomes apparent before your eyes. The book begins by setting a scene that provides you with a sense of calm, even though you are already aware of a problem *lying in wait*.

Patrick Mitchell's love for his son, *Luke*, is immense in this book. It reminded me of the way my grandson, *Gauge*, "shrieks with joy" each time he sees his *Pap-pap*, Matt. Reading the scenes with *Patrick* and *Luke* will remind you how a *Father* is supposed to love a *Son*.

The discussions over the breakfast table concerning the leading news headlines reminded me of growing up in my *grandparents* house as a kid. We would rush to the table where my granddad, *Popeye*, would throw out random questions and comments about the things reported in the **newspaper** of the day. I always imagined my family would be that way one day as well. I had to stop reading and get some breakfast when I started reading about the "*awesome breakfast*" *Patrick* made his wife, *Stephanie*, and his son, *Luke*. I loved that he involved his son in the preparation of the meal by letting him watch while he beat the eggs. I've always believed *it's important to cook with your kids*.

Excerpt:

"Fuck you cooperate America. Fuck you for bombarding our youth with milkshakes and French fries – weapons of mass destruction."

It doesn't take long for the mood of the book to shift from a *Norman Rockwell Painting* into **Reality** ! Soon after expressing admiration for a singer who uses the "f-word" with "*emotion and eloquence*" the author begins emoting the word and it's attitude freely toward many of the world's woes and transformations. It's the way many of us feel, but never have the guts to say anything about it. I can just imagine how much harder it must be for someone who has served the **Military** . Seeing things like that must make them *wonder*, at least sometimes, *what and who* they are fighting for. *Thank God* *Patrick Mitchell* has *Luke* and *Stephanie*.

I love that the author points out some of the annoyances of everyday life that drive me crazy; people with their noses in their cellphones (*I refuse to even own a cellphone!*), not bothering to show up on time (therefore *wasting my time* and that of others!), and even the blatant disregard for *the consequences of one's actions* until it becomes an inconvenience (*cue the whining!*)! It is as if manners were never taught to the upcoming generation.

Excerpt:

"Everything is for sale, even our patriotism. Walmart sells us our patriotism."

When I read *Patrick*'s rant on how buying a "yellow 'support the troops'" bumper sticker doesn't do a "damn thing" for service members and if they really want to **support the troops** they should start by telling Veterans that they "*appreciate their service*" or "*send them a care package*" I wanted to buy enough copies of the book to leave one under the windshield of every car I saw with that sticker at the grocery store!

I suffer from Multiple Sclerosis (MS). Years ago my friend, who also has MS, sent me and my family a bunch of Red Bracelets to wear in support of finding a cure. I wore mine for a few days and then into the jewelry box it went not to be seen for years. Time passed and I was offered choices to purchase pink, yellow,

blue, green, the colors and causes of these bracelets were never ending. I took out my dusty Red Bracelet and wore it proudly only to find out Red Bracelet's now represents millions of causes and not just MS. What was the point? Even worse, none of the money from the sale of those bracelets ever went to any MS cause. Needless to say, I don't indulge in this type of "support" anymore.

Excerpt:

"...you want to fix the debt problem for America, revoke religious tax exemption across the board. Treat the churches like businesses, that's what they really are anyway."

The truth is that churches enjoy *tax exempt status* because it is their responsibility to care for the indigent, feed the hungry, house the homeless, and treat the ill when they cannot care for themselves. On paper this sounds lovely. The church provides society with needed services and in return a great burden is lifted from the shoulders of the community. Now if the churches were *keeping their end of the bargain* I'd be on their side, but the mere existence of entitlement programs, such as; welfare, food stamps, public housing, Medicaid, and more proves that the churches have *progressed* passed their original purpose and into a new phase. A new phase in which they should *pay taxes* by-the-way!

Excerpt:

"I don't want my children growing up surrounded by conformist zombies, with the mental capacity of a box of crayons, who are too distracted by the media to form their own thoughts and opinions."

...and "Jumping Jesus on a Pogo stick" if I'm not angry this book ran out of pages!

I HIGHLY RECOMMEND this book!

This review, for *Priority* by Aaron Powell, provided by DJ6ual:

Cassandra says

My Thoughts - 4 out of 5 unicorns - I really liked it!!

**Book gifted to me by author for honest review

Okay, the cover doesn't do much for me, but it is purposeful. This is definitely one of those books you should read to open your eyes.

Aaron hits on some things that are happening a lot in America today. I really enjoyed this book, but it gets you really thinking. I like Aaron and his character are all veterans. This review is a little different because I use my own story to illustrate the idea behind this book. I don't want to give away this story because you need to read it yourself.

When I served (even though I was never where the action was), I felt like I had a higher purpose like I was making a difference. When I got out (for my family, my son), I felt like part of me was missing (could be my soulmate, but that's his choice), and I decided it was purpose. I went from job to job making good money, but I was never really happy (I did live for my son though). Until I decided to teach even though I laughed when my college professor suggested it to me, I feel like I have purpose again, trying to teach my high school students logic and reasoning through math and some integrity and drive which seems to be missing from American society. I love all my kids even the ones who like to be turds. It is especially satisfying this year because one of my students who was never great at math is my aid this year. He tells my students to stop whining about what's fair and to listen because I might actually teach them something about life. He used to be my biggest trouble maker, and now he is sticking up for me. I'm particularly proud of the fact he decided to join the Navy and aspires to be a Seal. He has changed so much into a great young man. But you all are probably wondering what all this has to do with this book, right?

This feeling of purpose and trying to figure life is what is happening in this book. How often do you see people talking to each other? Not very often unless it is texting or on the phone or computer what happened to knowing who your neighbors are. Life has become impersonal. The main character Patrick is putting his priority on his family and their lives. He doesn't whine about being too tired to play with and take care of his son (which I'm ashamed to feel sometimes). How often do you go to the park or play with your kids? I'd wager not enough. He addresses the dreams some veterans have post-war. This book is really deep for only being a novella and 89 pages long. Aaron has a way with words, and I can't wait to read the other books I have.

I recommend reading this book to all veterans and to those of you who have families and recommend opening your eyes a little. Change one thing to make your life better and more purposeful and not for money.

Tasha says

I will say this if your intention is to read the wonderful Doomsday Diaries Series... You MUST read this story first to understand some of the things that happen in Doomsday Diaries, or how Luke's Parents met and their life before the Doomsday Diaries

Chris Elliott says

So real. So vivid. Good job cousin.

Raphaela Jackson says

Will be reviewed soon

Richard Cezar says

This book is a great statement on our culture and the ethics of war and society as a whole. It seems to be written with intended brashness, so as to say “wake up and stop the killing”. I thoroughly enjoyed how the author cut from dream to reality and ended with a message.

The nightmares are something, I believe, all military vets must endure, but few can put them into words as skillfully as Mr. Powell. Though it's a work of fiction, I doubt that it could have been written by one who hadn't been in Iraq. His emotion comes through and drives the story home to me.

This is a must read for all ages.
