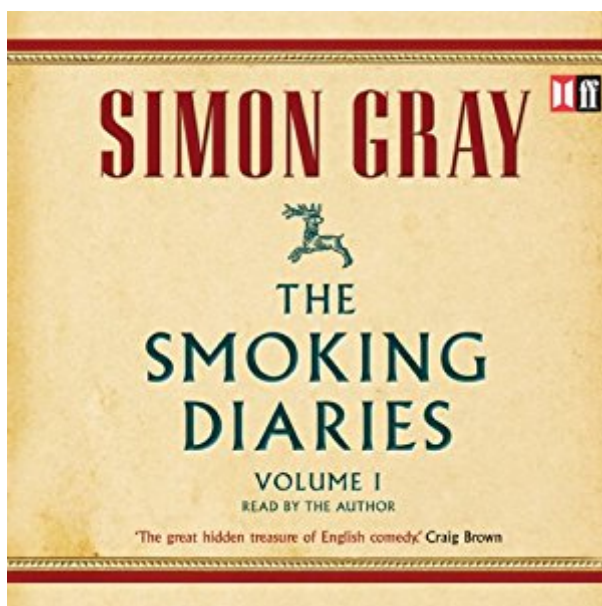


The book was found

The Smoking Diaries: The Smoking Diaries, Volume 1



Synopsis

When he turned 65, the playwright Simon Gray began to keep a diary: not a careful honing of the days's events with a view to posterity but an account of his thoughts as he had them, honestly, turbulently, digressively expressed. One of Britain's most amusing and original writers reflects on a life filled with cigarettes (continuing), alcohol (stopped), several triumphs, and many more disasters; a record of shame, adultery, friendship, and love. Few diarists have ever been so frank about themselves, and even fewer so entertaining.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 4 hours 40 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Abridged

Publisher: Canongate Faber

Audible.com Release Date: December 13, 2012

Language: English

ASIN: B00ANG6XFM

Best Sellers Rank: #109 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Addiction & Recovery > Smoking #5654 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Biographies & Memoirs #70208 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs

Customer Reviews

If you respond to Gray's formidable wit, you will probably enjoy this and laugh out loud from time to time. It has a sad side, to be sure, Gray's bad habits left him with little money in his retiring years. His drinking probably shot his health before his time. Yet he wrote at least two of the funniest plays of the modern era, and some of that wit is on display here.

The book was excellent, dealing with issues related to the end of life. It arrived in good physical condition.

Simon Gray is at the end. His friends are ill or dying, he is ill and dying - HAS now died. All is crumbling and fragmenting in a tumult of despair and decay. But there is great bravery and humour aplenty in these memoirs as Simon Gray documents a year in his life replete with digressions that shed light on the rich treasure trove of his mind. There are superb riffs on the friends and strangers

he encounters, holidays he takes, books he is reading - books he wishes he was reading instead, memories of his childhood sexual awakenings via American crime writer Hank Janson, reflections on various points of his life since and grim projections into his highly curtailed future. The stories are fantastic. Such as the tale of a chain smoking alcoholic friend whose wife, on his deathbed, forced a glass of whisky and a lit cigarette into each hand 'if photographed, it could serve as the ghastliest of warnings - look what I have done'. And a vignette from a train journey in Suffolk when he encounters what he takes to be a psychopathic murderer but is just an aimable gentleman trying to reclaim his newspaper which the author has taken. Ditch those tedious memoirs from whiny American affluenza riddled losers who write about how they messed up their lives through drugs and got them back together again, and pick up Gray's memoirs (many more in the series than this) which show how rich the form can be when put in the hands of a wily old English writer with plenty of wit and interests in life.

This book (the first of four volumes) is a casual account of Simon Gray's daily life after his big hit plays. Things are not as bright as in past years. Age is catching up with him and sixty cigarettes a day do take their toll. Despite all of that it is also a very funny book. I look forward to reading the next three volumes.

This book was a huge bestseller in England and spawned a couple of sequels. The author, Simon Gray, is a well-known British playwright (of course, he's unheard of in the United States). Gray is very witty and his diaries constitute the perfect companion for anyone growing old but not only unwilling to go gently into that good night but instead thoroughly willing to give the good night a boffing about the bollocks. Oh, there's a lot of smoking in this book--as the title suggests--so if you find that objectionable, well, please feel free to go willingly away.

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