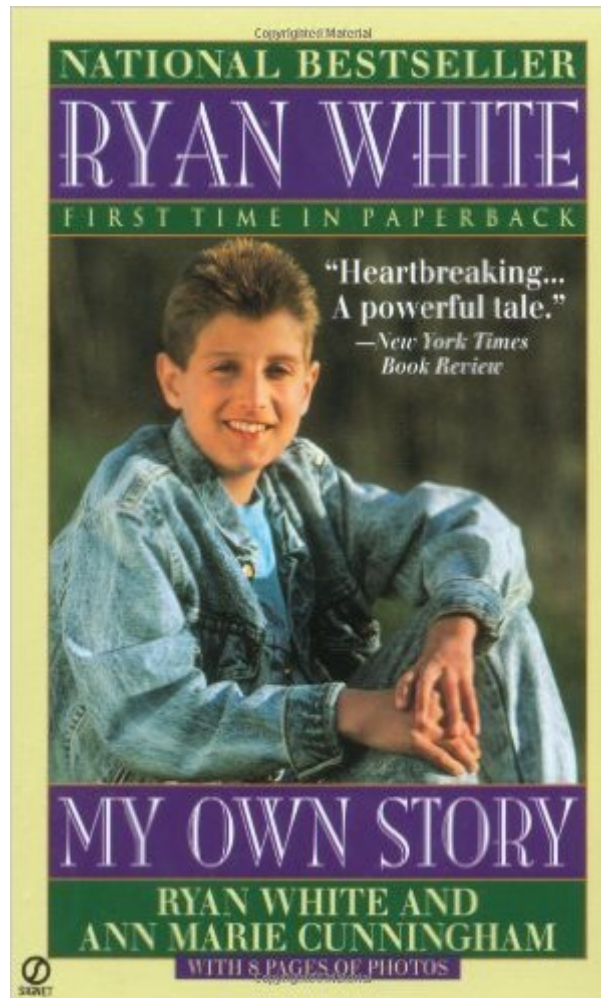


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# Ryan White: My Own Story (Signet)



## Synopsis

A touching tale of a courageous young man, his battle against fear and hatred, and his fight to educate the public about AIDS. "A story of tragedy and courage that should be read by all."#151;Dallas Morning News.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Today is World AIDS Day and each year I remember my childhood friend, Ryan White. His sister and I were both Rollerskaters and skated in the same skating rinks. Knowing Ryan personally and having his book for years now, it is still a story that resonates with me. It is true, thoughtful, and in his own words. I'll never forget the hatred the spewed from the city of Kokomo against him. It was such a devastating blow to his well being. Not only did he have this death sentence, but the entire town was treating him worse than what you would treat a pig going to slaughter. I am not joking. I remember seeing him at the skating rink one day, it was a time when he wasn't as sick so he was able to be a kid. I went up to him to give him a hug because I hadn't seen him in so long and he said, "You want to hug ME?" He was shocked that someone would want to touch him. That's how bad it was. Read his book. He is the reason people with AIDS are accepted now. This friend of mine had more courage than anyone I have ever met.

I read this book 3 years ago as a sophomore in high school. I had heard the story of Ryan White but never knew it in this much detail. To be honest, throughout the book, my eyes were rarely ever

dry. Ryan was so young, yet he was forced to become an adult much sooner than anyone could ever imagine. No matter what everyone else said about him, Ryan always kept his head up. He never lost hope in himself. I remember once in the book he tells his mom I'll beat this thing or I'll die trying. That is what he did. He died trying to beat the dreadful disease. However, good did come of this. Because of Ryan White, new light has been shed on the entire AIDS issue. He was so brave. I do not know of anyone in this world who possesses the same kind of courage that this young man did. The story of Ryan White will never leave my heart. He is a true inspiration to all of us and will never be forgotten. In the words of Elton's song "Your candle burned out long before your legend ever did."

I first read Ryan White's Story last summer of 2002. It was a wonderful book. It really made me think about my own life and I realized that I needed to be thankful for each day the Lord gave me. Having AIDS can be a really hard thing for someone to deal with. But with all the courage that Ryan White had, he did everything he could to stop it from coming but death took his toll and he died on in April of 1990. We need to remember to help those who "might" have AIDS. Today, fear of AIDS still lurks in the air and even one or two people might get it but if I remember right 1 in 10 people get AIDS. It's sad but it's really true.

I read this book because my friend told me I should. She said I would cry, and I did. Ryan White was a remarkable person. He was born with hemophilia and struggled through much of his short life trying to be a normal kid. Ryan was diagnosed with AIDS at age 13. I am 14 years old, and I know what it is like to be a teenager. The trials and tribulations any normal teen goes through, Ryan went through but he did it with his deadly disease. I am amazed at how much strength and courage he and his family all had. When their own hometown turned their backs on the White family, they moved and built up a whole new life with new friends. Wherever Ryan went, his message also followed and the message is this: NEVER give up on your life. Thank you.

I heard about his story through the 3-2-1 Contact special that first aired and then read the book. Both presented a young boy who went through some amazing odds and succeeded in bringing AIDS awareness to the national consciousness. The prose is simple and unscholarly, but this is the beauty of the book, because Ryan was a real human being with real feelings and frustrations. Although some language will offend the sensitive, it captures the importance of tolerance and education. In addition to fighting the complications of hemophilia and AIDS, he also had to fight sheer

uneducation, and a weaker person would have crumbled a lot earlier. Picked on because of his difference, Ryan was ultimately more saintly than several holier than those fundamentalists who either condemned him or patronized him. Although I am fortunate enough not to have hemophilia or HIV/AIDS, I did see a lot of myself in him and needed the obligatory tissues by my side as I read this compelling story. In the years since, Elton John has dedicated "Candle in the Wind" to many people and it has lost some of its bestowment awe, but I remain convinced that it rightfully belongs to Ryan White. As for quotes, I believe Michael Jackson said it best: "Good bye Ryan White, you taught us how to stand and fight" People like this do not come a long every day.

Ryan White was born with hemophilia but even though he had that disease, he wanted to live a normal life. When he was given treatment to help clot his blood, Factor, Ryan contracted AIDS through a contaminated batch. AIDS was a new disease that was barely being discovered so little was known about it. His health started to deteriorate little by little but overall he felt energized and well. When his hometown, Kokomo, Indiana began to find out, they began to discriminate him. He was banned from his school and other places in his town because people believed AIDS was contagious. Ryan felt that he should be treated equal as if he didn't have a sickness but people refused. He started to speak up for himself and became a spokesperson for AIDS. To get what he really wanted back- his education, Ryan began to fight back and ended up going to court hearings so he could resume his education. He eventually won the case and started attending school again. When he went back, bullying was worse than anything. His family then moved to a different part of Indiana and got a lot of support. His story touched everyone's heart and he got worldwide attention. Various celebrities supported him so he got to experience many cool opportunities. As his fame and fun life began to expand, his well-being started to come down. In the end, Ryan grew really weak and lost his battle to AIDS.

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