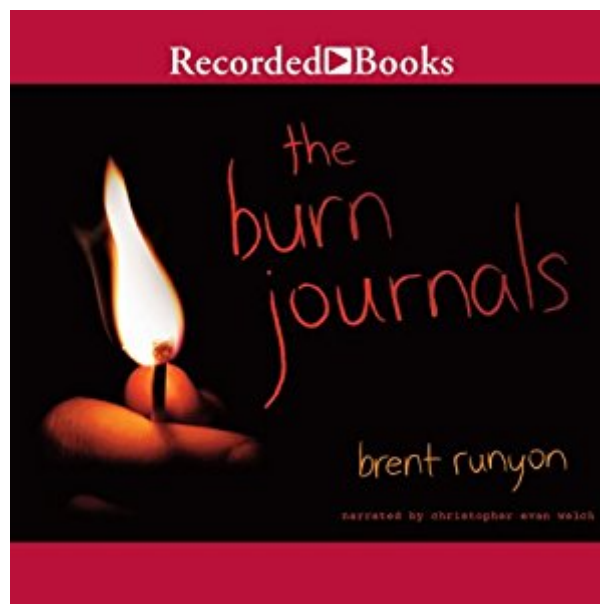


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# The Burn Journals



## Synopsis

BRENT RUNYON WAS 14 years old when he set himself on fire. This is a true story. In *The Burn Journals*, Runyon describes that devastating suicide attempt and his recovery over the following year. He takes us into the Burn Unit in a children's hospital and through painful burn care and skin-grafting procedures. Then to a rehabilitation hospital, for intensive physical, occupational, and psychological therapy. And then finally back home, to the frightening prospect of entering high school. But more importantly, Runyon takes us into his own mind. He shares his thoughts and hopes and fears with such unflinching honesty that we understand "with a terrible clarity" what it means to want to kill yourself and how it feels to struggle back toward normality. Intense, exposed, insightful, *The Burn Journals* is a deeply personal story with universal reach. It is impossible to look away. Impossible to remain unmoved. This truly riveting memoir is a spectacular debut for a talented new writer. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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## Customer Reviews

Being a male adolescent myself, I find this book unbelievably easy to relate to. The comicalness Brent describes along the way, the gripping reality, but also the harsh consequences of his actions. I myself have previously attempted suicide, but was saved at literally the last minute. I went through almost the exact same procedures Brent went through. Right from entering the ambulance all the way through to re-entering high school. Visiting many different hospitals, being 'interviewed' by what seemed like a million different doctors and nurses and psychologists etc. Though the story of Brent Runyon takes place in America, the facts and feelings are exactly the same here in the UK. My dad

bought me this book after watching an interview with Brent on morning TV. I, like Brent, kept very much to myself, and was so self conscious of what I had said to my parents, doctors etc. My dad read *The Burn Journals* before me, then recommended it. He found he really connected with Brent's mother and father, trying their best to keep things together. He found out a lot about how teenagers think and view the world. He passed on the book to me. I really didn't particularly want to read it, because the prospect of hearing someone else's "cry for attention" sounded very daunting. I decided to at least give it a go though. Then I couldn't put it down!! I very highly recommend this book to everyone. Especially though, Parents: This book describes what a teenager goes through. From the crushes we have on each other, to our opinions of others etc. This isn't a book just about someone who tried to kill themselves. It's a very big insight into how a teenager thinks. Teenagers: If yourself or anyone you know suffers from depression and has thought about killing themselves, stop! Get them to read an account of someone else's experience. For me, I felt I was the only person who felt the way I did. Sure, there are others but we don't ALL feel the same. But after reading Brent's account and thoughts of what had happened, I realised, actually just how similar we, or at least me and someone else (Brent) felt. Doctors: Yes, even doctors. Especially psychologists. Teens aren't really the 'talking' type of people, especially on a subject so personal. No one (adults included) ever understands fully what is going on with other people, as we all have thoughts and opinions we keep to ourselves. Brent's insight shows a very personal and truthful way of thinking though. I think people of the medical profession will find this book very useful, as it gives a very in-depth description of feelings, emotions, and thoughts felt during a time of trauma. Hope this has been helpful, Rich - 15 Years-old

This is the true story of a 14-year old who set himself on fire in his household bathroom. It came very highly recommended from my mom, a middle school teacher/reviewer of YA books. I will admit that I let it sit for a while because I wasn't sure I could stomach the subject matter. There was no need for my apprehension--the book is completely readable. Brent, the narrator, is straightforward and just as confused about himself as everyone else in the world is. He's refreshingly normal in pretty much every way, except for that fateful day with the gasoline in the shower. I think that's the true strength of the book--it is important to remember that normal middle school students are struggling with these kinds of issues and not sure where they fit into their family and the world. The story is told amazingly well. Runyon does no posturing; he lays everything out just like it happened, with every stupid and uncool thing he said, and all the times he didn't understand himself and the world. He is still very much a 14-year old boy during his year of recovery, trying to figure out how to

talk and interact with girls. I think if I wrote my autobiography, I'd be tempted to make myself look cooler than I am. For Runyon, it is his straightforwardness that helps the reader so easily identify with him.

I read a lot of YA novels for my job, and most of them are terrible. What is so amazing about this book is precisely that it isn't a "problem" story with a preachy moral and an epiphany. It's absolutely real. And for those who think the writing is flat or amateurish, try writing like this sometime. This kind of prose is incredibly difficult to pull off, and the mark of having done so is that it looks easy. I plan to read everything this guy writes.

i think this book is so good! i read it within a week, (good for me because i am a slow reader). i immediately got sucked in at the beginning; will he really do it? will he live? how will his family react if he sets himself on fire and then doesn't live? this book kept me wondering the whole way and wanting to know what will happen next. and i kept thinking; now why would he write that the character did this or that? but then i realize that it's a TRUE STORY! like in that carrie underwood song, "the past can't be rewritten, you get the life you're given..." that made the burn journals all the more touching to me, and i read it from cover to cover. and if i get the chance, i'll read it again soon.

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