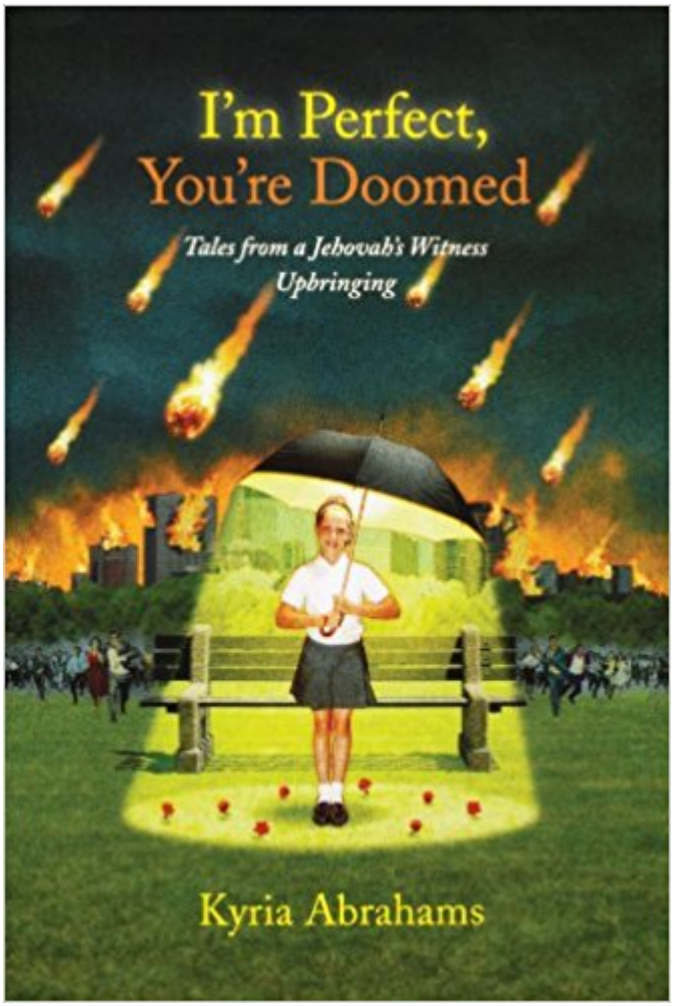
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I'm Perfect, You're Doomed: Tales From A Jehovah's Witness Upbringing



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Synopsis

Raised as a JehovahÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Witness, Kyria AbrahamsÃ¢â ¬â„¢s childhood was haunted by the knowledge that her neighbors and schoolmates were doomed to die in an imminent fiery catastrophe; that Smurfs were evil; that just about anything you could buy at a yard sale was infested by demons; and that Ouija boardsÃ¢â ¬â •even if they were manufactured by Parker BrothersÃ¢â ¬â •were portals to hell. .When Kyria turned eighteen, she found herself married to a man she didnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t love, with adultery her only way out. Ã¢â ¬Å“DisfellowshippedÃ¢â ¬Â• and exiled from the only world sheÃ¢â ¬â„¢d ever known, Kyria realized that the only people who could save her were the very sinners she had prayed would be smitten by GodÃ¢â ¬â„¢s wrath. Written with scorching wit and deep compassion, IÃ¢â ¬â„¢m Perfect, YouÃ¢â ¬â„¢re Doomed manages to be hilarious about the ironic absurdity of growing up believing that nothing matters because everythingÃ¢â ¬â„¢s about to be destroyed..

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Customer Reviews

When Abrahams was growing up, her world was neatly divided between those who would live forever in a paradise on earth and all the "worldly" people her Jehovah’s Witness family prayed for. Her congregation forbade Christmas and Halloween, aggressively shunned anyone who left the fold and taught children that birthday parties were of the devil. For kicks in her early teens, Abrahams would go witnessing door-to-door with her pal Lisa, a die-hard J-Dub. This acerbic, witty memoir chronicles the first 23 years of Abraham’s life with candor and a good dose of comedy. Unlike other

memoirs written by the disenchanted, Abrahams musters some affection for her decent but screwed-up family, and even for the religion itself. Where the story hits a rough patch is in her account of her late teens and early 20s, when she dropped out of high school; rushed into a disastrous teen marriage; fell into alcohol, drugs and adultery; and finally "fired Jehovah as [her] personal bodyguard" and became an apostate divorcÃƒÂ©e. None of this is particularly funny, and Abrahams's tale of self-destruction ends abruptly enough that readers will wonder how she managed to pull herself together. (Mar. 3) Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Starred Review Given that Abrahams is now a stand-up comic and spoken-word poet, it makes perfect sense to begin her very funny memoir with her performance debut at the Pawtucket, Rhode Island, Kingdom Hall, at age 8 (her presentation was about freedom from demon possession). She describes the childrenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s books she read as a child as a cross between Ã¢â ¬Å“Dr. Seuss rhymes and tales of how sinners would scream and gnash their teeth at Armageddon.Ã¢â ¬Â• In her world, Smurfs were Ã¢â ¬Å“little blue demonsÃ¢â ¬Â• and yard sales were enticements from Satan. As a bored teenager with OCD, she didnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t know what to do with herself or how to make sense of the world. On the verge of 18, she married a 24-year-old part-time college math teacher because, even if his interest in her was, at best, halfhearted, she wanted a boyfriend and didnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t know any other JehovahÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Witnesses who liked her. Anyway, she reasons, Ã¢â ¬Å“this is what adults did, and I was an adult.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã Â It wasnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t long before she longed to be out of the marriage. Between threats of suicide, she tried to be Ã¢â ¬Å“disfellowshipped,Ã¢â ¬Â• or shunned, by her congregation, which proved surprisingly difficult to accomplish. Abrahams is a natural writer whose prose flows effortlessly as she easily mixes throwaway humor and painful memories in a compelling narrative. --June Sawyers --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Coming from a person with two sisters who converted to Jehovahs Witnesses, this book is right on track and is an excellent read for anyone not familiar with their inner teachings. Most people who don't know their beliefs think they just don't believe in birthdays or Christmas. But their views, which are strictly governed and monitored by the Watchtower self-appointed governing body, are much much more than that. To put their religion succinctly, it is this; just as Moses did in the Old Testament, he built an ark and then went calling for anyone who was willing to repent of their sins to

join him and his family and be saved during the impending flood. Obviously none did and all perished. This is essentially what JW's are doing when they are go door-to-door (in their terms-ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Pioneering"). JWÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s believe that in 1914 Jesus began his invisible walk on earth and when the generation of 1914 dies, Armageddon will ensue and ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“the angels will go out and separate the wicked from among the righteous.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• Take a look: http://www.watchman.org/articles/jehovahs-witnesses/jehovahs-witnesses-and-the-history-of-1914. It is a fact that every JW is very much looking forward to Armageddon when "this wicked system of things will end" and everyone except for those in the "one true religion" will be destroyed. They will all then be vindicated for their virtuous beliefs by those who slammed doors in their faces or poked fun of them in grade school :) If you try to talk to them about ANYTHING negative or even remotely contrary to the Watchtower beliefs, they are coached and taught that you are a demon and will say a quick prayer for you and walk to the next door because you simply arenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t worth a second consideration because when Armageddon happensÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â|. You will be toast, as depicted on the cover of Kyrias book.Once you know what happens within Jehovahs Witnesses circles, you might think of them as a very strict working company, much like the Mormans. And as a Company, once employees believe what they tell you to believe, they become part a very large rewards program. ItÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s a great way to grow the employee database. Lets say one day you are mulling around and think to yourself that one day you want to be importantÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â|. How about forming a new company? Lets call this one Scamway. You first appoint an inner circle, aka Board Members. Charles Russel, the founder did this. So you convert and recruit your six best friends to form an ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“AnointedÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• board. Joseph Smith just needed to find some tablets that nobody ever saw... and a few dozen young sexy wives :). Now you need followers because there can only be seven male captains of this ship. But so that everyone already in feels like a member of an exclusive club, not just anyone can be an employee of this company Before you receive your offer to join, you will need to have several interviews with existing Scamway members to make sure you are receptive and vulnerable enough to believe everything the Company instructs. It wont be an accident that during these initial interviews, the interviewing employees will be SUPER friendly- you will find you have newfound friends coming out of the woodwork, and who will do anything for you and your family. Free babysitting, rides to the airport, lots of BBQÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s and weekend parties (employees only of course), marital counseling, bro-friends, wife friends, use of a mountain cabin or two, a job offer from an employee business, half price to unclog your kitchen sink from another employee side

business etc. And for people who didnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t have caring friends before this, this will be very very appealing. But this is just a trial period. Before you can make these new coworker friends permanent, and they will tell you this, you will need to be baptized. You and the wife discuss this newfound ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“familyÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• and decide you want this way of life for your family. You go through the ceremony and you are now a full fledged employee (aka Brother or Sister). But surprise, just like Moses, you are now required to go Pioneering and will need to log at least 80 hours per month to go door-to-door. And if you aspire to be anything more than a Kingdom Hall lowlife, you will need to log 130+ hours a month in order to be an elite Pioneer. And yes, your Kingdom Hall elders can inspect your log book. DonÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t believe me? See http://wol.jw.org/en/wol/d/r1/lp-e/1102012154. Both of my sisters are relatively income-challenged because higher education is also discouraged since Armageddon is just around the corner ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“one wont grow old in this wicked system of things so why bother with higher education?ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• See: http://www.jwfacts.com/watchtower/higher-education-university.php or http://www.jwfiles.com/wt_ex_jw_corner/ex_jw_stories/jeff-schwehm.htm. One sister has had two hip replacements and is always in severe pain after hitting the streets but as the above articles state, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“pioneers are content to live a modest lifestyle, confident that Jehovah will supply them with the necessities of lifeÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• and ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Love of neighbor motivates a pioneer to give generously of his time and energy to help others spiritually. As a result, his faith is strengthened, he draws closer to God, and he experiences much happiness.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• So if you are OK with hitting the streets >80 hours a month which is about three hours EVERY day with 2-3 other employees who can attest to your diligence and attendance, AND attend the required bi-weekly evening meetings, Sunday Kingdom Hall, annual Conventions, AND donÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t question ANY of the Company teachings, AND in your ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“freeÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• time be eager to spend Saturdays helping to build new Kingdom halls, you will continue to be part of the JW rewards program. And what a rewards it is. One of my sisters recently traveled to Greece. Her and her hubby (an Elder of course) got half price airfare from a ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“sisterÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• who works as a travel agent, stayed free in a ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“brothersÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• basement on the coast, used their car for two weeks, free meals, tour guide, etc. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœSis also has reciprocal housing arrangements with more than a few sisters and brothers across the US but mainly in New York (the company HQ) and Miami. The other sister has a makeup business. She gets the majority of her clients from the Kingdom Hall, ie they take care of their own.But if you arenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t OK with ANY of

these, you will find yourself turned in for bad behavior and called into a panel before Kingdom Hall elders. You will be given a second chance to change your wicked ways, ie spend more time pioneering, or face being disfellowshipped. What a great way to build a company, right? Its easy to join, but if you question anything or let your volunteer log suffer because you want to coach your kids baseball team, you are out. But in reality, you donÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t want out because the rewards programÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â¦ well it rocks, so you stay.So why did I write this? I believe my sisters, and all JWÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s are in this cult religion for the wrong reasons, aka the rewards program. I believe that once you become a JW, even if you have doubts about the religion, they stay because of the rewards program. Questioning required reading in church, especially someone elses beliefs like the Watchtower, should be OK right? Every real Christian church encourages critical thinking. But for JW's think again. If you do you are disfellowshipped, your new ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“familyÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• as well as your blood family if also JWÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s, will be proud to shun you in the name of Jehovah. And since you told your old worldly drinking buddies to take a hike when you were baptized, they might be your only chance for a friend, but they arenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t going to do near as much for you as the JWÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s. Sad to say, but while JW's will quote supporting scripture all day, the bottom line is that the above is true.

this book made me deeply sad while at the same time deeply comforted..unlike the author i wasn't raised from birth as a witness but i spent a little more than 20 years as one.. from about 14 to 35 years of age.. my expierence differs in some aspects but what is consistent in all former witness stories is that upon deciding you no longer want to remain a witness (regardless of your reason) you cease to exist to those you formerly called family.. poof! you're gone from their lives.. those who once loved you no longer speak to you.. you are cut off as if you had died.. except you havnt.. you are alive and well and maybe, just maybe, a better person.. but that doesn't matter..as my aunt who raised me from 14 years of age said "it would be a compromise of my faith to continue to speak to you"..if i returned to the fold all would be forgiven but barring that she could no longer have anything to do with me.. and she hasn't..i cried with sadness and relief when i read the last paragraph of this book:"these worldly, godless poets had loaned me money when i hadn't asked for it and had given me a place to stay.. when the people i had known for 23 years stopped talking to me, the people i had known for 23 days helped me move"this was my expierence as well.. when my family completely turned away from me it was a "wordly family" who took me in.. they never asked where i came from or why i was alone in the world.. they just took me in and loved me as if i were one of them.. amazing..the author does a beautiful job of laying bare her tormented soul while a witness

and then the difficulties of trying to fit into a world she knows absolutely nothing about.. the real world.. its a mysterious place to those of us raised in a closeted society like J.W's.. i applaud those who despite not knowing how to live in the world take a leap of faith and jump anyway.. its terrifying and intimidating and overwhelming but the feeling of freedom, of being able to finally breathe is worth every scary moment.. as this author confirms you will find your way.. people will help you and there is good in this world..

One of my favorite memoirs. Hilarious, self-aware, and eerily familiar. Though my own journey out of the JWs was, obviously, a very different and personal experience, I still find her raw honesty and self-deprecating humor to be very refreshing. Although works like Reed's Blood On The Altar give a number of important facts and a run-down of the history of this virulent christian sect in all it's authoritarian, life absorbing splendor, this is a more personal journey of self-discovery, of growing up and learning about how to be an adult, experiment with sexuality, and find one's self.So often JWs leave this particular cult to join more mainstream versions of Christianity. I have no problem with someone being a christian on a personal level, I just rarely hear my story told in the literature critical of The Watchtower Organization. It's not explicit that she is, like myself, an atheist necessarily but she doesn't move from one organization to another, larger organization that teaches you what and how to think. She just moves on with her life, deals with the shunning and the lack of support with honesty and integrity. She's just an imperfect human trying to struggle and survive and make mistakes and learn and that's all any of us are. It's also very funny in parts. Sorry for the slipshod review, I don't wish to turn this into my life story. Everyone should give this a read, whether familiar with controlling fundamentalist communities or not.

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