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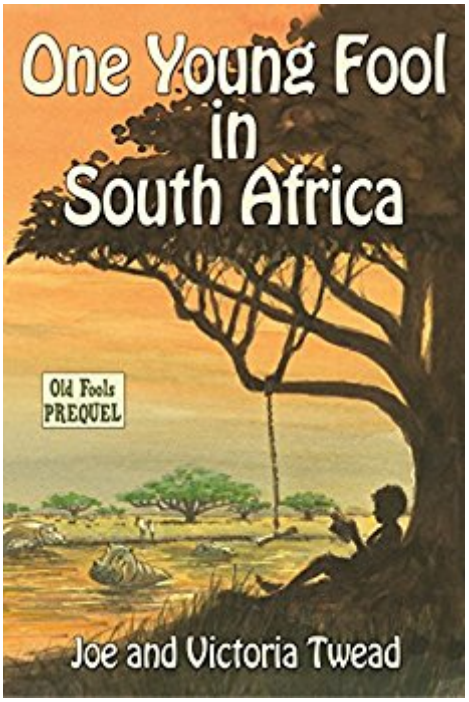

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Synopsis

Ã¢â ¬Å“Have I ever told you about my seventh birthday?Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬Å“Only a million times.Ã¢â ¬Â•Who is Joe Twead? Where did he come from? What happened before Joe met Victoria and they moved to a crazy Spanish mountain village?Dark, funny, and often magical, Joe vividly paints his childhood memories despite constant heckling from Victoria at his elbow as he writes.

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Customer Reviews

As a South African I really enjoyed this book. What could have been a sad story (no spoilers here) actually turns into a not-at-all-bad childhood and schooldays story. Yes, it has pathos and sadness, but it’s also funny. One thing I would have liked is a more chronologically told history. Joe does jump from nine year old to high school boy and back, and to ages in between. Victoria is right when she tells Joe that he gets too long-winded with some descriptions, but we’ll forgive that! I was very relieved that he did not delve into South African politics -- at that same age I knew and understood

very little of the politics if the day, as all youngsters then, and I was terrified he'll fall into that trap so beloved of people writing about South Africa: vastly exaggerating the political situation for the sake of sensation and because it seems a "popular" thing to do. But he never discusses politics and give us an honest story of his youth and high school here. It's not a story with wild ups and downs and incredible adventures, but it's enjoyable. Just one thing, Joe, we do have Google to help -- and you should not have spelled the names wrong of those two well-known camps in the Kruger National Park -- it's Skukuza and Pretoriuskop ....!

This book captures your heart and soul. The author has climbed from relative obscurity as the beloved husband in the mule series to a full blown author in his own right with the same astounding sense of humour as his wife. I fully expect this book to join those of Victoria Twead on the New York Times best seller list. He took me back to my own boarding school days in 50s and 60s England and elicited both laughs and tears. I hope Joe will share with his readers his thoughts and feelings about his time in Spain. Being someone who constantly has to struggle with word counts (why not use 100 even if one or two would do) I did enjoy the descriptions of architectural details of the home. Lastly the interplay between two fabulous people who I have come to love and respect ties together so well the chicken series to date. As always I eagerly await the next installments of their life story. Well done Joe.....no longer one author living under your roof

I have most of the Old Fools books so when Joe Tweed wrote a book about his young life I was intrigued. Joe does not have a easy start to life and for many of his young years it remains the same. At times it's a very sad story but the author had a grace in his writing that put's you at ease with the goings on in the boy's home. I felt early on that Joe's mother probably suffered from mental illness and I could empathise with her short comings as a mother to Joe and his younger sister. In spite of his childhood Joe seemed to make the best of life and went on to be a marvelous human being it seems. Highly recommend reading!

Lots of us were waiting on Joe's book. It was interesting reading it because he would write about his life and then he would have an area in italics where he was talking to his wife. Joe grew up in South Africa and as his mother wasn't able to take care of him he was put in three different homes. The first one was horrendous for a boy who was allowed to roam free, then a good one and then the one that he stayed in until he was 18. While horrible things happened to him this isn't just a sad book but he shares some wonderful stories of camping and finding other people to love him. Victoria was

correct Joe--sometimes there was just too much "architect" information and I had to skim. But when the book ended it was like--what!! I need to know the information going forward from there!! I recommend this book and hey Joe--get busy we need the sequel.

We got to know Joe through his wife Victoria's delightful memoirs about their expat life in Spain. Joe's memories about growing up in children and boys homes in South Africa was captivating and endearing from the first page on. He shares with a refreshing honesty some dark, many happy and often bitter sweet recollections of reaching adulthood without the support of a family. My heart went out to the little boy who didn't have the best start life, but proves that no matter what one is handed, one can make the best out of it . Congratulations Joe to a great start in a hopefully flourishing writing career.

I loved this book. Honestly written, warts and all, and a good reminder to us that even though we all have parts of our lives where that we'd love to go back and behave better, we can still turn out OK in the end. Joe's resilience during a truly difficult chidhood and adolescence is impressive. He's inspired me to jot down childhood memories as they come to mind (don't worry, no book in my future) and to remember those people who have helped along my own life path. The writing style is very good, and Victoria's inserts are a well judged delight. I hope there is a sequel.

Having become acquainted with Joe through his wife's books, it was very interesting to learn about his younger years living in an orphanage. As hard as that must have been to live without any family except his sister whom he doesn't see again for ten yearsJoe emerged to become a strong man who could be considered a successful and kind human being.My only negative is, like Victoria, his wife, mentions, he goes too in-depth describing every detail of a room or situation. Of course, so did Charles Dickens and look how much that affected his popularity!A first-hand look at what it was like growing up in a South African orphanage during the 60s. I enjoyed this very entertaining and informative book.

Having read, with great enjoyment, Victoria's "Old Fools" series", Joe Twead's book came as quite a surprise. His young life in South Africa was nothing like I could ever have imagined when reading Victoria's books. I often wondered about his background and where he got such a wonderful way with words that made me laugh so much in the "Old Fools" series.

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