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## Stoner & Spaz

By Ron Koertge



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**A funny, in-your-face novel starring an unlikely teenage pair - a sheltered cinemaphile with cerebral palsy and the tattooed, straight-talking stoner who steals his heart.**

For sixteen-year-old Ben Bancroft - a kid with cerebral palsy, no parents, and an overprotective grandmother - the closest thing to happiness is hunkering alone in the back of the Rialto Theatre watching *Bride of Frankenstein* for the umpteenth time. Of course he waits for the lights to dim before making an entrance, so that his own lurching down the aisle doesn't look like an ad for *Monster Week*. The last person he wants to run into is drugged-up Colleen Minou, resplendent in ripped tights, neon miniskirt, and an impressive array of tattoos. But when Colleen climbs into the seat beside him and rests a woozy head on his shoulder, Ben has that unmistakable feeling that his life is about to change.

With unsparing humor and a keen flair for dialogue, Ron Koertge captures the rare repartee between two lonely teenagers on opposite sides of the social divide. It's the tale of a self-deprecating protagonist who learns that kindred spirits can be found for the looking - and that the incentive to follow your passion can be set into motion by something as simple as a human touch.

*From the Hardcover edition.*



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## **Stoner & Spaz By Ron Koertge Bibliography**

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- 192 pages

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## Editorial Review

### Amazon.com Review

Colleen Minou is a hard-core stoner, a girl whose motto is, "I'll get high and do anything." Ben Bancroft is a movie-addicted preppie who suffers from cerebral palsy, "the resident spaz, invisible as the sign that says NO RUNNING, the one no one pays attention to." Together, they form the most unlikely couple since Dharma and Greg. He's Brooks Brothers, she's Salvation Army. He's never even smoked a cigarette, she's got 20 different chemicals running through her veins. But when these two lonely teens meet one night at Ben's favorite hang, the Rialto (a classic film theatre that "smells like butter from the Paleozoic"), sparks fly. At least for Ben they do. Maybe it's because Colleen's the first girl to ever really notice him, to have the nerve to tease him about his disability instead of pretend it's not there. For once, Ben is actually more interested in his real life than a movie. Colleen takes him clubbing, lights his first joint, even challenges him to direct his own movie. But when Ben, in turn, dares her to stay straight, Colleen admits that, despite his devotion, she still needs the drugs to "smooth out the edges." Is Ben capable of convincing her otherwise? If not, how will he ever be cured of his Colleen addiction?

Author of the acclaimed *Brimstone Journals*, Ron Koertge's wry depiction of this car wreck of a relationship is sharply observed and wholly original. Teen readers will have a tough time turning the last page of this oddly endearing, screwball love story. (Ages 13 and older) --*Jennifer Hubert*

### From Publishers Weekly

Perhaps not since Harold and Maude has there been such a likable unlikely romance. "Since I've been pretty much treading water all day, the marquee of the Rialto Theatre looks like the prow of a ship coming to save me," begins narrator Ben Bancroft, a 16-year-old who has cerebral palsy. Koertge's (The *Brimstone Journals*) opening scene sets in motion the novel's key elements: Ben's black humor and his love for movies, both of which keep him afloat, and his chance face-to-face meeting there with Colleen Minou, a drug addict (who looks like Helena Bonham Carter "in Fight Club... pretty in an edgy, ruined way"). After Ben meets a new neighbor who happens to have made a short documentary for a film class (the novel, after all, is set in Los Angeles), he starts one of his own, *High School Confidential*. Thanks to Ben's nc.

### From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up-Author Ron Koertge takes on the difficult teen topics without flinching, and the audio version of this dramatic story (Candlewick, 2002) is just as good as the print version. Flinching is a key theme in this book, as Ben Bancroft, the main character, lets us know that as a person with cerebral palsy, no one has ever looked at him directly without flinching, let alone actually touched him. Ben shies away from confronting his over-protective grandmother, from actively confronting the suicide of his father and his abandonment by his mother, and from truly relating to anyone in his high school. In spite of all this, he is a very together young man, living vicariously through old movies until he has a close encounter with Colleen Minou, one of his school's most whacked-out druggies. Surprisingly, it is Colleen who won't flinch, who actually touches Ben in every possible way, who encourages him in his filmmaking, and lets him help her-at least temporarily-into sobriety. Narrator Josh Hamilton gives a perfect voice to Ben and also manages through modulations of his tone and pitch to convincingly portray the grandmother, Colleen, and a neighbor who aids in the filmmaking plot line. By the end, Colleen and Ben are once again on opposite sides of many questions, but Ben has changed dramatically and we can hope for something better for Colleen in the future. Listeners will find this story riveting. The concerns of real teens come through in vivid dialogue and film-shot narratives. The sensitive topic of sexuality makes this a book for older teen readers, and it deserves a place in any collection that serves them.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Kim Bartlett:**

Have you spare time for the day? What do you do when you have much more or little spare time? Yeah, you can choose the suitable activity regarding spend your time. Any person spent all their spare time to take a go walking, shopping, or went to typically the Mall. How about open or perhaps read a book entitled Stoner & Spaz? Maybe it is to become best activity for you. You recognize beside you can spend your time with your favorite's book, you can wiser than before. Do you agree with their opinion or you have other opinion?

#### **William Ullrich:**

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#### **Judy Turner:**

What is your hobby? Have you heard in which question when you got scholars? We believe that that concern was given by teacher on their students. Many kinds of hobby, Everyone has different hobby. So you know that little person including reading or as studying become their hobby. You should know that reading is very important as well as book as to be the matter. Book is important thing to include you knowledge, except your current teacher or lecturer. You discover good news or update with regards to something by book. A substantial number of sorts of books that can you go onto be your object. One of them is actually Stoner & Spaz.

#### **Karolyn Kaufman:**

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