
A GLIMPSE OF MCCURDY: HER RISE & FALL FROM FAME IN *I'M GLAD MY MOM DIED*

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Abstract

The author reviews Jennette McCurdy's 2022 memoir *I'm Glad My Mom Died*, providing a brief summary, personal connections, and potential classroom audiences and applications.

Keywords: young adult memoir, *I'm Glad My Mom Died*, Jennette McCurdy, child actor, *iCarly*, mental health, abuse

In Jennette McCurdy's 2022 memoir *I'm Glad My Mom Died*, we catch a glimpse of the actor's not-so glamorous life. McCurdy enlightens her readers by opening up about many challenges and hardships she faced such as anorexia, bulimia, and alcoholism. Based on the book's title, most of the issues McCurdy goes through are because of her mom. For many of us, a mother is supposed to be our cheerleader, our best friend, the person who raises and takes care of us. Unfortunately, it was McCurdy doing just that for her mom instead. Jennette grew up in a poor family, with a father who was gone all the time and a mother who had health issues related to her cancer. McCurdy was the youngest of four children and ended up losing her childhood due to working as an actress at such a young age. She is best known for her role in Nickelodeon's *iCarly*, where she plays a character named Sam Puckett. Even her experience with Nickelodeon wasn't as "magical" as it may have seemed. Jennette's memoir opens her private life to the public and gives a glimpse of how her life isn't at all what we thought it was.

I think this book will appeal to high school readers because most people are aware of who Jennette McCurdy is and the popular show that she played a role in. Often, we read news and magazine articles on popular or famous people, so reading a book about someone who is still relevant and popular, would most likely appeal to a class of high schoolers. Depending on the maturity of the students, we could read the memoir together and outside of class and have whole-group discussions. I think there is a lot to dissect in the text, and plenty of opportunities to relate to the author, as well as real-world situations. We may know someone who is a people-pleaser, or someone who struggles with staying sober, maybe even someone who came from an abusive family. The classroom is meant to be a safe place, and I trust that students can feel empathic toward their peers and that anything discussed within the classroom will stay in the classroom.

It's hard to narrow down what I like most about the book. Once I started reading it, I couldn't put it down. I read almost the whole book in just one sitting. I felt like I could relate to Jennette in multiple ways, and other times I felt like I wasn't alone. Jennette's writing made it sound like she was just casually talking to me directly about her problems. I think it's interesting that we often think famous people have the most amazing lives, but we never truly know what they are going through. So, I think what I like most about the book is how vulnerable McCurdy is when

writing about her life. I like to know that people like Jennette McCurdy are just like us: emotional, vulnerable, and human.

Author Biography

Danika Pester completed her bachelor's degree in Secondary Education at Wichita State University in May 2024, and she will begin her first year of teaching in August. She plans to pursue a master's degree in English in the future. During her free time, she enjoys reading, journaling, and spending time with her family. Email Danika at dbpester@shockers.wichita.edu.

