

A "drama of tenderness and violence," HILLBILLY DRUG BABY: THE STORY, explores Appalachian teen's quest for a new life

HILLBILLY DRUG BABY: THE STORY zeroes in on six months in the life of an aged-out foster child

Jesse-Ray Lewis, 19, enters a West Virginia "safe house" with few possessions beyond the kerchiefs that identify him as a gang member. An aged-out foster child, he lands in Bluefield, where a charity gives him food.

Published by WriteLife Publishing (December 2018; 978-1-60808-203-2; \$16.95), HILLBILLY DRUG BABY: THE STORY tells of two people who intervene in the life of a homeless, drug-abusing teen with a background of violence and neglect. In their next-door suite called the safe house, they impose three rules: "No alcohol or drugs. You have to work. You have to go to school." Jesse-Ray expresses gratitude for shelter and a middle-aged couple concerned with his welfare. But what does he want?

The couple struggle to determine his true motives, especially after he admits being high on meth at their first meeting. At night he writes verse reflecting trauma and violence, shame and love, even despair. Author Andrea Brunais sees more than just a street-smart boy who can write. She sees a soul who can be saved from a downward spiral. But will Jesse-Ray accept the help of strangers, as glimmers of hope expressed in his writings suggest? Will the couple succeed in steering him toward a new life? And how will the ordeal transform everyone?

Award-winning journalist and author Andrea Brunais spent 30 years as an editor, reporter, and columnist for Media General, Creative Loafing, and Knight Ridder newspapers. A freelance writer and author of both fiction and nonfiction, she has won awards including Silver medalist, fiction, in the Florida Authors and Publishers Association nationwide contest, 2015.

Her freelance work has appeared in outlets such as the Christian Science Monitor, TravelPulse.com, DuPont Registry, and Appalachian Voice. Her newspaper honors include first place in Commentary from the Florida Press Club, a Robert Kennedy Journalism Award, and first place in the annual Southern Newspaper Publishers competition.

She works in higher-education communications and is the creator and executive producer of the web-episode series Save Our Towns. Previous works by Brunais include the novels MERCEDES WORE BLACK and NIGHT OF THE LITANI.

"HILLBILLY DRUG BABY: THE STORY explores complexities of addiction at a human level. Brunais moves past the generalizations and stereotypes that often dominate discussions of addiction and treatment, and tells a story of a human being and how he affected those around him."—reviewer *Bill Case, Charleston Gazette Mail*

"The story is heartfelt, difficult and told with the authority of a prize-winning journalist Andrea's writing is smooth, forceful and fully engaging at every point of the book."—reviewer *Dan Smith, Virginia Communications Hall of Fame journalist, the Roanoker magazine*

“Drugs and the children of Appalachia draw headlines, but rarely have we heard about the journey toward redemption for one of them.”—reviewer *Saundra Kelley*, author, *SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN STORYTELLERS*, *Valley Business FRONT* magazine

Watch the trailer here:

www.tinyurl.com/hillbillydrugbabytrailer

A downloadable press kit can be found at:

<https://hillbillydrugbaby.com/press-kit-1>

The book is available at Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com, IndieBound.org and Walmart.com

Brunais will be giving talks and holding book signings through June 2019 in Virginia and West Virginia.

- Jan. 12 – book signing, Barnes & Noble, Christiansburg, Virginia
- Feb. 6 – author talk, the Reynolds Homestead, Critz, Virginia
- March 21 – author talk and discussion, Alexander Black House, Blacksburg, Virginia

I hope you will consider a review, an interview, or a mention. For a review copy or any other information you may need, please contact me.

Best,

Terri Leidich

President/Publisher

BQB and WriteLife Publishing

terri@bqbpublishing.com

(678) 316-4150