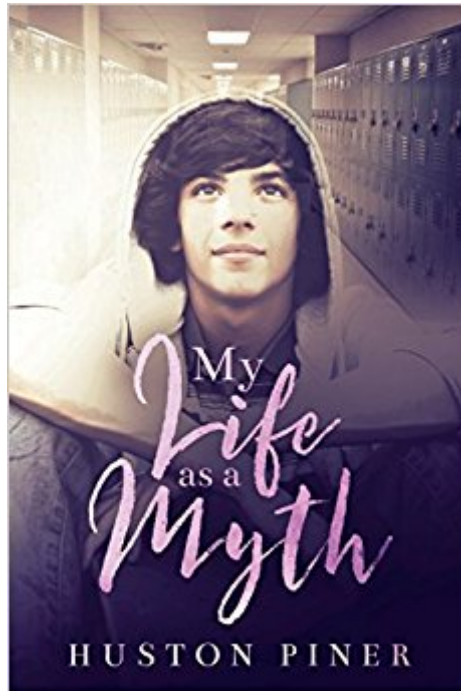


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# My Life As A Myth



## Synopsis

Can a cool reputation really deliver on promises of happiness? Nick's got problems. He's a social outcast who dreams of being popular, he's an easy target for bullies, and he doesn't understand why he's just not attracted to girls. So, after a series of misunderstandings label him a troublemaker on his first day of high school, he's really stoked to have Jesse Gaston and his gang take him in. Jesse starts a PR campaign around campus to give Nick a new image, and the shy loser soon finds himself transformed into an antiestablishment hero. While Nick would rather explore his growing attraction to Bobby Warren, he's forced to fend off would-be girlfriends and struggles with the demands of acting cool. And things at home are spinning out of control as the Vietnam War's destructive impact threatens to change his life forever. Nick's story is both humorous and haunting—a journey of ridiculous misadventures, unexpected psychedelic explorations, and tragic turns of fate. Can a world still reeling from the sexual revolution and the illicit pleasures of marijuana and underage drinking accept two boys in love? Can Nick and Bobby's relationship survive a hostile time when acid rock rules, status is everything, and being gay is the last taboo?

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Only occasionally does a book make me laugh out loud, really care for its characters or even bring me close to tears. Needless to say .. this great story managed to do all of that. Nick, GoodReads review"... a realistic depiction of the struggles an ordinary young gay person may experience." Orion, Reviews by Jessewave"Piner, in glorious prose, has put into words the spirit of the struggling teen homosexual."BJ Sheppard, Insight Out! "one of the most realistic LGBTQ YA books that has

crossed my desk" Kazza K, Greedy Bug Book Reviews "Overall a wonderful YA read which I highly recommend." Jeff Erno, GoodReads --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

My Life as a Myth is for every young person forced to pretend to be something they're not, and for every adult who's forgotten how hard (and wrong) that is. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

So often young people feel compelled to be someone they're not. Putting aside their individuality, they wear the latest designer gear, listen to the "in" bands of the moment, and hide their deepest desires and insecurities, all in the quest to be popular, to fit in. For the protagonist in this entertaining and immensely moving debut by Huston Piner, the choice is taken out of his hands when a classmate decides to turn his knack for attracting trouble to his advantage and make him a star. It starts to go wrong for fourteen-year-old Nick Horton on his very first day of high school. Awkward around people, he has few friends and generally prefers to hover beneath the radar. Before he so much as steps onto the school bus, however, a case of being in the wrong place at the wrong time brings him to the attention of the principal and earns him a reputation as a trouble-maker. This unexpected notoriety also alerts fellow freshman Jesse Gaston. Jesse welcomes Nick into his circle of friends, where upon he sets about creating a whole new persona for him. Thus "Napalm Nick" is born, flouter of authority and a law unto himself. And suddenly everyone knows his name. Students are nodding to him in the school corridors, and girls clamor to be his date. Only Bobby Warren, the most sweet-natured of Jesse's gang, seems interested in getting to know the real Nick. As the pretence gathers momentum and Nick's world, both at home and at school, spirals beyond his control, Bobby is the one person with whom he can be truly himself. He longs to be free of the sham his life has become, to simply be an ordinary boy falling in love for the first time. Yet, when the charade finally comes crashing down, even Nick is unprepared for the backlash. Veering from the hilariously funny to moments so poignant they brought me to tears, this is the story of one teenager's struggle to find himself and come to terms with being gay in the fiercely homophobic society of the '60s and '70s. Nick is such a genuinely decent kid, poles apart from the devil-may-care rebel Jesse builds him up to be, that he stole my heart from the outset. He and Bobby may be only fourteen, but the author handles their developing romance with tenderness and sensitivity, and I found it incredibly powerful. If you're seeking a highly original young adult read that will have you laughing and crying in equal measure, I can certainly recommend this book.

The famous American musician, Kurt Cobain, of the rock-band, Nirvana had once quoted: "I started to be really proud of the fact I was gay even though I wasn't." Well no doubt that Cobain was talking about the gay rights. Huston Piner, an American author, has clearly followed Cobain's remarkable words to pen down a novel called *My Life as a Myth* about the gay community in our society. The best part about the book being that it is set during the 1970s, when you can almost imagine, that homosexuality was considered as almost as a sin or maybe some kind of mental illness. And remarkably, Piner has captured all those hatred, anger and indifference against them. This is also about how a teenage boy identifies his sexual orientation, fears to become an outcast in the society, and the regular high-school tantrums. Nick is a high-school freshman who is scared that on the very first day of his school, people might think of him as an outcast. But instead by accident, he falls in the middle of some trouble among the teachers and the principal and soon he is labeled as a rebel among his peers. He even befriends the bad guys and the trouble-maker gangs of a guy named Jesse. Thus his image as a rebel makes him popular as Napalm Nick among his peers and soon he is swooned over by so many girls. But unfortunately, he is not attracted to those girls; instead he is slowly falling for his gang-mate named Bobby. Whereas Bobby is very much bent to know the identity of the real Nick, not Napalm Nick. Whereas Nick is dying to get out of this bad-boy image, before he realizes this, everything comes falling apart in his life. Then there is his family where Nick is the youngest among 2 brothers and names of his brothers are not allowed in his household. Buy one fine Christmas day, his brother; Raymond comes home with a secret which might cost a lot for Nick's family. The plot is excellent and brilliantly written. Huston Piner has included all types of vivid images from happy to sad and with each moment in Nick's life, one second you'll find yourself, rolling to the other second in tears. The author has captured the 60s style lifestyle and moments in his book perfectly. The book is quite sensitive and emotions are quite raw enough to make you fall in love with Nick and feel you in pain with Nick's struggle among his peers and in his family. The characters are well-developed and very marvelously crafted out, especially Nick and Bobby. Nick, the innocent and naive one, whereas Bobby, being the sensitive and the understanding guy. Also there is the bad-guy, Jesse who is quite intense and passionate to turn Nick into a bad-boy image. The author has also brought up the high-school and teenage issues like taking drugs, smoking pot, bullying etc. Since it was the 60s era, and people's horizon have not widened that much, has made Nick's life more complicated and how much trouble he had to face with his sexuality. The authors carefully chosen words and dialogues have made the book more interesting, giving an edge to it. All-in-all, it is a very good book about young teenagers and the

issues faced by them while growing up. A huge thanks to the author, Huston Piner, for giving me an opportunity to read and review his book.

This book should be required reading for every high school student, assigned on the first day of school in their freshman year. Wow. I honestly believe it could do a great deal to eradicate bullying of every sort, and might well help more than one scared, lonely and hurting kid survive long enough to understand that people aren't just mouthing platitudes when they say it will get better. Frankly, the book is so well written that even the kids on the other side of the bullying equation would be drawn in, and learn what it's like to be the kid bullied. It might well save them too. This time capsule story from the early '70's was different in the best possible way. The character develops in a naturalistic way, and it never wallows in nostalgia. The ending is a bit of a downer, but it probably couldn't have ended differently. Brilliant book - kept me reading, rapt, and made me cry. I really didn't see the ending. Wonderful teenage saga, with an ending I didn't see, though in hindsight I should have. The High School is well shown, as is Nick's home life. All characters are well developed throughout, and their emotional journey is so well shown. The ending is so poignant. I fell in love with Nick and Bobby, and the minors were very real too. The fact that I should have seen the ending, but didn't, shows how well the author took something of a cliché - the gay teen not fitting in at high school, bullied, scared, and with home problems finally commits suicide, maybe (for there's a twist - and made it fresh and exciting, and unpredictable. A perfect book. Another exceptional writer and a very authentic character voice. Really loved the humor and the writer's ability to evoke the era, although all the feelings and thoughts are still relevant and relatable to 2013.

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