

Book Review from the *Times Record News*  
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By Monica Bartling

## JOURNEY OF A LONELY TEEN

John Zaiss' "A Dedication" takes readers into the very heart and soul of Quinton Marshall, a brilliant 17-year-old high school junior, who because of apathy and rebellion is barely making it through school.

Quinn, as his friends call him, is bored with school and barely tolerant of his overly controlling mother and absent father. Quinn just wants to be left alone with his loud music, computer and one great interest: photography. "A Dedication" will resonate with parents of high school students or those who remember their own late teenaged mental struggles with balancing family rules, school rules and the intrinsic need to be independent.

The book begins with Quinn's statement, "It wasn't that long ago that I reveled in being labeled a loner, a troubled teenager, and I wore that badge with an angry pride, will to challenge and ready to dismiss any . . . authority. But my life changed."

From that simple statement, Zaiss takes the reader through the events that turned one lonely, bitter teen into a young man who cared. Before the transformation occurs, however, Quinn fails two courses and has to take them again in summer school. His other option was to repeat his entire junior year of high school. During a school break he goes to a place in the mountains to take pictures and discovers an elderly man painting. He decides to photograph the artist at work and startles the painter who becomes angry and determined to make Quinn pay. The ensuing fight leaves the artwork ruined and Quinn embarrassed for tormenting an artist and running away. His embarrassment escalates when he encounters the same man a couple of days later in the coffee shop where he goes to skip school. The artist comes over to talk to him. This simple act, and the ensuing friendship that Joe develops with Quinn, turns into the one thing that turns his life around.

Zaiss covers a raft of life lessons in a well-written style that is easy to read. For some parents it may hit a little too close to home and be a little too sad. I found it warm, funny, sad, enlightening and compelling.