



## Mostly True: Collected Stories & Drawings

*Brian Andreas*

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## Mostly True: Collected Stories & Drawings Brian Andreas

The first book of an expansive trilogy, filled with quirky stories & drawings. It includes some of Brian's best loved stories, including Flying Woman & Believing My Father.

### Mostly True: Collected Stories & Drawings Details

Date : Published February 1st 2008 by Storypeople (first published August 1st 1993)

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Author : Brian Andreas

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## **From Reader Review Mostly True: Collected Stories & Drawings for online ebook**

### **brian tanabe says**

I first discovered Andreas through his StoryPeople. Haunting, to say the least.

So finally I pick up one of his collections of stories and drawings... and frankly, some of his pieces approach greatness, but most are odd and some even a little bizarre.

Here's one of my favorite oddities:

"The next time the demons come, he said, just wave your penis at them.

I can't do that, I said.

Why not? he said.

Well, I said finally. Because I'm American."

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### **Jamila says**

Outside the box is a great place to be is what you'll discover after picking up this book. Andreas demonstrates outwardly thinking through his writing and drawings. His style simplifies the complex in a childlike manner.

It is impossible to find just one favorite story.

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### **Joy Pixley says**

This short collection of drawings and micro-prose-poems is amazing and weird and moving. Each time you turn the page, there is a drawing on the left side (often with a poem/story written into it) and a micro-story on the right side. If you aren't familiar with Andreas' drawing style, go online: if you don't like one, you won't like the rest. Me? I'm fascinated. The freedom of a child's imagination combined with an adult's emotional palette. I picture myself asking a child what all the weird little bits and bobs mean, and the child within me comes up with some pretty interesting (and sometimes surprising) answers.

My advice would be: don't rush reading these. Read one or two or four at a time. Think about them. Muse. Talk about the ideas with a friend. There's so much to explore with each one.

It's hard to pick favorites, but here are two:

Place to Fly

She kept asking if the stories were true.  
I kept asking her if it mattered.  
We finally gave up.

She was looking for a place to stand  
& I wanted a place to fly.

### Dark Garden

I once had a garden  
filled with flowers  
that grew only on dark  
thoughts.

but they needed constant  
attention

& one day I decided  
I had better things  
to do.

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### Diane says

have really enjoyed all his books!

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### Jackie says

Brian Andreas is my favorite living artist hands down. He's a charming soccer dad kind of guy, but his simplistic drawings that go with what I find to be profoundly worded snippets of stories are soul stirring. His whole Story People series, both art prints and books, are another one of my "comfort zones"--I read them over and over to lift my spirits and remember the possibilites that surround us in everyday life.

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### Sarah Miller says

These books make me happy.

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### George Polley says

I first ran across this book in a shop in Seattle, Washington back in 1993 when it was first published. Updated in 2005, it and its companions (which includes "Still Mostly True", published in 1994 and updated

in 2005) have long been my favorites. The following story, "Tiger Rain", will tell you why ... it's the kind of story that sends my imagination off on fantastic adventures.

"Her umbrella was filled with rain she had collected in her travels & on hot summer days she would open it up for the neighborhood kids & we would splash in the puddles & then it would smell like Nairobi or Tasmania & later on we would sit on the porch & eat ice cream & watch for tigers in the bushes."

"Mostly True" stories are the kinds of stories that I keep returning to, either by reading them over and over or inventing stories of my own, fantastical tales that "never could really happen", but might, just might, and most definitely do when we were children ... and still are in our deepest parts magical things happen that are "mostly true", but in a special way, and not quite.

I guess that's why I read it over and over again.

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### **Casey Kiser says**

the next time the demons come, he said,  
just wave your penis at them.

I can't do that, I said.

why not? he said.

well, I said finally. because I'm American.

(Page 16)

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### **Kelsey Trinkner says**

I have always loved Brian Andreas' books. They consist of poems and short stories. Some make no sense, while others are extremely relate-able. All of the poems and short stories are only a few sentences long. My favorite from this book reads "I saw them standing there pretending to be just friends, when all the time in the world could not pry them apart." The image on this particular story is of two people standing on either side of the sentence, but they're facing away from each other. One figure has an arm outstretched over the words with an extended finger almost touching the other figure. I like this image. It makes me happy, though I'm not sure why. I have always enjoyed going to his work space in Iowa. I look forward to going back to his work place again. I loved reading this book as much as the last few I've read. I have recommended these books to a few friends before and I will continue to recommend these books, as well as continue to read them in the future.

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## Ranting Wright says

I appreciate this book more for its formal structure than for its subject matter. That does not mean to say that the book is thematically uninspiring, but that the design of the book and the narrative (or lack thereof) is marked by points of innovation.

First, the introduction from the author encourages the reader to engage the book in multiple ways, such as reading it, teaching it to someone else, sending it to a friend, or throwing it at your dog. I actually received this book from a friend who knows I collect books by the pound, so we both met the understanding that the book would most likely stop here. (At least until I find somebody worthy...who knows how long my friend had it before me.) Whatever you choose to do with the book, Andreas wants you to recognize it as more than a story or a collection of short stories. It is a bound block of paper, an object with mass in this universe. It could be a shim, a fire starter, a conversation starter, a weapon---its potential is only limited by the shortcomings of humanity.

Second, the stories are hardly a page, only fifteen to fifty words each. Most of these stories are accompanied with a drawing and another smaller story within the drawing, and it is these small bits of fiction which really interest me. I have noticed a trend in the past five to seven years (today being May 31 2017), a trend characterized by so-called 'poets' avoiding the demands of creating a sonnet or any sort of organized and extended verse. Instead, the 'new poet' writes a short phrase or sentence then leaves it to the reader to believe that these scant few words somehow carry a magnitude of knowledge incomprehensible to mere mortals. The stories of Brian Andreas do not follow this trend. They do not force themselves upon you. You can read the stories and find that five or six bring you great truth while the rest feel like filler only to read the book a second time and discover that some stories have lost their gravity while others are only just now open to you.

Setting aside my admiration for the format of *Mostly True*, I can honestly say that this book stopped me on more than one occasion and begged me to sit and ponder. Like I said before, some stories just did not do it for me, but a handful of them made me question my understanding of reality. *Presence of Mind*, for example, was fun to explore: the narrator is certain that he does not lie in his dreams and therefore, if he speaks mostly from his dreams then his waking life will mostly proceed truthfully, I.e. in an honest manner. However, this argument only stands if 'presence of mind' is only ever active consciously. The narrator does not have the presence of mind to lie, but the dream world itself is beyond the realm of the present mind. I believe that the narrator's presence of mind in the conscious world would not be strong enough to confirm that there is no dishonest presence of mind in the dream world. Furthermore, every aspect of waking reality in our current world was part of somebody's dream, but the dreams of some are the nightmares of others, meaning the truths of some are the falsities of others. One religion says the others are wrong, and yet each religion is steadfast in its predictions concerning existence, so who could ever ultimately decide what is 'wrong' and what is 'right', what is a 'dream' and what is a 'reality'? How could a liar know when he lies and when he tells the truth if he does not know himself to be a liar? If you make your actions true by default then there is no action which can be false unless you forgot to learn what false means in the first place.

Great book. Besides *Presence of Mind*, some favorite stories were *Opera Man*, *Geographer*, and *Porcupine*. Definite reread value.

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## **Denae DiVincenzo says**

I want Brian Andreas to live with me and narrate my entire life. Everything in these books is so beautiful and touching and sad, I can't get enough. I'm shocked to find it on Goodreads; the experience of reading the series is so intimate that I was nearly convinced I was the only person to have discovered them.

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## **Julie says**

I picked up my first Brian Andreas book quite a few years ago while in Minnesota with some friends. He calls it story telling but it's a mix of that, poetry, comedy, and if you really think about it, songwriting (although music isn't involved). Some of his stories remind me of things that children may innocently say. This is another one of those books that stays in my collection. This is a great book if you need to gain some perspective.

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## **Miles says**

I've had this beautiful collection of stories and drawings for a few months now and have read it like I do most things- slowly and incompletely. Each page has one hand stamped story on one side and a drawing on the other. Today, I decided to read the whole thing while eating lunch at whole foods. It was quite a strange experience to read this collection in such a way that feels so counter to the book's creation/intention. Short poetic moments/vignettes that have no narrative arc and are hand-stamp-written. It made me think of the respect that is/should be given to tactile creations/arts. Here are some examples/favorites:

But first, a favorite line from the intro:

" I like art that admits to being a part of life."

Blue Squares:

"We lay there & look up at  
the night sky & she told me  
about stars called blue squares  
& red swirls & I told her I'd  
never heard of them.

Of course not, she said,  
the really important stuff they  
never tell you. You have to  
imagine it on your own."

Empty Space:

" After his father  
died, he carried  
his life more

gently & left an  
empty space  
for the birds  
& other creatures."

unnamed:

"I have  
always thought  
that stars turn  
into white birds  
in the morning  
light & sleep with  
their heads under  
their wings until  
the dusk begins to  
walk through  
the streets"

At first, the writing made me want to write like him and live in and see and love the magic all around but as I kept reading I was overcome with my acknowledging Brian Andreas' male voice. It made me kind of upset and confused. I couldn't figure out all inside me: why did i keep imagining the "I" in his stories as a man? Was there a tinge of friendship in how he wrote about men and romance in his moments with women? Was it the fact that I knew he was a man? Was it my own lack of creativity/symptom of my privilege? I couldn't tell but I didn't like it. I wanted to read magical vignettes by women and/or people of color. I kept reading though, some stories softened me, others annoyed/confused me and in the end, as I closed the book I felt slightly sad. I don't know, maybe it was the beauty of the stories, or my whirling notions/feelings about male privilege, or maybe the fact that I was leaving these expansive and simple stories that were from & not this world. I recommend this book, there's a lot in there.

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### **Raeann says**

Read this book in one sitting and loved it. It's really short and simple, but all the different stories are wonderful. My favorite story was this one - "She said she usually cried at least once each day not because she was sad, but because the world was so beautiful and life was so short"

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### **Cynthia says**

sweet little book, charming drawings, snippets of stories that sink into the heart with a sigh.

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