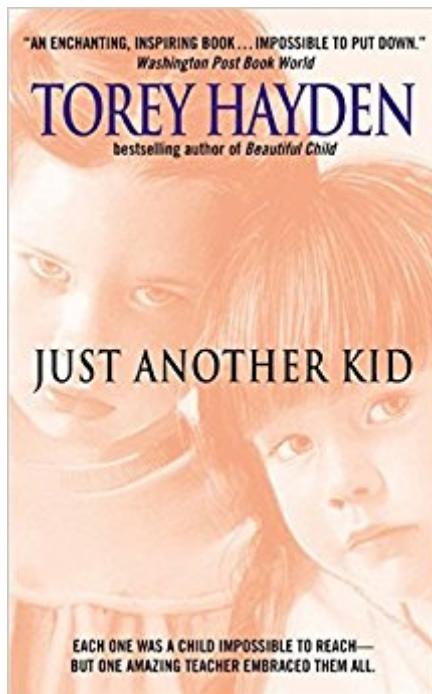


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# Just Another Kid



## **Synopsis**

From the bestselling author of *One Child* comes these remarkable stories of six traumatized children who appeared to have no hope for the future and the incredible teacher who would break through their shells. Torey Hayden faced six emotionally troubled kids no other teacher could handle--three recent arrivals from battle-torn Northern Ireland, badly traumatized by the horrors of war; eleven-year-old Dirkie, who only knew of life inside an institution; excitable Mariana, aggressive and sexually precocious at the age of eight; and seven-year-old Leslie, perhaps the most hopeless of all, unresponsive and unable to speak. With compassion, rare insight, and masterful storytelling, teacher Torey Hayden once again touches our hearts with her account of the miracles that can happen in her class of "special" children.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

A talented special education teacher with a gift for writing, Hayden dramatically describes the difficulties and joys of working with a small group of severely emotionally handicapped children. The centerpiece of this tale, though, is Ladbrook Taylor, mother of one of the children. Lad is very beautiful, very wealthy, highly educated, yet emotionally fractured, withdrawn, and alcoholic. She joins Hayden in the classroom as a volunteer aide. This potentially explosive situation gradually leads to a deepening relationship between the two women that ultimately allows Hayden to help Lad. In the process, Lad reveals her startling past, containing buckets of melodrama, easily on par with the juiciest TV soaps. Riveting reading. Carol R. Glatt, Northeastern Hospital of

PhiladelphiaCopyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

""Just Another Kid" is not just another book. This remarkable teacher's memoir reminds us that love takes many forms."-- "The New York Times""""Just Another Kid" is an enchanting, inspiring book...impossible to put down."-- "The Washington Post"

My favorite author. I buy Torey's books to give as gifts to anyone who teaches, taught, is a social worker, psychologist, cares about kids, has a special education child, is a parent, etc. This story is not only a story about a special education teacher and an unusual teaching assistant, but is also a glimpse into the history of the reality of special education in public schools in America and perhaps a cautionary tale about how far we have come, and how quickly we can revert to such a time unless people care a whole lot to do something about it....

Torey Hayden recounts the true story of her teaching experience and interaction with one parent in particular. I could not put this book down. It is so interesting on so many levels. The friend I recommended it to said the same thing, she couldn't put it down. Hayden has such a respectful and honest way of discussing the children's various challenges. She describes the day to day with such interesting, funny, and compassionate detail. What is fascinating is how she can come up with just the right way to handle a new situation on the fly. Although learning about the kids was engrossing in and of itself, the real story comes from this slowly developed, constantly evolving relationship Hayden finds herself in with a parent of one of the students. Dr. Taylor is one of the most interesting characters about which I've read, which is probably the result of her being a real person and Hayden describing the reality of dealing with all sides, positive and negative, of a woman who has genius intelligence, lacks all social skills, is beautiful, an alcoholic, and at once narcissistic, sweet and vulnerable, as well as willing to change. The stories of the children keep the book moving; you love them, hope for them, are heartbroken for them, frustrated with them.. and all the while desperate to know what move Dr. Taylor is going to make next and how Hayden will handle it all.

I found "Just Another Kid" absorbing and engaging; that's why I ordered my second copy from .com. (I got my first copy from a local bookstore.) I love how Torey was willing to help and guide Ladbrooke once Dr. Taylor reached out and requested Ms. Hayden's help. Particularly touching was the teacher's response when her assistant told the story of the brother Bobby's suicide at his

apartment. There were a couple things I found disturbing, however. They involve Ms. Hayden's interaction with Shemona. One such scene comes right after Leslie alerts Torey to the sound of a kid crying and the teacher goes to investigate an altercation between eleven-year-old Dirkie and the little girl, Shemona. The teacher admitted right there in her own account that Dirkie started the ruckus by pestering the little girl about her hair. Instead of going after the culprit, however, Ms. Hayden punished Shemona and tried to bully the kid into talking just for the sake of talking. The second scenario involving Shemona and the Hayden woman had to do with an ingrown toenail the child had. When the adult finally got the little kid down to the faculty lounge so that the painful problem could be fixed, she then explained that she would go and get some cream and things to treat it. That part is perfectly okay. The toenail needed to be fixed. What was NOT okay was the woman's response when the little girl queried about possible pain from the actual treatment itself. Torey actually had the nerve to smirk and reply with another question: "It hurts already, doesn't it?" Ordinarily, I would call the teacher very compassionate, and I'm sure she was, but these two scenes are two of the very few instances when she totally blew it. By the way, that's one of the parts of this book that I really like. Torey actually admitted to Ladbrooke that she, Torey Hayden, quite often screwed up things in her classroom. Now, that takes honest humility. Despite the teacher's quirks, I would recommend "Just Another Kid" to any and all readers out there who haven't read it yet. H. Campbell

Love all of Torey's books! I need more to read!

Very good! Just as described!

I loved it simply because of the character of Ladbrooke (who wasn't even one of the children). I found someone else who was "like me," and it was wonderful to know I wasn't the only one. "Tense, she became less articulate. Frightened at finding herself unable to say what she wanted, she panicked. The panic destroyed whatever bit of expression she was still capable of." That is by far, my favorite quote that describes me perfectly. Reading it was an eye-opening experience. The actual storyline was good, and entertaining, but it wasn't anything exceptional otherwise. But I thought overall it was worth reading.

Love her books!! Can't wait to start this one!

Torey Hayden is my favourite author... I would have to say this is one of favourite of her books. Her patience is inspiring as well has her ability to pull back and look at circumstances objectively.I definitely recommend this book.

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