

## Good book, good review: *Twelve*

By Michael Johnson  
Whalesong Staff

The time has come for some one from my generation to stand up and say, "This is who we are." The time has come for a voice to rise out of the sea of murmurs and amplify; a voice to carry our 21st century emotions across expansive oceans and farther still: into the understanding of our parents. HELLO JUNEAAA?!? UH ... ANYBODY LISTENING TO ME? NO? Damn, figured it was worth a shot.

In *Twelve*, Nick McDonell's youthful yawp resounds in every corner of the world. Youthful indeed, *Twelve* was written when he was nearly that young. You UASers know I am not one to impose my opinion much, but this book is too good to ignore. I devoured *Twelve* like fresh king crab legs —with relish, but uncontrollable, unavoring speed. If I were a cat, *Twelve* would be tuna. If I were a dog, *Twelve* would be a cat. If I were George Bush, *Twelve* would be Iraq. Once this book has your attention, the only way to escape its spell is to consume it. And even then you're in trouble. If I were a qualified, overly verbose literary critic I would exclaim, "A spine-chilling spell-binder, an apocalyptic masterpiece!" and all sorts of other glamorous things that the book is not.

The plot of *Twelve* interweaves the lives of several over-privileged, drug-addled, confused private school teens in New York City who are mixed up in a financially-induced world of addictive want. Some people die, some live, some we are left to wonder. But while the plot has great twists, the actual content is not what makes this book an instant classic (nor is it a reason to write the book off).

This kid, McDonell, he has got *it*. His words beckon, they entice, they seduce the reader into an uncannily intimate bond with the characters. I marvel at how I felt so driven to finish the book. It had been awhile since I'd voluntarily consumed a few hundred pages in an evening.

What's more, the story is largely true, with McDonell writing himself in as the main character, "White Mike." Perhaps this allows and accounts for the inimitable, piercing honesty that goosebumps the reader throughout. For a teenager, McDonell certainly has honed the ability to write precise — even in the crazy climax the reader is plowed through events that other authors might take chapters to describe.

Want to read something different? No theatrical embellishment, no Hollywood influence, no fluff? *Twelve* is a real death, dealt out in real time, contrasted against countless "novels" today that are slow-motion-snake-pit-sword-fight-epic-battle-bulletproof-enemy-so-I-gotta-kick-him-out-of-an-airplane deaths that are better left for Jackie Chan flicks.

Want to read something different, something with quality? Take a look at *Twelve*. Want to watch *Survivor* and read trashy romance novels? Take a look at yourself.



## Matrix continued from page 6

and I am with my friend trying to get on the ski lift that goes to the top and I get whacked in the stomach by the seat and dragged off the ledge into a fluffy pile of snow. They had to stop the lift and the 3 million people in the lines waiting had a great laugh at my expense. The drama isn't nearly over. I hear a voice behind me as I am trying to get my board, "Dixie?" I look around and who is staring down at me looking like something from Hot Greek Gods Magazine? You guessed it. By his body language I could tell she was there and I just waited for him to turn around, get her attention and introduce us. She is a good three feet smaller than I am. I felt like the jolly green giant who got pushed out of the game because I was too big and clumsy. It was a case of the power three — ungraceful, unappealing, and uninvited. That perfectly sums up how I felt. I tried to make small talk, but the tension on the air was just suffocating. I could smell it. We went our separate ways and for the whole day I kept feeling like he was making the best attempt to not be near me and the closer I got, the further away he went. I'll tell you, it's not fun feeling the one-night-stand that someone never expected to see.

We later on decided that maybe things were moving a little fast. I'm not quite sure, but I don't really think I had much of a choice in it anyway. We were going to do less relationship stuff and more hanging out and laughing stuff. That lasted about a week, as our schedules didn't leave much room for hanging out. We subsequently decided that NO relationship stuff was the order of the day. I was being punished because he had bitten off more of life than he could chew and he had so much to do that he could barely breathe. How do you get angry with someone who can't dedicate adequate time to you because they are swamped in life? There is no one to blame; it was the situation.

So I am once again on the prowl. Phillip is still going to be my friend; I am at least going to fight for that. But as for this dastardly game of love, I will keep the blindfold on and trust my instincts. I won't see him coming; he'll blindsides me and send me into a chaotic state of passionate frenzy and we will laugh at the little things for no reason. I deserve that, at least.

## Need a drink continued from page 4

- Exercise or go for a walk or hike.
- Talk to close friends.
- Laugh! Laugh! Laugh!
- Develop a daily routine.
- Take vitamins.

•Catch and STOP your "stinkin-thinkin" (*self put-downs, negativity, perfectionism, criticism of others, judgments, worry about things you can't control, doom and gloom*), because this is only one possible way to view reality.

On April 10, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., UAS will join other campuses in offering students a chance to learn about their own drinking. By taking a short survey, students will be able to enter a drawing for cool door prizes. Many local businesses are co-sponsoring the event.

Stop by the cafeteria for free pizza, some non-alcoholic beer, and a virgin margarita!

If the beer's  
starting to  
impair your  
game...



Think what  
it'll do to  
your driving.

It's time to call a cab. Now.

DESIGNATE A DRIVER.



This ad is sponsored by Alaska Electric Light & Power.