



Confessions of a Closet Catholic

By Sarah Darer Littman

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Winner of the Sydney Taylor Book Award!

An "eleven-going-on-twelve-year-old Jewish girl" searches for her identity in what *Publisher's Weekly* called a "reassuring debut novel about finding one's personal peace-and-comfort zone."

Justine Silver's best friend, Mary Catherine McAllister, has given up chocolate for Lent, but Justine doesn't think God wants her to make that kind of sacrifice. So she's decided to give up being Jewish instead. Eleven-year-old Justine pours her heart out to her teddy bear, "Father Ted," in a homemade closet confessional. But when Justine's beloved Bubbe suffers a stroke, Justine worries that her religious exploration is responsible. Worse, she must suddenly contemplate life without Bubbe. Ultimately, it's Bubbe's quiet understanding of Justine's search for identity that helps Justine to find faith in the most important place of all—within herself.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 4-7 - Justine Silver, 11, has decided to give up being Jewish for Lent. Of course, this is a secret she keeps from her family, along with her regular confessions to her stuffed teddy bear, "Father Ted," who also administers the sacrament when she can sneak upstairs with grape juice and a few matzos. Mac, Justine's best friend at her new school, is Catholic, with straight blonde hair and a large exuberant family that's more fun than hers. And Justine's strange fascination with this "perfect" life and religion has her doubting her own faith, which people in her own family observe in very different ways. She explains to Mac and her family, "...being Jewish is all about suffering....People hate us, try to kill us, and don't want us to join their country club, while you guys get Christmas trees and Easter eggs." The exploration of faith is the central theme of this book, from Justine's illicit confessions in a Catholic church to the emotional shroud of her grandmother's death. Justine's world is deeply controlled by her guilt about her faithlessness, about how best to worship God, and her turmoil over pleasing her parents. But despite the seemingly profound context, the novel is injected with humor throughout and written with the voice of a contemporary adolescent. Readers can't help but laugh and cry with this winning protagonist. - *Kimberly Monaghan, formerly at Vernon Area Public Library, IL*

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About the Author

Sarah Darer Littman is the critically acclaimed author of *Backlash*, *Want to Go Private?*, *Life, After*, *Purge*; and *Confessions of a Closet Catholic*, winner of the Sydney Taylor Book Award. When she's not writing novels, Sarah is an award-winning columnist for the online news site CTNewsJunkie. She teaches creative writing as an adjunct professor in the MFA program at Western Connecticut State University, and with Writopia Lab. Sarah lives in Connecticut.

Visit Sarah online at sarahdarerlittman.com

Users Review

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Jose Carr:

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