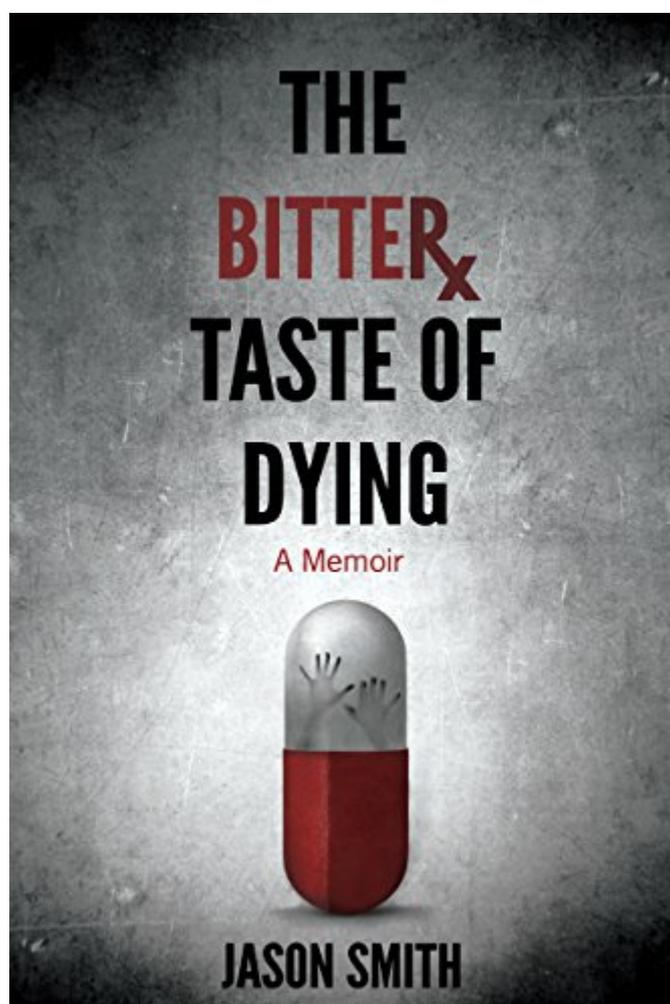


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# The Bitter Taste Of Dying: A Memoir



## Synopsis

In his first book, author Jason Smith explores the depravity and desperation required to maintain an opiate addiction so fierce, he finds himself jumping continents to avoid jail time and learns the hard way that some demons cannot be outrun. While teaching in Europe, he meets a prostitute who secures drugs for him at the dangerous price of helping out the Russian mafia; in China, he gets his Percocet and Xanax fix but terrifies a crowd of children and parents at his job in the process; and in Mexico, Smith thought a Tijuana jail cell would be the perfect place to kick his Fentanyl habit, but soon realizes that the power of addiction is stronger than his desire to escape it. *The Bitter Taste of Dying* paints a portrait of the modern day drug addict with clarity and refreshing honesty. With a gritty mixture of self-deprecation and light-hearted confessional, Smith's memoir deftly describes the journey into the harrowing depths of addiction and demonstrates the experience of finally being released from it. **Praise for *THE BITTER TASTE OF DYING*** "Jason is a great writer who's clearly done the life-destroying research that I can relate to. This is the voice of a new generation of drug addicts." — Jerry Stahl, NY Times bestselling author of *Permanent Midnight* and *Happy Mutant Baby Pills* "This memoir grabs you by the throat on the first page and doesn't let go until you're done, in one sitting--gasping for breath because you know, finally, what it's like to be a drug addict without having been one yourself. Jason Smith is a gifted writer offering no excuses for the damage he did on his harrowing 16-year journey into prescription drug hell, a huge, hidden problem in America today. Read *The Bitter Taste of Dying* to understand it." — Jonathan Alter, NY Times bestselling author of *The Center Holds*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

At the age of 14, Jason Smith got his first taste of addiction. Literally. While his parents were away for the weekend, his uncle--a heroin addict who was living with Jason and his family--overdosed, and Jason had to perform CPR on him. Without going into too much detail, let's just say that the taste was unforgettable. The bitter taste of dying indeed. Three years later, Smith inadvertently stumbled upon the warm, comforting effects of drugs when he ended up in the hospital following a car accident that injured his back. One shot of Demerol and Smith was hooked. *The Bitter Taste of Dying* is a gripping, no-holds-barred memoir of Smith's experiences while in the throes of the beast known as addiction. He takes the reader along on his journeys to Europe, Mexico, and China, documenting his innermost feelings and the crazy, mixed-up thinking that goes hand-in-hand with drug dependency. Smith's days and nights are filled with desperation and recklessness as he constantly chases a high while simultaneously running away from life. Smith can't live without drugs, but he can't live with them, either. At least not in a manner that most human beings would want to live. His addiction is his constant companion through college, allowing him to shed the shyness and anxiety he felt while growing up. Drugs make his life easier, but at the same time they make his life a living hell. Some of the situations Smith finds himself in are nothing short of terrifying. His time spent in a Tijuana prison--where he was beaten by guards and given drinking water from a janitor's mop bucket--and his encounter with the Russian mob had me overflowing with empathy. The lengths Smith goes to in order to stay high are beyond what most people can even comprehend.

Just a few years ago, Jason Smith was lying in his bloody bathtub, blood slowly draining from his slit wrists. Now he is here to tell us how he reached the point of suicide after his long, dark descent into prescription opiate abuse. *The Bitter Taste Dying* is a story of resurrection told by an author who has literally come back from the black grip of death. Today's junkies are not just on the street corner anymore. Big Pharma are the suppliers, and doctors are the pushers, cultivating (perhaps

inadvertently, but thatâ€™s debatable) a massive population of addicts from all demographics. After a severe car accident, Smith has back surgery and is given a perpetual menu of painkillers and muscle relaxers by his physicians. It doesnâ€™t take long for the high schooler to realize that by taking more than the recommended dosage, he could obtain the warm, euphoric mental and physical comfort only opiates can bring. But all too soon he also discovers the pangs of withdrawal whenever his medication runs out. If anyone has difficulty understanding what an addict feels like, Smith describes it with painful accuracy. â€œYou know that feeling of having your head held under water, the last of your oxygen depleted, where every fiber of your being screams at you to get to the surface for more air? Thatâ€™s the feeling of needing more drugsâ€

As Smith grows into a man, his addiction grows to mammoth proportions and he must go through heroic efforts to keep himself in pills and Fentanyl patches. Smith tells the story in an approachable, conversational tone that may have you laughing out loud at some parts. As horrendous as it is watching how far he would go and how morally low he would sink to get more drugs, itâ€™s difficult not to marvel at his ingenuity and boldness.

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