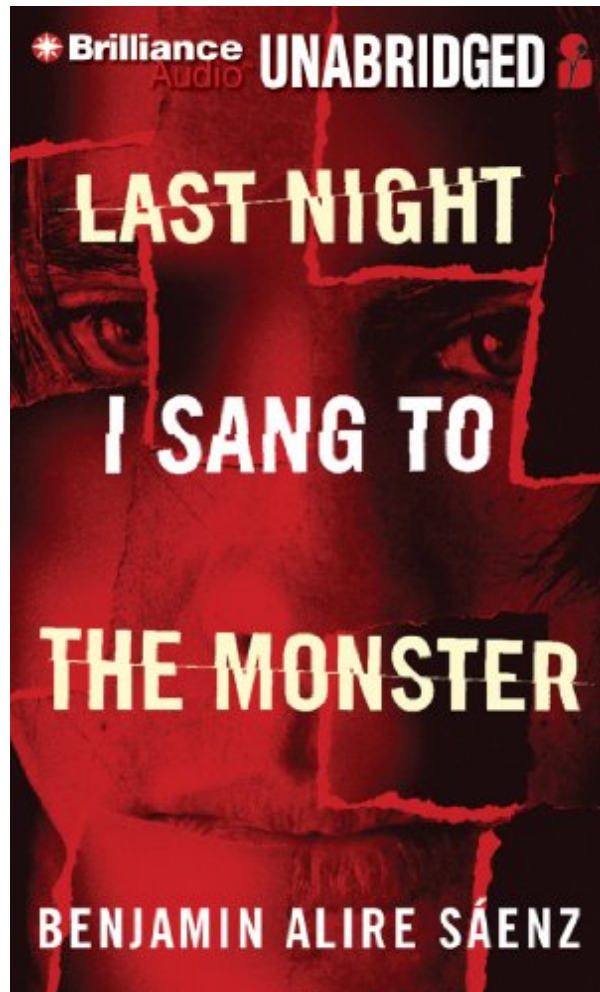
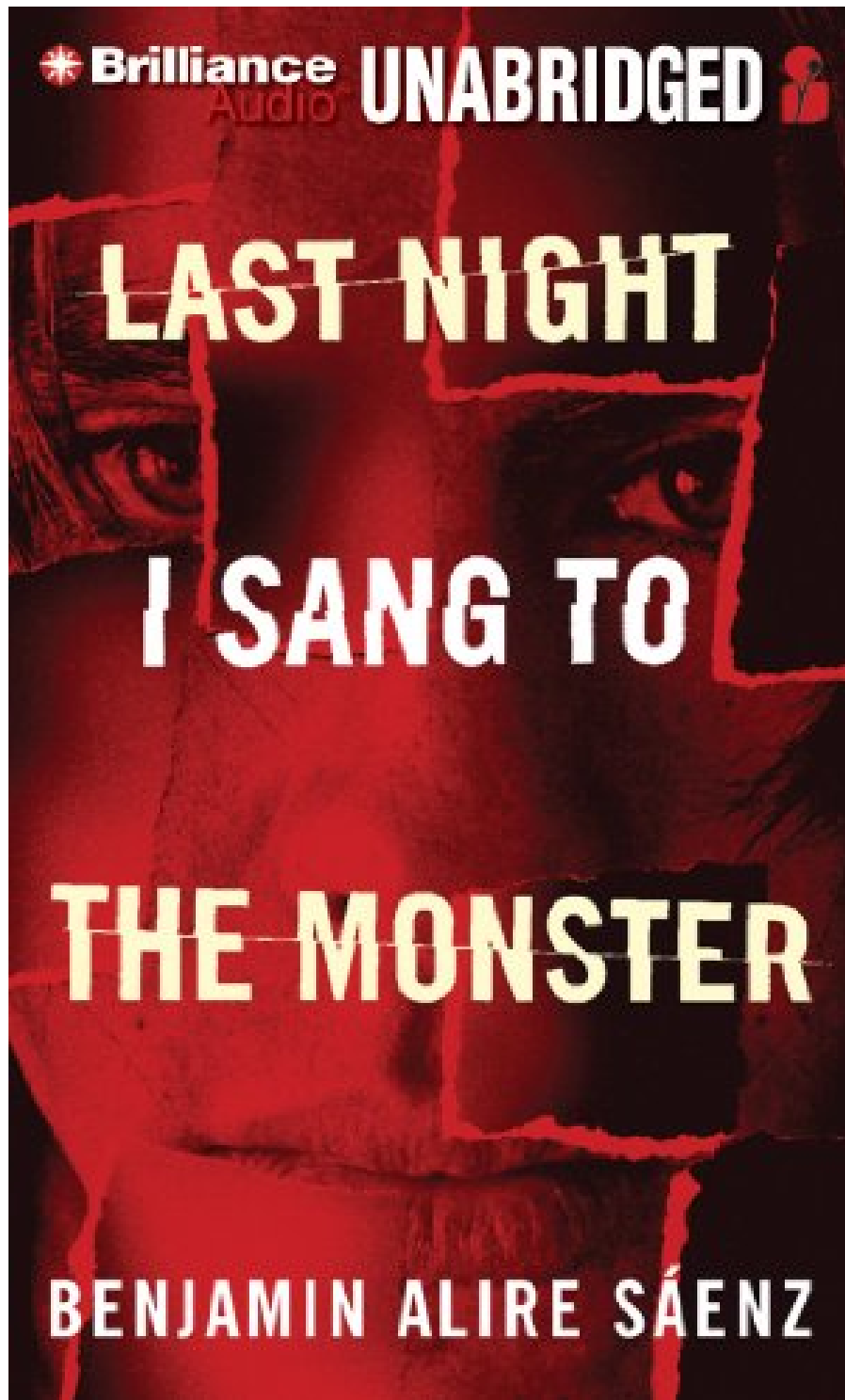


**LAST NIGHT I SANG TO THE MONSTER BY
BENJAMIN ALIRE SáENZ**



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Zach is a senior but he's in rehab instead of high school. He doesn't remember how he got there. Remembering sucks and being alive — well, what's up with that? I have it in my head that when we're born, God writes things down on our hearts. See, on some people's hearts he writes happy and on some people's hearts he writes sad and on some people's hearts he writes crazy and on some people's hearts he writes genius and on some people's hearts he writes angry and on some people's hearts he writes winner and on some people's hearts he writes loser. It's all like a game to him. Him. God. And it's all pretty much random. He takes out his pen and starts writing on our blank hearts. When it came to my turn, he wrote sad. I don't like God very much. Apparently, he doesn't like me very much either. —Zach Benjamin Alire Sáenz' new novel is a gift of honesty and poetry and heart. Zach is a beautiful young man who desperately wants to forget the unforgettable. In order to deal with his addiction, he must first deal with his lost childhood. Sáenz has created one of the most unique and heartfelt friendships I've ever encountered in literature, and it's through this friendship that Zach ultimately discovers his voice. This novel sang to me from the opening page and never once hit a false note. — Matt de la Peña I cried with Zach all the way through this book: tears of rage and sorrow — sometimes laughing though — and finally, tears of hope and joy. Thanks to Ben Sáenz' pitch-perfect writing, Zach will stay in my heart for a long time. —Linda Sue Park

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Most helpful customer reviews

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful.

A Great Addition to Literature for Young People

By Eric Selby

For several years I worked in a therapeutic setting for male juvenile sex offenders. What a gift this book would have been back then. Before I launch into my accolades, let me state that there are elements of this book that many adults may find to be lacking in authenticity. In other words, Zach at times says things that I know someone with his troubled mind would not say. Most certainly he would not have finished this program as quickly as he does in the novel.

But remember this: the book was not written for adults although I highly recommend for adults. The other reviews provide you with information about where Zach is and why he is there. So I will not do that. Instead I want to focus upon why we need more books like this. Millions of kids grow up in hostile homes. And so much damage is done by parents who do not have the skills needed to be effective parents. Most situations are not as overwhelming as Zach's, of course, with his many addictions as well as his seeming inability to relate to anyone, to trust anyone. The reader, however, will not know the full reason until the end. In other words there is a plot.

The book is very engaging, skillfully written albeit not exactly authentic in the voice of an 18-year-old in a few places. I quite literally did not want to put it down. So I spent the entire day reading it. And now I am about to order three copies as gifts to people I think will find it a rich experience.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

This is not a great piece of literature but it is a good book ...

By Michael Bledsoe

This is not a great piece of literature but it is a good book nonetheless. I was weary by some of the same material treaded over and over again but very much valued having a window into the process and experience of an addict in rehab who came to terms with his addiction. It is tender but the reason why Zach is thrown into rehab is just too darn extreme. I don't want to give away the ending so that is about as clear as I can be about that. And that ending or overall context for how he ends up in rehab actually takes his family off the hook for their contribution to his addiction. Anyway, I really did value it for the insight into how brave someone has to be to counter their "demons."

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Not going to forget this one any time soon

By Sirius

I bought this book after I fell in love with his writing in "Aristotle and Dante discover secrets of the universe". I knew that this book was not a romance (really I do read a lot of books in other genres :)), but subject matter hinted strongly that I need to be in the appropriate mood before starting this one. So it stayed in my TBR for few months, but yesterday I picked it up and I could not put it down, literally. I think this novel is another proof of the obvious - good writer can make any subject interesting and engaging. Not that I have not read about enough traumatized people in m/m romance novels (this book is NOT a romance of any kind), but I do not remember recently (or ever) reading a book which is devoted to the recovery from addiction almost exclusively and we are deeply in the head of Zach's (the narrator). Zach is in rehab and trying to recover from the alcoholic addiction. He does not remember how he got there (or he does not want to remember) and the story also deals with him slowly allowing himself to remember the other trauma he experienced. He interacts with his roommates, his therapist, he also has a lot of imaginary conversations :), and this is pretty much all that happens in this book and I loved being an observer of that. It is a very character oriented book.

It is very painful being in Zach's head, but it also raw, honest and very exhilarating to see him slowly moving to the better place in his life. There are no guarantees that he won't relapse to drinking, there are no guarantees of anything, but we can see that he has a good chance of having more and more good days .

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