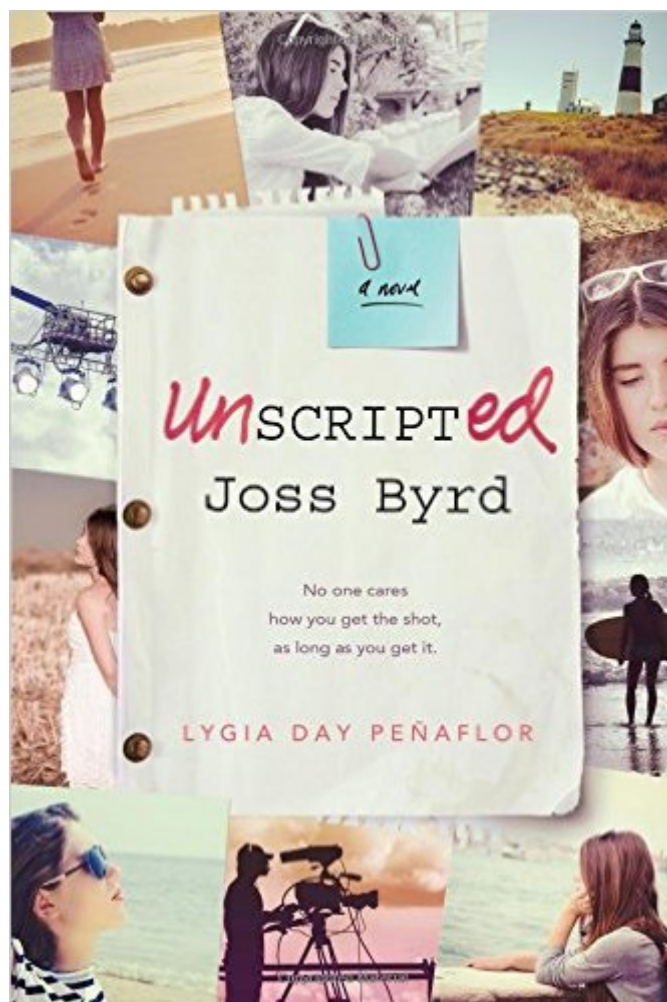


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Unscripted Joss Byrd: A Novel



Synopsis

Hollywood critics agree. Joss Byrd is "fiercely emotional," a young actress with "complete conviction," and a "powerhouse." Joss Byrd is America's most celebrated young actress, but on the set of her latest project, a gritty indie film called *The Locals*, Joss's life is far from glamorous. While struggling with her mother's expectations, a crush on her movie brother, and a secret that could end her career, Joss must pull off a performance worthy of a star. When her renowned, charismatic director demands more than she is ready to deliver, Joss must go off-script to stay true to herself.

Book Information

Hardcover: 224 pages

Publisher: Roaring Brook Press (August 23, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1626723699

ISBN-13: 978-1626723696

Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 0.9 x 8.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (8 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #665,876 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #51 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Performing Arts > Film](#) #241 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Physical & Emotional Abuse](#) #523 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Self Esteem & Reliance](#)

Age Range: 12 - 18 years

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

It's no surprise that the author of *UNSCRIPTED JOSS BYRD* has spent years working in the movie business and knows her way around stars, sets and scripts. Because this book lifts the veil of false glamour that's so carefully draped over the harsh realities of what it actually means to be a "child star". But not in a gritty way, or a simplistic one. This book is delicately balanced and told in a true, clear voice. The story takes us through the final days of a movie shoot, and into the world of Joss Byrd, a talented twelve-year-old actress who somehow manages to rise above the harsh lessons life keeps teaching her. Time and again, she's used by the adults around her for profit or as an emotional prop, but she hangs on to her sense of self and keeps going. Joss holds herself apart from the other kids on set (including the very interesting 14-year-old guy who plays her older brother

in the film) in order to keep a secret she's ashamed of. Her single mother, Viva, has manipulated Joss by subtly cultivating that shame, to keep Joss obedient and stuck working nonstop at acting in order to keep them financially afloat. (Shockingly, we learn that the parent of a child actor can keep all but 15% of that child's earnings.) The character of Viva in this book made me glad that I'm not the kind of person who would hunt someone's mother down and beat the *** out of her. (And I'm lucky Viva is fictional, so even if I were tempted, I couldn't.) Can you tell how real these characters became to me as I read this? Not a single one is over-drawn or stereotyped. The author manages to withhold judgment on Viva's behavior and a host of other strange, Hollywood-specific behaviors, letting us make the judgments ourselves. There is plenty of dramatic material in this book, but the author doesn't dramatize it: a nuanced difference that's key to what makes the story shine so brightly. And shine it does. Slowly, Joss comes to some empowering realizations over the course of the novel. She takes realistic action--circumscribed by her age and her inherent niceness--that lets the reader know Joss is going to make it. She's going to be more than all right; she's going to grow out of the people around her and triumph in life. A fast-paced, immersive read with a protagonist you can love and root for! I highly recommend it for Upper Middle Grade through Young Adult. (14 and up)

Wow! What a character! What a story! Joss Byrd is a rising young film star with loads of natural talent, a desperate need to work, and a secret. While on location of her latest movie, she panics over the script - that changes daily - until the plot thickens off-screen and she's faced with the biggest decision of her career. *UNSCRIPTED JOSS BYRD* is a story of family, friendships, and Hollywood, and most importantly, a fresh, lovable character who finds a way to be true to herself. Highly recommend!

3.5/5 *Unscripted Joss Byrd* is author Lygia Day Peñaflor's debut novel. I found *Unscripted Joss Byrd* to be a very interesting read. One that I don't see too much of in young adult literature. I think the fact that the novel draws on Lygia's firsthand experience as a teacher for young Hollywood stars adds a level of credibility that made me feel like what I was reading was part expose and part fiction. I consider *Unscripted Joss Byrd* to be young adult fiction because of the maturity and nature of some of the situations and themes, however the main character is a little on the young side. I think I would have preferred Joss to have been a couple of years older. In the end, it worked out alright because I think Hollywood ages you so much that you end up being older than your years, but that was my main hold back with the story. What I loved the most about *Unscripted*

Joss Byrd was that I felt like we were given a special sneak peak into the private lives of a famous actress. It was like being a fly on the wall in the life of Joss. The story had a very realistic feel to it. Lygia Day Peñaflor holds no punches with *Unscripted Joss Byrd*. When there is a dark underbelly in Hollywood, Lygia Day Peñaflor exposes it for what it is. But at the, I don't feel like she over exaggerated anything or created any drama for drama's sake. I feel like she stuck to what the true ugly facts of the industry are. And I appreciated that. At least, I felt like she did. (But what do I know.)Bottom line: If you like your contemporary reads with some grit and real-worldness, *Unscripted Joss Byrd* is the book for you. I really enjoyed this one, and Joss Byrd is a great young adult voice.*Disclaimer- I got a copy of this book for free in exchange for my honest review. I was not compensated for my thoughts.

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