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**On sale: February 4, 2014**

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## 13-YEAR-OLD DEBUT AUTHOR JAKE MARCIONETTE PENS HUMOROUS MIDDLE GRADE NOVEL, PERFECT FOR RELUCTANT BOY READERS

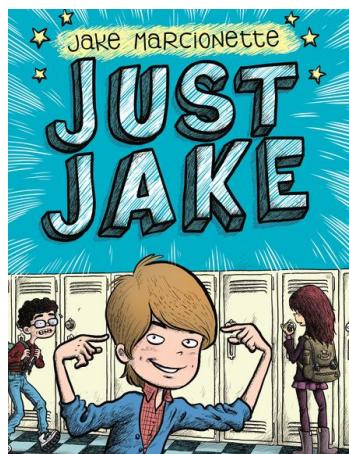
### ADVANCE PRAISE FOR JUST JAKE

"Jake's youthful exuberance shines through and keeps the story speeding ahead."  
– Publishers Weekly

"Aimed directly at fans of series like *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*...Jake's first-person narrative looks and feels like a sixth-grader's real-time memoir, complete with water stains, doodles and examples of Jake's signature Kid Cards...An eye-catching read."

– Kirkus Reviews

## JUST JAKE By Jake Marcionette



Penguin Young Reader Group is thrilled to publish 13-year-old **Jake Marcionette**'s debut novel for middle grade readers, **JUST JAKE** (on sale February 4, 2014; Grosset & Dunlap; Ages 8-12; 160 pages; \$11.99). This based-on-true-life story was written and contracted when Marcionette was only twelve. The author felt there were too few books available that effectively hooked young boy readers, so he created his own. Marcionette brings his authentic voice and humor to each page where they are sure to resonate with young readers.

**JUST JAKE** introduces readers to sixth-grader Jake Ali Mathews whose life is turned upside down when his family moves from Florida to Maryland. Jake has to adapt to a new school and make friends while staying under the radar of the school bully. Jake has always profiled the kids at school using his hand-made "Kid Cards," so when he arrives at his new school, Jake starts building a new collection. But what happens when the school bully decides Jake is next in line for annihilation and his Kid Cards get into the wrong hands? Jake may have to stand up to his bully after all.

\*Over\*

**JUST JAKE** is a full-color novel filled with fun illustrations and photos that make the book look like Jake's journal or blog. Jake believes that kids can pursue their dreams at a young age, and he hopes to encourage other children to do so.

**Jake Marcionette** was just twelve years old when he wrote **JUST JAKE**. He's now in eighth grade and lives with his family in Florida. In addition to writing, Jake loves playing lacrosse, basketball and annoying his big sister, Alexis. A second book in the **JUST JAKE** series is planned for February 2015.

**JUST JAKE**  
**By Jake Marcionette**

On sale February 4, 2014; Grosset & Dunlap; Ages 8-12; 160 pages; \$11.99

Penguin Random House (<http://global.penguinrandomhouse.com/>) is the world's most global trade book publisher. It was formed on July 1, 2013, upon the completion of an agreement between Bertelsmann and Pearson to merge their respective trade publishing companies, Random House and Penguin, with the parent companies owning 53% and 47%, respectively. Penguin Random House comprises the adult and children's fiction and nonfiction print and digital trade book publishing businesses of Penguin and Random House in the U.S., U.K., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India and South Africa, and Penguin's trade publishing activity in Asia and Brazil; DK worldwide; and Penguin Random House Grupo Editorial's Spanish-language companies in Spain, Mexico, Argentina, Uruguay, Colombia, and Chile. Penguin Random House employs more than 10,000 people globally across almost 250 editorially and creatively independent imprints and publishing houses that collectively publish more than 15,000 new titles annually. Its publishing lists include more than 70 Nobel Prize laureates and hundreds of the world's most widely read authors.

# The Detroit News

Date: Monday, January 13, 2014  
Location: DETROIT, MI  
Circulation (DMA): 90,916 (11)  
Type (Frequency): Newspaper (D)  
Page: 1  
Section: E-Edition  
Keyword: Penguin Young Readers Group

## Teen writers discover success in publishing

*Many put out their own books, some do it the traditional way*

BY HEIDI STEVENS  
Chicago Tribune

Jake Marcionette was never much of a reader.

"My mom always screamed at me to read, but I never really enjoyed it," says the 13-year-old, lacrosse-playing Maryland resident — whose debut novel just got picked up by Penguin.

"A lot of middle school books are too babyish," he says. "Almost Disney-like. They talk down to the reader and dumb things down. They don't take on enough day-to-day stuff, like bullies."

Marcionette channeled his frustration into "Just Jake," a 160-page middle school story about Jake Ali Matthews, a sixth-grader struggling to adjust to a new school and fly under the radar of a bully.

"I feel like I can really capture middle school because I experience it every day," he says. "It's loosely based on my life."

"Just Jake," scheduled for a February release, is part of a growing collection of books by teen authors — some published through traditional houses, many of them self-published — that represent, in many ways, what it means to be a contemporary teenager.

"It's no secret that disseminating the written word is so simple these days," says Amy Pelman, digital services manager for the Arlington Heights (Ill.) Memorial Library, who writes for The Hub, the Young Adult Library Services Association's blog. "It's kind of a natural progression for this modern type of writing — blogging, websites — to attempt to be part of the traditional publishing world."

"Published books," Pelman continues, "are perceived as having their own kind of authority and quality, and they also enjoy the possibility of becoming a blockbuster. So just as some teens dream of becoming famous pop stars, some dream of becoming famous authors."

Katherine Ewell, an 18-year-old freshman at Stanford University, just landed a deal with HarperCollins for an April release of her debut novel, "Dear Killer," the story of fictional, 17-year-old serial killer Kit Ward.

Dystopian fantasies make up a large chunk of the stories teens are churning out, says young adult novelist Stephanie Morrill, who runs a website called Go Teen Writers ([go-teenwriters.blogspot.com](http://go-teenwriters.blogspot.com)).

"These teens grew up reading Harry Potter," Morrill says. "For a lot of them, writing is an escape from a mundane life. If you're going to escape, why not create a really unique story world you can escape to?"

Such as the world of Ewell's Kit Ward, who chooses her prey through letters and cash that arrive in a secret mailbox. "I've been writing for a lot of years," Ewell says. "'Dear Killer' is something like my eighth book."

She found the agent who led her to HarperCollins through her previous book, "Bloodline of Queens," a science-fiction tale that became a semifinalist in Amazon's 2011 Breakthrough Novel Award contest.

Morrill, who wrote "The Reinvention of Skylar Hoyt" (Revell) and "The Revised Life of Ellie Sweet" (Playlist), teamed up with fellow author Jill Williamson, best known for the "Blood of Kings" trilogy (Marcher Lord Press), to create Go Teen Writers. The site encourages and instructs teens throughout the writing and publishing process.

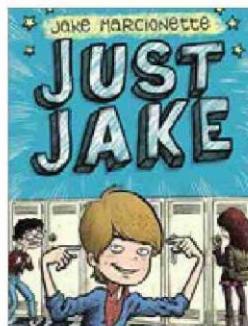
Morrill was inspired to launch the site after fielding repeated how-do-I-get-published questions from her teen readers.

"My advice is always, 'Go to a writers conference; take some classes; pay a professional editor to give you a really good critique,'" she says. "I was so focused on being published when I was a teenager that I didn't realize how much I needed feedback that wasn't from my parents, who thought I was wonderful."

This isn't to say that books by teens aren't any good. Lest we forget, S.E. Hinton was just 18 when she finished writing the coming-of-age novel "The Outsiders," first published in 1967 by Viking Press.

"Teens like and respect stuff that their peers like and respect," says Pelman. "They're not super trusting of the stuff that adults are into."

Look no further than Marcionette, who is already at work on a "Just Jake" sequel. "When I finished 'Just Jake,' I thought it was really good," he says. "I thought it was a lot better than the stuff my mom had been handing me to read."



"Just Jake" is by 13-year-old Jake Marcionette.