



## Clarion Review

Biography

### **Spizzerinktum: The Rapturous Delight of Growing Up American**

Delmar S. Powell

978-1-4259-2297-9

Five Stars (out of Five)

Spizzerinktum? “Dad I can’t find that word in the dictionary at school where did you hear it?” asked Kenny.

“Why I didn’t hear it anywhere Kenny. I just made it up because you boys are so full of pep vim and vinegar and a lot of spunk!” Dad smiled cheerfully.

*Spizzerinktum: The Rapturous Delight of Growing Up American* is the exuberant account of the life of the Powells a family with strong Quaker and Baptist roots. The story of their lives is told through the eyes of Delmar the youngest of three mischievous brothers and more siblings as they arrive.

The story begins with a fascinating account of the Powell family from Wales to the “New World” sharing charming bits of folklore of the Welch. For instance the way the original Powell family located an inn was through a fifty-six letter Welsh word that included each of the landmarks surrounding the destination. The story continues as the Powells move to Texas open a music store and weathering the Great Depression as a family.

The boys are high-spirited and the reader will be drawn into their antics...tying strings to animate dead snakes as a surprise (and almost surprising their grandmother to death!) taking swims in pools infested with bugs learning to become excellent swimmers what it means to be “tough Texans” and eventually fine men serving in WWII.

The Powell brothers are raised in a strict but loving atmosphere where even the phrase “gee whiz” is forbidden for its similarity to sacred words. The Powell parents are constantly shown guiding and educating the children with unstinting devotion.

Author Delmar S. Powell a former Law Enforcement Chaplain and missionary in Africa has a gift for drawing a picture of his world with clarity. He does not shy from details even when they are less than pleasant. The reader will be disturbed to find the family’s way of dealing with unwanted kittens involved a stump and an axe. The boys are extremely forthright

and goodhearted but one gets the impression that they could be on the most wanted poster for the ASPCA.

Fascinating details abound with every page. At times it's like looking into an entirely different world. For example Powell describes a "roller coaster for cars" where families would take their cars on a wooden contraption that would simulate the undulations of a roller coaster...until their third go-around when they find a family ahead of them had somehow broken through the wooden planks falling to severe injury or the time the family horse saves the author's baby sister from drowning...to the young adult Powell hugging a fifteen-year-old girl (her first from a beau) his America's basic innocence is touching and beautiful.

Powell's writing style is refreshingly simple which suits the pace and content of the book beautifully. One truly feels the imprint of a younger less complicated world; reading "Spizzerinktum" is guaranteed a fascinating journey back in time.