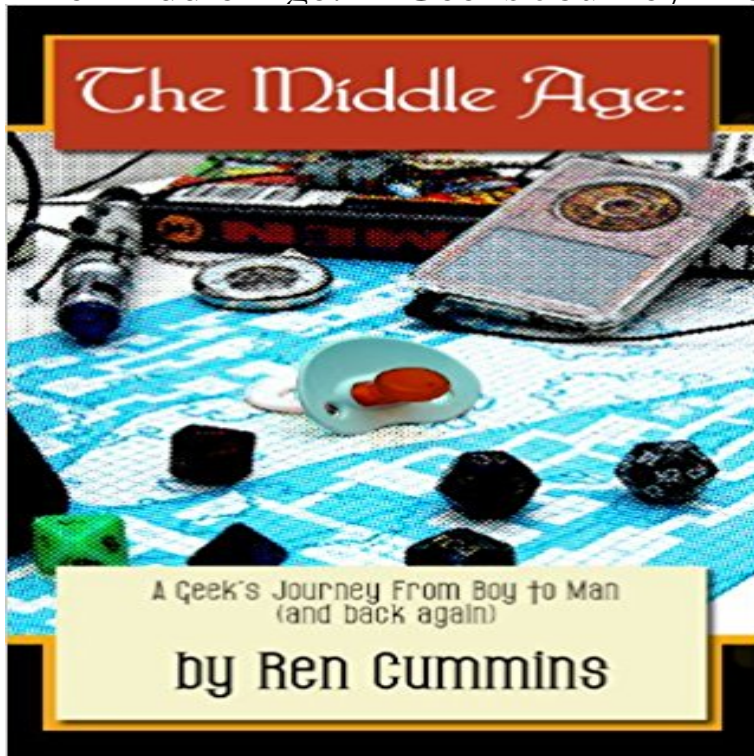


# The Middle Age: A Geeks Journey From Boy to Man (and back again)



Author and musician Ren Cummins shifts gears into a bit of more or less non-fiction with a chronicle of a real-life young man who wakes up to confront the reality of mid-life; finding himself in the midst of his thirties with relatively no idea how he managed to get there. Or, more seriously, on some of the challenges facing a once and future geek as he examines the reality of being a father while still enjoying the simple pleasures of childhood, and living off a diet of 100% all-purpose pop culture. Culled from his personal journals and a smattering of online commentaries, Ren describes the process of shifting gears from young man to husband and father and the enthusiastic elements of juggling youthful optimism and the maturity essential to helping raise the next generation of full-functional bright and shining geek warriors. The Middle Age: A Geek's Journey from Boy to Man (and Back Again), Book 1, covers topics from Growing up to Fatherhood, all painted with the colors of a man who once stood in line all day to watch the original Star Wars. Or, make that twice â€“ more than twenty years between each time. Sample: Its not that I was sick any more or less often as a child, I didnt break any bones, and I didnt spend the night in the hospital from the time I was born until sometime in my twenties. All that aside, some of the strongest memories I have as a child were when I was sick with something or another. My earliest recollectable (? is that a word? Well, it is now.) dream was when

I had a fever, and in the dream I was so warm that my parents placed me on a block of ice, which I melted clean through - only to awaken with the fever gone. But I also remember the absolute and undeniable power in my parents telling me Its going to be all right. One of the worst bits of that came every Christmas vacation for like 3 or 4 years straight when I was like 5 through 8 or 9. Every year, Santa would give me an ear infection. I dont know why it was so consistent, but you could pretty much write a calendar by it. Whatd you get for Christmas, Ren? I got to lay on my side with hydrogen peroxide in my ears. I got a remote controlled sports car! You suck. Oh yeah. Good times. So anyway, here we are, some 30 years later, and my daughter now gets them. Two years in a row now, but both times right around Christmas. What the hell, anyway? So let me point out a fact, here. Nothing - NOTHING - frightens me in life more than seeing that little girl get sick. And a lot gives me a bit of fear in life, let me throw that out there. Not the kind of bone-chilling fear which fills your bowels with ice, or removes all power of thought or speech. I honestly dont get that kind of fear, as far as I can remember. (Ive got a bit of claustrophobia, a bit of altaphobia, and a healthy amount of hydrophobia, but I consider those just self-preservational phobias, like fear of drinking poison, or something) [note: I keep looking at the word altaphobia and wanting to spell it Altophobia, which I can only assume to be the illogical fear of women who cant sing in the upper octaves?] But something about seeing Jillie lay there, sick, makes me more afraid

than anything Ive ever felt. How did my parents muster up the absolute certainty that it would be okay? How was it so potent, this confidence, that it brushed all my five-year-old fear away, and left me to calmly await the healing process? Jillie was sick this weekend - which is why Ive been so quiet the past few days - and Ive had to revisit this sensation. Fear. I know shell be fine. I do. I dont know quite how I know these things - certainly, whatever extrasensory gifts Ive had have never really crossed into precognition - but I know that there are few things Ive ever NEEDED to be more true than this. The Middle Age, volume 1, is a 40,000+ word collection of articles about growing up, becoming a parent, but remaining a bit of a geek.

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