It is the year 1990 in South Africa. Nelson Mandela had just been let out of jail and the story *Spud* is being told by a 13-year-old boy named John "Spud" Milton. He writes in his diary all about his first year at a boys-only private boarding school in Durban, South Africa. With lunatic parents and a loopy grandmother, Spud has his hands full trying to act normal, but when he meets who consist of his house for boarding school, he finds that some people are just as insane. His dormitory (known as the Crazy Eight) consists of John "Spud" Milton, Robert "Rambo" Black, Charlie "Mad Dog" Hooper, Henry "Gecko" Barker, Alan "Boggo" Greenstien, Vern "Rain Man" Blackadder, Simon Brown, and Sidney "Fatty" Smitherson-Scott. Throughout the year the Crazy Eight become close. Doing many crazy things like illegal night swimming, world record farting contests, horrible fights, and a ton more. Also when Spud meets a girl named Debbie or as he calls her "the Mermaid" she becomes his first girlfriend. But when he meets a different girl named Amanda who goes to the girls-only boarding school, he wonders if he is in love with her, too. Will the Crazy Eights make it through the year without getting expelled for doing all their crazy ideas and stunts? Will Spud fall in love with Amanda or still love Mermaid?

The book is packed with many exciting parts and you will want to keep reading more even after you finish. I really liked this book because it had very good adventures and just when I thought it couldn't get any more suspenseful and exciting, it did. If you like comedies, adventures, suspense, and mystery, then this is a good book for you. But if you are the kind of person who likes to read slower, less action-packed, more serious kinds of books, *Spud* would probably not be for you. It is a book with many hilarious and wild parts.

Right from the beginning, John Van De Ruit will have you wanting to read more and more. The book is very detailed and doesn't leave anything out. When you read it, you feel like you're actually in the book. For example, when the Crazy Eights went on an illegal night swim, the way that it was told made me feel like I was there in the pitch black darkness running and jumping into the chilled water. After the swim, the Crazy Eights got chased by the dogs sent out by the security guards. Mad Dog shot his slingshot at the dogs and the way the author described the sound of the slingshot being shot and the dog howling, I almost thought I could hear it. The characters in the book also make it very fun to read because they are all different and so interesting that you want to meet them in person. For example I would I would want to meet Mad Dog because he comes up with crazy things to do and he is fierce and ruthless. I don't think there was anything that I didn't like about the book. Spud is a very good book and if I had to recommend this to somebody or more than one person I would tell them to read it.