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The Running Dream



Synopsis

The acclaimed author of *Flipped* delivers a powerful and healing story that's perfect for the millions who watch the Olympics or anyone who's ever thought that something was impossible. Readers will revel in the story of a girl who puts herself back together and learns to dream bigger than ever before after she's told she'll never run again. Jessica thinks her life is over when she loses a leg in a car accident. She's not comforted by the news that she'll be able to walk with the help of a prosthetic leg. Who cares about walking when you live to run? As she struggles to cope with crutches and a first cyborg-like prosthetic, Jessica feels oddly both in the spotlight and invisible. People who don't know what to say, act like she's not there. Which she could handle better if she weren't now keenly aware that she'd done the same thing herself to a girl with CP named Rosa. A girl who is going to tutor her through all the math she's missed. A girl who sees right into the heart of her. With the support of family, friends, a coach, and her track teammates, Jessica may actually be able to run again. But that's not enough for her now. She doesn't just want to cross finish lines herself—she wants to take Rosa with her. Winner of the Schneider Family Book Award

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars See all reviews (336 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #220,778 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #64 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Special Needs #203 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Sports #270 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Special Needs

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

You know how it is when you wake up in the morning and sigh...you have to go to work at a place

that makes you ill, or you have to face down a bill collector, or spend hours in your home trying to work and take care of your child while outside your next door neighbors are playing music so loud it could wake the dead. Or maybe you can't sleep because of the aches and pains or the icy wind blowing against the window, and you wish your life could be better? I'm guilty of this; I'm guilty of cussing or crying, sighing or grumbling...but what if it was worse? What if I really had something to complain about? I don't. I get up every day on two good legs, with minor aches and pains maybe, but able to walk out the door and follow my dream. This is a book that shows us what real troubles are, and how someone can overcome the fact that they have lost the destiny that they were shooting for with their whole heart, body, mind, and soul. Jessica Carlisle has a gift - she can run like the wind and win race after race for her team. She's so good, in fact, that she's looking at winning gold medals in the Olympics when she gets older. Not only is she good at running, she loves it. There is nothing like the power - the "whoosh" - as her feet glide across the asphalt to people cheering. In that world she is Queen; in that world everything else makes sense. After a meet one day, where she has set a record almost impossible to achieve, Jessica is sitting on the bus with her friends when the crash comes. The lights go out and when they blink back on, she's in a hospital bed. She has a mother crying beside her; flowers on the table telling her to Get Well; a father who is angry and pacing the floor ready to take out the fates that have hurt his little girl; and, a cheery doctor who can say nothing more than 'you're healing well...you're fine...everything will get better...' and smiling like Jessica should feel like she's just won the lottery. A smile that says forget about the fact that one of your legs is gone, at least you have your life. What life? Her whole future has been taken away from her. Her leg was smashed under a tangled piece of metal while others escaped with only cuts and bruises. Jessica is mad...beyond mad. Why her? The story that follows hits you right between the eyes. Not a standard drama, the author writes her pages from Jessica's own mind, showing readers the steps of depression, anger, and the torrent of emotions that happen to someone when life becomes brutally unfair. The power that Jessica shows, the courage and bravery that comes upon her when she realizes that it's not over and there's no way the devil who made this happen is going to win, makes for one of the most powerful stories I've read in a long time. Jessica's best friend, the boy she's always loved from afar, the support of her parents, schoolmates, and coach, as well as a young freshman in a wheelchair named Rosa who becomes a large part of Jessica's life, all come together to make a story that the reader WANTS to read. Not because of the lessons taught, mind you, but because Jessica's life, while tragic at first, turns into a fun, enjoyable read about friendship and starting over. I hope this book goes straight to the top where it belongs...and I will try never to whine again. I will chase my dream until the lights turn out

for good no matter what stands in my way or is thrown at me. Jessica is a fantastic role model for children and adults to simply keep going and, no matter what, doing what you love. Bravo!Until Next Time,Amy, Bookpleasures.com Reviewer

The Running Dream is very inspirational, and I love books that make me feel, think and moves my heart.Jessica is a great narrator- she has a concise voice, and I like how the emotion comes out in this book. It is fictional, but it all feels real. From the details, the emotions, the responses of friends and family, down to financial matters.I love the message that comes through both Jessica and Rose- do not see the disability- see the person. I love that even though Jessica has her own physical problems, she must overcome her prejudices and notions with Rose.This is a great story and I recommend it

We were introduced to the book this year as it is on a list of suggested summer reading choices for my soon to be 7th grader. A friend read and recommended it to my daughter, who then bought it. Three days later, she came to me and insisted I read it too. I am very glad I did, as it is a well written story about facing adversity, understanding matters bigger than oneself, and overcoming obstacles.Jessica, the main character, loses part of her leg after a car accident. At sixteen, that alone would be very difficult to cope with; however, Jessica is a fast runner on the track team, and to lose her leg makes her feel like she has lost her freedom. The book is in five parts, with very short chapters in each section, so it moves along at a very quick pace. The story opens with Jessica facing the reality of not having a leg and continues with her going through different stages of denial, anger, acceptance, and ultimately resolve. She has some supportive friends, a realistic family, and doctors who care but don't always know how to express themselves well to a teenage girl. Along the way to her recovery, Jessica learns more about herself, her fortitude, and her character than she ever expected. The author does an excellent job taking the reader along on the journey.This review is vague, because I don't want to share too much about the plot and inadvertently give away a spoiler. Suffice it to say, the book is great for middle school and high school students. There is no inappropriate language or behaviors, and the lessons learned will be relevant to the 11-17 year old age group. As an adult, I also found it meaningful and am glad my daughter suggested I read it.

As a lifetime runner, I understand the feel of freedom that running gives you and I can't imagine not being able to run any more(although riding a horse is quite the high too). Well written, and believable, we join Jessica on the worst day of her life. She has just set a record for the 400 at her

high school, when the school bus is hit by an uninsured driver's truck and Jessica wakes up in a hospital with a doctor telling her how lucky she is. Jessica feels anything but lucky since her dream of running is now over. Even when she considers the death of her teammate, Jessica feels as if she died to, or at least her dream did. With the help of her friends and family, Jessica goes from denial, to depression, to learning to live again in a different way, but just as fulfilling. She learns more about herself and how she took being healthy and popular for granted until her life fell apart. As she regains her life, Jessica wants to help another girl, Rosa, fulfill her lifelong dream. As Jessica heals, she brings another girl with her into a life that is fuller than the one Jessica had lived previously. A great book to show how even the worst things that happen to us can give us unexpected gifts. Jessica is a great character that I'm sure young girls will relate to and inspire to be like. Highly recommended.

Flipped, also written by Van Draanen, was the first of her works that I read. She is quickly becoming one of my favorite authors. In addition to Flipped and The Running Dream, I've read Swear to Howdy, and The Runaway. These books are insightful and inspirational without being over the top. I teach fifth grade, and though written for older children, might read this to a more mature class.

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