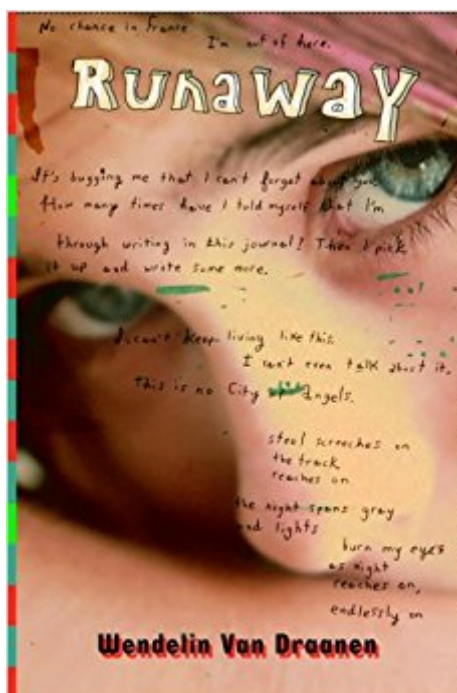


The book was found

Runaway



Synopsis

"It's a cold, hard, cruel fact that my mother loved heroin more than she loved me." Holly is in her fifth foster home in two years and she's had enough. She's run away before and always been caught quickly. But she's older and wiser now--she's twelve--and this time she gets away clean. Through tough and tender and angry and funny journal entries, Holly spills out her story. We travel with her across the country--hopping trains, scamming food, sleeping in parks or homeless encampments. And we also travel with her across the gaping holes in her heart--as she finally comes to terms with her mother's addiction and death. *Runaway* is a remarkably uplifting portrait of a girl still young and stubborn and naive enough to hold out hope for finding a better place in the world, and within herself, to be.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 740L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 256 pages

Publisher: Knopf Books for Young Readers; 1st edition (September 12, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0375835229

ISBN-13: 978-0375835223

Product Dimensions: 5.9 x 1 x 8.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 70 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #782,494 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #92 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Runaways](#) #106 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Dysfunctional Relationships](#) #157 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Runaways](#)

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Grade 6-8 Readers won't look at homeless people in quite the same way after meeting Holly and seeing her through five long months on her own. An urban, female version of Gary Paulsen's *Hatchet* (Macmillan, 1986), this novel chronicles the daily struggle for food, shelter, safety, and cleanliness that becomes the focus of life once a home and income are stripped away. Twelve-year-old Holly knows a lot about living on the streets, since she lived that life with her

drug-addicted mother before the woman's death from an overdose. She determines that it is preferable to continuing in her abusive foster home. A journal provided by a compassionate teacher is where she records her lonely and difficult struggle for survival. While the plot has the occasional convenience, readers will be drawn to the gripping details of both physical and emotional landmines hidden in the ordinariness of everyday life. This is a great book to hand-sell or booktalk to young teens who enjoy a dose of emotional trauma in their fiction or for reluctant readers who need suspense to keep them turning the pages. Van Draanen has shown great versatility in adding another dimension to her already respected body of work.

—Faith Brautigam, Gail Borden Public Library, Elgin, IL Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From May until November, Holly writes in her journal, by turns fierce, angry, scared, heartbroken, defiant. Her teacher gave Holly the journal in the hopes of allowing her to work through her mother's overdose and stays in a succession of foster homes. But Holly has more immediate issues--hunger and shelter and not being cold. Running away again from an abusive foster family, she makes her way by stealth and cunning to Los Angeles. She writes poetry in her journal, too--vivid and wired poems that it seems a smart 12-year-old actually could write. She refuses to see herself as homeless, but as a gypsy, making a home where she can--libraries and schools are among her favorite places to hide. As her situation gets increasingly desperate, readers long for Holly to find a bath and a hot meal and someone to care for her. The ending of this taut, powerful story seems possible and deeply hopeful.

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This book is one of the BEST teen novels I have ever read. I got it for my neighbor who is 13 to read. She has told me many times that she wants to "runaway" and that life would be so much better than the home situation she lives in with her guardian Aunt and Uncle. After reading this, and seeing the real struggles that the author wrote about gave her something really hard to think about. I recommend parents get this book for any tween to read. I am a retired teacher after 26 years and this is a great teaching tool for children from 10-18. We need more novels written like this one that "teaches" children by example, and not shaking a finger at them. Ms. Van Draanen did an awesome job writing this one. I have just ordered *The Running Dream*.

Okay, I will admit, I am not a runaway, nor have I ever been in the system. But, I can admit I can still

relate to Holly, my mom was just like hers, a drug addict. That's not the only thing you can relate to in this book, you can relate to feeling trapped, and being confused and scared, wondering what's gonna happen next, and if you'll ever find home, or a family- and pretending not to care about all these feelings inside you. The book translates the sides of Holly's personality perfectly, the "I don't care and I'm tough as nails" side and the "I do care and I'm a dreamer" side, you see this perfectly in the book, you see Holly and how she grows up, matures and faces her demons- both inside and out. Van Draanen also manages to catch Holly's childish side, but not in a "I love fun and games" way but in the "I wish this could happen" way, it really makes you feel for the character, and even though I will admit, it's below my reading level, I still read it, because the emotions Holly feels translates for all ages.

I love this book. It combines fear, reality, sadness, happiness and the always familiar happy ending. You cannot go wrong with that combo. Genius. Just genius! The survival story of a twelve year old girl who has to STEAL to survive, with all her experiences combined into a journal. It really opens you up to the fact that homelessness is a real problem, and shows you what you can do to help, and tells you about the life of a homeless person. Yes, I know, Holly is a fictional character, but to me, the author made her feel so real. I felt like as she was going through the experiences, I was right there through it all. Five Stars!

Book required by school for teenage daughter

This is a story told through a journal. This young woman's mother dies of an overdose and she is placed in foster care. She runs away after being emotionally abused by foster parents. She is a tenacious and inventive person who finds her way despite numerous hardships. Through her courage she finds her way utilizing the journal to record her experiences and to help her work through loss as well as trauma. This book is captivating and well written. I highly recommend this novel.

Great book, my 5th grade students are loving it.

Moving story of a young girl who runs away from an abusive foster home, convinced that anything, even a life on the streets, will be better than her current situation. She leaves with nothing more than a backpack full of supplies, which includes a journal given to her by a caring teacher. Initially, Holly

writes in her journal as a way to pass the time, and ridicules her teacher, who knows nothing of her students' real lives. Gradually, as time passes and Holly encounters many dangers on the street, she comes to see the journal as her only real safe haven. Excellent, and not overly explicit, so a good choice for middle school readers.

This book was truly amazing and moved me like no other book has. This book has brought me to the realization that this situation is all too real. Holly's situation unfortunately had a positive outcome compared to many others like it. I recommend Runaway to all teen and adult readers.

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