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This Ordinary Life



Synopsis

A teen with big dreams of making it in radio, struggles to hold her family together while dealing with her brother's epilepsy, her mother's alcoholism, and her own broken heart. Sometimes hope is the most extraordinary gift of all. Â High-school radio host Jasmine Torres's life is full of family dysfunction, but if she can score the internship of her dreams with a New York City radio station, she knows she can turn things around. That is, until her brother Danny's latest seizure forces her to miss the interview, and she's back to the endless loop of missing school for his doctor appointments, picking up the pieces of her mother's booze-soaked life, and stressing about Danny's future. Then she meets Wes. He's the perfect combination of smart, cute, and funny. He also happens to have epilepsy like her brother. Wes is living a normal life despite his medical issues, which gives Jasmine hope for Danny. But memories of her cheating ex-boyfriend keep Jasmine from going on a real date with Wes, no matter how many times he asks her. Jasmine can't control everything, not who wins the internship, not her mother's addiction, not her brother's health, not even where her heart will lead her. She wishes she could just have an ordinary life, but Jasmine may just discover that what she already has is pretty extraordinary after all.

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Customer Reviews

Walkup has a knack for strong, likable characters, particularly evident in Jasmine, Wes, Frankie, and Danny. Highlights: I fell in love with Jasmine's sense of self--she is a teen with strong ethics and self-respect that shine through in all areas of her life. She is honest, goal-driven, kind, responsible, tough, and funny--a well-developed character who models a complex strength in what can only be defined as Ordinary Life. Considering how infrequently the term "strong female character" is attached to women who *aren't* stepping into traditionally male booty-kicking roles, it's fantastic to see Walkup highlighting a kind of strength that doesn't require any hand-to-hand combat.

:) Jasmine's relationship with Wes, a boy who--like her younger brother--has epilepsy, is both a sweet romance (with one of the better first dates in YA) and rich ground for exploring Jasmine's fears and hopes for her brother as he grows up. And Jasmine's brother, Danny, and her best friend, Frankie, are utterly adorable. They, even more than Wes, show the reader how deeply Jasmine is loved. The only note that didn't ring entirely true for me was her mom's character arc. Although I wanted everything to be wrapped up well for Jasmine and her family, the transformation felt a little too easy for me, a concern teen readers may or may not share. Overall, a great read that tackles big topics and difficult situations with humor and characters you will root for. With the resilience and optimism shown in this novel, Jasmine more than earns the nickname Wes gives her.

This was one of those contemporary YA's I literally like to just curl up with and soak up. Jenn Walkup's style flows and keeps readers turning pages as they are drawn deeper into Jasmine's story. I especially liked how she treated the topic of epilepsy in its many facets and questions. Walkup's advocacy clearly shines through here and makes this book more than your average rom com, though you do get the bonus of Wes as a bit of a manic pixie dream boy. I did love how much this revolved around radio, too. It made me nostalgic for indie radio stations and high school and college programs. I liked Walkup's first book, but I really loved this one and highly recommend it to anyone who needs something to hold up with on a rainy day.

Jasmine is a special person to take care of her brother with his epilepsy while trying to protect them both because of her mother's alcohol. Her high dream is to have her own radio station some day. And works hard at this goal

Stand alone Jasmine's first person Jasmine is a teenager with the responsibilities of an adult. Her mom is an alcoholic and works as a bartender. Her young brother is an epileptic that has frequent seizures. She's barely managing all of her responsibilities. Lucky for her she meets Wes and he pesters her to become his girlfriend. A cute love story. :) I only gave it four stars because it seemed to take awhile before the end of book drama and excitement. It dragged for a bit.

I enjoyed this novel it was sweet and emotional. All of what you want in a good story.

Jasmine Torres is the kind of heroine every teenage girl can find strength in. She is fiercely independent, knows her self-worth, and is devoted to her younger brother. Jasmine has intense aspirations to be a radio DJ but her family life tends to complicate this pursuit of her passion. Can she balance both taking care of her family and achieving her own dreams? This Ordinary Life is the ideal book for middle school readers.

This is a wonderful YA Contemporary with a lot of heart, especially between siblings Jasmine and Danny Torres. Jennifer Walkup does a great job of tackling both epilepsy and alcoholism with raw humor, yet showing the grim reality of what these things can do to any family. The voice was spot on, and the writing never drifted into the maudlin. I can't recommend this one enough, and I'm excited to read more of this author's work.

This book is incredible! I loved how the characters really got to know each other as the book went on and how everything worked out in the end! I'm a sucker for a happy ending so this is a perfect book if you like that. It is filled with twists and turns that will keep you wanting more, definitely recommend.

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