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This Brave Balance



Synopsis

Dipper isn't sure of many things. When he goes to school his grades are terrible. When he works construction he makes decent money but doesn't enjoy it. And the only time he sees his mom is in the middle of the night when neither of them can sleep. However, the one thing he is sure of is his training as a parkour athlete. With friends Corone, Skylark, and Jay, training to become awesome at parkour is the only part of Dipper's day that he enjoys. When Corone's ex-girlfriend Kite joins the group and becomes close to Dipper, however, everything changes, and a series of events threatens to tear the group apart forever. Raw and intense, Rusalka Reh's portrayal of the cold isolation of an adolescent subculture and the comfort provided by finding a group to belong to attacks stereotypes with a hard, edgy truth. These are kids who face choices that will define who they are as adults, yet they lack the experience needed to make them. They don't know the system. They don't know the rules. What they know instinctively, however, is that parkour is teaching them ways of seeing life that will help them survive. When the tasers start flying, they learn the power of their instincts and how serious their choices truly are. An accurate depiction of life at the cusp of the monumental change from adolescence to adulthood, *This Brave Balance* is as daring as the sport of parkour itself. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Customer Reviews

Slice-of-life featuring a young German traceur and his fellow parkour practitioners. I'm not normally a fan of slice-of-life, but since my son is an avid traceur, I had to at least try this. Although it was slow in places, Reh skillfully wove several storylines through descriptions of the parkour training, and kept me wanting to know what would happen next in spite of some heavy-handed "if I had only known" foreshadowing, which I despise. The characters felt real and faced real problems, and Reh even managed to avoid a pat ending. Kindle formatting was fine.

A decent YA novel. The translation is a bit rough in places, but not horrible. I enjoyed it enough to not caution against it totally but there are probably better books worth your time.

This book was well written and a pleasure to read. It was fun watching the characters develop and grow and go through the changes life brings.

Parkour Training is home away from home for Dipper, Corone, Skylark, and Jay. They look forward to their meetings with the group more-and-more as the world outside the group is uninviting. In the minds of these young boys, it's a place they can go to as an escape from isolation, a place where they are accepted, where freedom is found. Dipper never gets to see his mom, he doesn't like his job, and his grades in school are poor. Jay has no relationship with his dad, and things at home for all the boys aren't the greatest of circumstances. In fact, the more the guys train, the worse things get at home. Despite the differences the boys experience, they realize that they only have each other. Parkour Training is a group of conformity, friendship, and comfort. What changes when Kite joins the group, and is Corone's sister accepted? I highly recommend this book to parents, teachers, and teenagers. Rusalka Reh penned a powerful story, based on the cold, harsh reality of the isolation of an adolescent subculture. The teenagers within the group all share conflicted, frustrating lives concerning lack of parental interest, resulting in emotional and psychological strain. Changes within the lives of the boys come about, decisions must be made, and survival becomes the name of the game. What events will transpire that may tear the group apart, and will the bond continue with all members of the group? The author describes the trials-and-tribulations from adolescence to

adulthood for teenagers in uncertain circumstances. The choices that are made must be dealt with, regardless of the consequences.

In my second foray into German young adult fiction, I read about the trials and tribulations of a young man nicknamed 'Dipper', a construction worker whose hobby and passion is parkour--which is sort of a cross between gymnastics and skateboarding (albeit without the skateboard). Dipper hangs out with a group of guys called the Urban Planetbirds, who all have birdy nicknames, Jay, Corrone, and Skylark. Corrone's little sister, Kittiwake also hangs out with them at times when she's not at school. Soon, they are joined by Kite (her real name, not a nickname) a Welsh girl attending university in Germany and Corrone's girlfriend. Dipper is instantly attracted to her, which causes problems between him and Corrone. Dipper becomes resentful when Corrone and Kittiwake move in with Kite because their mother abandoned them. He distances himself from the group, but gets pulled back in when he discovers Kittiwake, who he is very protective of, is in peril. I really enjoyed reading the book, even though I know very little about parkour. The story did teach me a little bit more about it, without it detracting from the plot at all. The story was engrossing and very realistic. Because of the translation, the narrative could was a little awkward at times, but I didn't think it was a major problem. I thought the ending, which was literally a cliffhanger, was wrapped up a little too quickly. I wanted to find out more about his new lady friend and if he liked her more than Miss Kite. But otherwise I liked the book very much, and would recommend it for teens and even so-called 'adults', like me. :)

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