

The Running Dream (Schneider Family Book Award - Teen Book Winner)

By Wendelin Van Draanen

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When Jessica is told she'll never run again, she puts herself back together—and learns to dream bigger than ever before. The acclaimed author of *Flipped* delivers a powerful and healing story.


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, Jessica feels that she's both in the spotlight and invisible. People who don't know what to say act like she's not there. Jessica's embarrassed to realize that she's done the same 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.

“Inspirational. The pace of Van Draanen's prose matches Jessica's at her swiftest. Readers will zoom through the book just as Jessica blazes around the track. A lively and lovely story.” —*Kirkus Reviews*

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 7 Up-Jessica has run her personal best at a track meet-then there's a tragic bus accident and the high school junior loses her leg as well as her future dreams. From waking up in the hospital and coping with the trauma, to her return home, then school, she tries to grab her life back. On one level the story offers inspiration to those dealing with physical changes in their own lives and the stages of recovery, fight, survival, and victory as Jessica reaches deep to push past her wall of self-pity and loathing, and moves beyond the "finish line." On a deeper level, there is her blind discrimination toward a fellow classmate who has cerebral palsy. Rosa is hard to understand and easy to ignore. She is anchored to a wheelchair. Jessica, encumbered by her crutches and her tender "stump," is seated in the back of the class, out of the way, next to Rosa. She learns that the girl is smart, wise, and friendly. They pass notes and share lunch. Rosa writes, "I wish people would see me and not my condition." When Jessica is running again-on a specially engineered prosthesis-she challenges herself to help her friend be seen. How Jessica orchestrates putting Rosa in the forefront of a community race and pushing her wheelchair across a finish line is a study in faith and determination. Readers will cheer for Jessica's recovery and be reminded to recognize people for their strengths and not overlook them because of their disabilities.-Alison Follo, North Country School, Lake Placid, NY (c) Copyright 2010. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

From [Booklist](#)

Sixteen-year-old Jessica is the track team's star sprinter until tragedy strikes: the team van is struck, killing one runner and demolishing Jessica's right leg. The book begins with Jessica refusing to acknowledge the result: a stump. But she is slowly reintroduced to life, which involves being fitted for a prosthesis, returning to school, and dealing with the usual—tough teachers, mean girls, and one really hot, sensitive, supportive boy. It's a classic problem novel in a lot of ways; accordingly, Van Draanen inserts setbacks with narrative precision, the most affecting of which (surprisingly) is the insurance battle that Jessica's parents face. Overall, though, this is a tremendously upbeat book, with Jessica's family, friends, and community coming together (the track team raises funds to buy Jessica a \$20,000 running leg). Even a subplot involving Jessica's friendship with the cerebral palsy-afflicted Rosa is not as treacly as it could have been. Van Draanen's extensive research into both running and amputees pays dividends—readers will truly feel what it's like to walk (or run) a mile (or 10) in Jessica's shoes. Grades 7-10. --Daniel Kraus

Review

"I read *The Running Dream* on my way to the World Championships. I nearly missed my flight for reading it and inhaled it before I touched down. It's a truly touching story that feels very real."--Katrin Green, Paralympic Gold Medalist

"This heart-touching story is a helpful reminder that we must appreciate each day and each blessing. When I go around "Rigor Mortis Bend" and think of Jessica, my legs do not feel nearly as tired anymore."--Jordan Hasay, four-time USA Track & Field Jr. Women's Champion

"Van Draanen's extensive research into both running and amputees pays dividends--readers will truly feel what's it like to walk (or run) a mile (or 10) in Jessica's shoes."--*Booklist*

"Inspirational. The pace of Van Draanen's prose matches Jessica's at her swiftest. Readers will zoom through

the book just as Jessica blazes around the track. A lively and lovely story."--*Kirkus Reviews*

"Van Draanen delivers an abundance of interesting medical detail and emotional authenticity in this accessible and inspirational novel."--*The Horn Book Magazine*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Carla Smith:

As people who live in the actual modest era should be up-date about what going on or details even knowledge to make these individuals keep up with the era which can be always change and advance. Some of you maybe will probably update themselves by reading books. It is a good choice for yourself but the problems coming to you is you don't know what type you should start with. This *The Running Dream* (Schneider Family Book Award - Teen Book Winner) is our recommendation to make you keep up with the world. Why, because this book serves what you want and need in this era.

Rhonda Robitaille:

The publication untitled *The Running Dream* (Schneider Family Book Award - Teen Book Winner) is the reserve that recommended to you to learn. You can see the quality of the book content that will be shown to a person. The language that creator use to explained their ideas are easily to understand. The article writer was did a lot of exploration when write the book, and so the information that they share to your account is absolutely accurate. You also could possibly get the e-book of *The Running Dream* (Schneider Family Book Award - Teen Book Winner) from the publisher to make you far more enjoy free time.

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Victoria Austin:

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