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Riptide



Synopsis

For Grace Parker, surfing is all about the ride and the moment. When she drops into a perfect wave, Grace can forget that her best friend, Ford Watson, has a crush on her that she can't reciprocate, no matter how tempting. She can forget the trouble she faces at home, where her parents pressure her to be impossibly perfect. She can forget how badly she wants a surf scholarship to UC San Diego. Signing up for her first surf competition, Grace has just one summer to train and impress the university scouts who will be judging the comp. But summer is about more than just big waves. As romances ignite and her feelings for Ford threaten to reach the point of no return, Grace must face the biggest challenges of her life. This summer, everything changes.

Praise: A compelling and atmospheric story of love and friendship. Two young people try to catch the perfect wave? and figure out where they belong.

Cynthia Leitich Smith, New York Times bestselling author of *Eternal* "This debut about a surfer girl delves into hidden child abuse and scores with strong characterizations." **KIRKUS REVIEWS** "Scheibe's story is rich with details, real-life problems, and characters you want to hang out with. You will feel its pull." **Jennifer Ziegler**, author of *How Not to be Popular*

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 - 12

Customer Reviews

Gr 9 Up-Grace's life is like a riptide that she cannot escape. Her father is a successful lawyer who

expects her to be perfect-like the image he, his wife, and his daughter present to the world. When the image slips, he abuses Grace, usually only hitting her where it cannot be seen, and rarely in front of her mother, who counters complaints with the argument that any father is better than none. Her parents expect that as valedictorian, she will go to an Ivy League school, but Grace wants to stay in California and join UC San Diego's surfing team. Only when she is in the water does she feel free of all the expectations and the weight of keeping the secret of what happens in her house from her best friend, Ford. She is also not telling him how she feels about him. Ford is caught in his own riptide-his growing feelings for Grace warring with his hard-won internship with her father and his career goal to become an immigration lawyer. Surfing is at the center of this story, told by the pair in alternating chapters. Although there is a glossary, readers unfamiliar with the sport are unlikely to stick with this uneven first novel.-Suanne B. Roush, Osceola High School, Seminole, FL

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"This debut about a surfer girl delves into hidden child abuse and scores with strong characterizations." --Kirkus Reviews"Surfing is described viscerally ... and the sport serves as a fine metaphor for building strength and identifying risks worth taking." --Publishers Weekly"A compelling and atmospheric story of love and friendship--two young people try to catch the perfect wave and figure out where they belong." --Cynthia Leitich Smith, New York Times best-selling author of *Eternal*"Scheibe's story is rich with details, real-life problems, and characters you want to hang out with. You will feel its pull." --Jennifer Ziegler, author of *How Not to be Popular*-This debut about a surfer girl delves into hidden child abuse and scores with strong characterizations.- --Kirkus Reviews-Surfing is described viscerally ... and the sport serves as a fine metaphor for building strength and identifying risks worth taking.- --Publishers Weekly-A compelling and atmospheric story of love and friendship--two young people try to catch the perfect wave and figure out where they belong.- --Cynthia Leitich Smith, New York Times best-selling author of *Eternal*-Scheibe's story is rich with details, real-life problems, and characters you want to hang out with. You will feel its pull.- --Jennifer Ziegler, author of *How Not to be Popular*

I was forced to read this for one of my college English classes. It is so poorly written that our whole class gave up a quarter of the way in and our teacher dropped the book from the curriculum forever. Crappily written and incredibly superficial and stupid plot line. Don't bother with this one.

Great book for a great price with instant shipping. I was able to read it before the deadline. Good reading.

There are so many reasons why *Riptide* could have been a book I fell head over heels in love with. It's about a girl who surfs, and surfing has always been a sport that fascinates me. The girl appears to be experiencing the problems of a typical teen - dealing with her parents, chasing her dreams, falling in love. While *Riptide*'s story includes all of these things, the execution simply fell flat for me and I finished feeling slightly disappointed in what I'd just read.

What I Liked Surfing was a big part of the novel. Like I already mentioned, I love surfing (even though I think I'm too much of a chicken to try it myself). The way that the sport is woven into the novel as part of Grace's life is really well-done, and it's so clear that Grace is dedicated to the sport that she loves. The best parts for me, however, were the descriptions of what it was like for Grace when she was surfing; it made me feel like I was right on the board along with her. Grace's determination to follow her dreams was admirable. There's a lot of opposition in Grace's life when it comes to her dreams of surfing, particularly from her parents. I really admire the fact that she persisted in doing what she wanted to do, what she knew she loved, in spite of everything. At the start, she was pretty hesitant to disobey them, but that just held her back. It was nice to see her finally fighting for what she wanted, instead of going along with what they wanted from her.

Ford (and his parents). Ford's story is actually told in bits and pieces here and there, since the POV shifts from Grace to him for some chapters. He was really intriguing, especially with his interest in immigration law and helping people he knew. I would have loved to read more about this particular part of the story. (Also, his parents are included because they are basically warm and wonderful, especially his mother.)

What I Didn't Like There are so many different things going on all at once. There's Grace's quest to enter and place in the surf competition. There's the matter of Grace's issues with her father. Grace's issues with her mother. Ford's dealing with something in his past that haunts him. Ford's internship at the firm where Grace's father works. Ford and Grace's friendship-more than friends dance. Other romantic interests. I mean, if these things had been properly woven together, I feel like I might have enjoyed the story more. But I felt like it was pretty scattered and all over the place, especially since a lot of them were either too easily concluded or never concluded at all. The multiple point-of-views didn't work. While I enjoyed reading from Ford's perspective, I wish it had been fleshed out more. There definitely wasn't an equal balance to the book, as it was primarily about Grace. Ford's parts ended up being very sporadic and jarring and just out of place to me. Grace has the worst parents. I absolutely hated Grace's parents. Sure, they had little moments where I started to soften towards

them, but in the end, they were simply horrible people. Her father's behavior was just nuts, but it was her mother who I hated even more as the book ended. The romance. You know, to me, if they'd just both been honest with each other from the start, they could have avoided all the potholes in their budding relationship. I suppose that was going to add another dimension to Grace's situation, but it seriously backfired for this reader. I really wanted to like *Riptide* more than I did, but it inevitably was a book that disappointed me. I couldn't connect with the characters to the level where I truly cared about what became of them. The story had too many plot threads, and the execution just didn't work when it came to weaving them together. While it had a lot of potential, *Riptide* was essentially a novel that I was disappointed in.

Riptide covers a lot of different things like family relationships, love, friendship and finding your own way in the world... sometimes with help. It covers abusive behavior in a classy way and shows the reader it is possible to leave your abuser. I definitely recommend reading this book! *Riptide* intertwines the light with the dark and shows the differing ways Grace and Ford feel with them taking turns every other chapter which keeps the book really flowing. I immediately liked the chemistry between Ford and Grace! Their love for each other is youthful and refreshing (makes me wish I was in high school again when guys actually tried!). I really liked Grace's dedication to her sport and getting into the college she wanted to go to.

This weekend, I read a YA novel (Young Adult novel) called *Riptide* by Lindsey Scheibe. I cracked it open for a light summer read as I curled up in bed. I teach a university course on coming-of-age themes, so YA literature is more than a "guilty pleasure." (Oh that I could teach a course on wine-tasting.) *Riptide* was not a light summer romance, which is what I thought it might be from the cover. It's a story of two teens, best friends who have fallen in love but, for several reasons, can't bring themselves to submit to their feelings. Grace Parker surfs to forget about her troubled home life and her confusing feelings for her best friend, Ford. And Ford is entangled in a tricky employment situation with Grace's father, which prevents him from confessing his love to Grace. Both Grace and Ford narrate alternating chapters. Perfect setup for a book for teens. I couldn't put the book down for long. Literally. When I needed to take my son somewhere, I put the book in my purse so I could read it at Jules' tennis lesson or the car wash or the grocery store checkout line. I am not kidding. I even pulled it from my purse at red lights so I could read a few sentences. That's kind of embarrassing to admit. This is not literary fiction. It's full of surf jargon, teen angst, and "whatev"s. It's about how teens are cruel to one another, competitive to a flaw, and how, despite our

feminist advancements, both girls and boys still see each other in (and limited by) the gender-constructs of the past. But that is one reason why I couldn't get my paws off the book. I was a teenager again, feeling those angsty emotions, in spite of the safe-calm of my current life. The other reason is this: Grace is in an abusive situation at home, and the tension is cable-tight. I knew things were going to be okay in the end, but I needed to see Grace's decision, the one that would free her. And the end of the book was satisfying. All the little plot lines didn't magically resolve, and some were left stranded. But they needed to be abandoned. That's the point of the book.

Sometimes we abandon things to make the right decision in life. Teenagers who speak their own dialect are not stupid. Teenagers who suffer indecision and inconsistency are psychologically normal. Intense angst over romance/love does feature prominently in the lives of many (of not most) teens. And, unfortunately, so do "issues." One in every four girls will be sexually abused by the time she's 18, according to the Dallas Children's Advocacy Center. Imagine how many others suffer from physical (beating) abuse and neglect. These are the unfortunate ones that I wrote about in a previous post. Books like Riptide tap into the heart of the unfortunate readers, those who have secrets, shame, and fear. Someone else suffers. Someone else has found a way to not only survive, but to find real love. And books like Riptide can give those "fortunate" readers--those who have never suffered abuse--a gift that will enlarge their souls: compassion.

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