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The Hockey Saint (The Forever Friends Series)



Synopsis

Through a chance meeting, Tom and hockey legend Jake form an unlikely friendship. Tom discovers that his idol isn't as perfect up close. With Jake living too much in the moment and with his past catching up to him, can Tom help him before it's too late?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 7 Up • Taking place two years after *The Stereotypical Freaks* (Animal Media, 2012), this is a full-color realistic graphic novel about an unlikely friendship between a famous 21-year-old Canadian hockey player named Jeremiah Jacobson and an average guy named Tom Leonard. Tom is an orphan and a college sophomore who lives with his grandmother. He loves hockey, and his hockey skills result in a partial scholarship, which helps him afford college. One night he happens to meet the famous hockey player Jeremiah Jacobson. The pair soon form a friendship. The young man soon learns that Jeremiah, though genuine, harbors secrets. Tom wants to help him, but Jeremiah has a hard time accepting he has a substance abuse problem. Readers will delight in the lively dialogue, especially when Jeremiah says things like "Don't worship athletes. There are men and women who deserve your admiration so much more." Chapters are accompanied by recommended listening, and the artwork is vibrant, making this title highly recommended for hockey fans and those who enjoyed the previous volume. • Lisa Gieskes, Richland County Public Library, Columbia, SC

A graphic novel slips home the fact that sports stars run the gamut of miseries we everyday Joes and Janes must confront. Jeremiah Jake Jacobson is the world's best hockey player, but he is a public relation man's nightmare: He won't do Q-and-As or sell products for the good of the marketing department. Indeed, though he may rack up points like a pinballer on a hot streak, he is practically a recluse. Tom Leonard, on the other hand, is a college sophomore in awe of Jacobson, and they become friends through a chance encounter. Tom soon learns that Jake gets some cool perks with the fame: private dining rooms, private screenings of movies and he also learns that Jake does a lot of volunteer work on the down low. Jake also smokes like a chimney and drinks way too much booze. So starts the slow revelation of truths: Sports are only as good as your love of the game; secrecy and denial gradually core you like an apple; all of us must address painful issues. Shapiro does a good job of expressing how difficult and important it is to talk about our emotions and weaknesses and that good friendship runs deep with thoughtful honesty. Inoue's illustrations are clean-lined if sometimes difficult to read, while Mossa's coloring creates a moody atmosphere. There are no simple answers in this thoughtful outing. (Graphic fiction. 8-14) --Kirkus

ReviewsTaking place two years after *The Stereotypical Freaks* (Animal Media, 2012), this is a full-color realistic graphic novel about an unlikely friendship between a famous 21-year-old Canadian hockey player named Jeremiah Jacobson and an average guy named Tom Leonard. Tom is an orphan and a college sophomore who lives with his grandmother. He loves hockey, and his hockey skills result in a partial scholarship, which helps him afford college. One night he happens to meet the famous hockey player Jeremiah Jacobson. The pair soon form a friendship. The young man soon learns that Jeremiah, though genuine, harbors secrets. Tom wants to help him, but Jeremiah has a hard time accepting he has a substance abuse problem. Readers will delight in the lively dialogue, especially when Jeremiah says things like "Don't worship athletes. There are men and women who deserve your admiration so much more...." Chapters are accompanied by recommended listening, and the artwork is vibrant, making this title highly recommended for hockey fans and those who enjoyed the previous volume. Lisa Gieskes, Richland County Public Library, Columbia, SC --School Library Journal

Howard and company have come up with a winning story line that's thoughtful and real, with lessons we can all learn at any age. Even the illustrations convey emotion to complement the dialogue. You don't have to be a hockey fan to enjoy *The Hockey Saint*.

A well-written "issues" story for teens. The book has a hockey theme but except for the beginning is

not really about hockey as such. As the book starts we are dropped into first-year college student Tom's career on the university hockey team but the story quickly turns to being about the characters rather than the sport. Tom meets his hockey idol and becomes involved in his life finding out that the man is not like what he is represented in the press at all. The book deals with many issues, and if it has any faults it would be that it tackles too many at once. Smoking, drinking, drunk driving, parental death, alcoholism, not losing touch with one's real friends on the way up and money/career are not the meaning of life. However when all is said and done the book's main theme is not idol-worshipping other people. It's a dramatic story that had me reading straight through. The art is a bit inconsistent, Tom's look becomes feminine at times, some facial expressions are downright ugly and while there aren't many female characters the young ones tended to have manga-looking eyes. Recommended for teens, especially boys, interested in hockey.

The main character is a teenaged boy and prodigy hockey player, who looks like a girl. A very emotional girl. With a grocery list. And his hero, a famous hockey player, looks like Jesus. Very weird. 40 pages in we were still getting to know the characters and nothing meaningful happens. I skimmed my way through another 30 odd pages. The star chain-smokes and drinks, the boy fangirls, there is the obligatory best female friend. All that's missing is the star making a pass at the boy. On top of the plot not being exactly gripping, I did not like the artwork much. The proportions of the characters looked weird at times, it was all a bit too simplistic for my taste. DNF at 76 pages, about halfway through. I received this free copy from the publisher/author via NetGalley, in exchange for an honest review, thank you!

Well, I originally thought that my hubby would review this but with the graphics it was difficult getting it to his Nook so I decided to read it and honestly I was surprised. I'm not much of a Graphic Novel person but this looked interesting so I thought, WHY NOT!? The greats of this are: It is a quick and easy read. I flew through it! The characters are well developed! The storyline is very well done! I was thinking about it days later!! I'm not huge into sports but somehow Howard Shapiro had me cheering along! The only downside I have are about the graphics. They are good but with the graphic novels that are out there I think they could be done better, however, my only experience (sadly!) is with The Walking Dead and Sandman by Neil Gaiman! Maybe I'm comparing apples to oranges though. Otherwise, the story itself is really great and I was pleasantly surprised with it. In short: You do not have to love graphic novels nor hockey to be able to relate and enjoy this! Received by the author for an honest review!

I first read Stereotypical Freaks because I am an avid manga and graphic novel fan and I liked the premise behind it. The Hockey Saint is the sequel and is just as fun and interesting as the first. I have to say I normally read a ton of romance (even in my manga) so it was nice to take a step back and have a book focus on friendship and the trials of growing up. The story centers not just on friendship but the faces behind fame and the darkness that sometimes comes with it. Jake (the hockey player) is addicted to drinking and smoking and Tom is hired to pull up dirt on him. While slightly cliché I still enjoyed their burgeoning friendship and the dynamics between the two.

'The Hockey Saint' by Howard Shapiro is the second graphic novel in a trilogy, but I read it as a standalone and didn't feel like I was missing anything. Tom Leonard is a college sophomore and idolizes hockey player Jeremiah Jacobson. Tom's had it rough since his parents died, and when he gets a chance to hang out with his idol, he takes it. Jeremiah has some good qualities, and some bad ones. He shows Tom that he's only human. When a rival team hires a private eye to dig up dirt on Jeremiah, Tom is caught in the middle. He is pressured to give out secrets of his new friendship and even offered money to give up the dirt. Eventually, this leads to a conflict between Tom and Jeremiah, especially when Tom sees something in Jeremiah's life that will eventually hurt him. The art is not awesome, but the story isn't bad at all. It feels like an after school special (except one where smoking and drinking is okay). I like the fact that Tom is not so starstruck that he doesn't want to help Jeremiah out. The supporting characters are pretty good for the most part. The main characters are only a few years apart, but I felt like Tom was a lot younger for some reason. The story has some good things to say about stardom and friendship. I received a review copy of this graphic novel from Animal Media Group and NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. Thank you for allowing me to review this graphic novel.

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