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The Steps



Synopsis

Twelve-year-old Annabel thought Christmas break was going to be amazing. She'd planned to stay home in New York City with her best friend and do traditional things like go ice-skating in Rockefeller Center, hit the after-Christmas sale at Bloomingdale's, and scream with the TRL crowd at MTV in Times Square. But when her best friend bails, Annabel's mom decides it's high time Annabel visit her father and his new family in Australia. Annabel is not pleased about traveling around the world to meet "the steps" -- twelve-year-old fashion-disaster stepsister, five-year-old stepbrother, and baby half sister -- but she's not going to waste this chance to steal her father back.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 860 (What's this?)

Paperback: 144 pages

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Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars 14 customer reviews

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

Grade 5-8-Annabel's parents, Angelina and Jack, met in New York City, fell in love, moved in together, had their daughter, and then, much later, became adults. Annabel's fresh and funny narration begins after Jack and Angelina no longer live together. In fact, he has moved to Australia, remarried, and started a new family. Angelina is involved with the divorced father of "the dorkiest kid in the whole of the seventh grade" in Annabel's school on Manhattan's Upper West Side. During Christmas break, the 12-year-old is sent to visit her father in Sydney. Her jealousy of the "steps," Lucy and Angus, gradually erodes as her understanding increases. When Lucy and Annabel run

away to Melbourne to see Lucy's grandmother and her friends, the girls have a "moment"-that memorable, pivotal instant that changes relationships and sparks lasting friendships. In the end, Annabel realizes that both of her parents love her, and she begins to call them Mom and Dad. In spite of the confusing family configurations with the "bazillion stepbrothers, stepsisters and half siblings," the narrative is fast, sometimes laugh-out-loud funny, and gradually reveals insight into families and individuals. Though Annabel uses contemporary references and present-day language, her concerns and emotional responses are timeless. Other characters, adults included, are well drawn, developed through interaction with Annabel and her own wry observations. A breezy, compelling, humorous glimpse of families trying to cope as they transform. Maria B. Salvatore, District of Columbia Public Library Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Gr. 4-7. As the book's clever cover shows, Annabel's Australian family has been blended to the max. Annabel and her mother live with Bubbee. Jack, Annabel's father, has moved to Australia with his wife, Penny; Penny's children from a previous marriage, Lucy and Angus; and baby Beatrice, Jack and Penny's child. Annabel is not very happy about any of this, and when she heads to Sydney to meet her new family, hostility is the word of the day, especially after she sees how Lucy and Angus have co-opted her dad. Wittily written, this follows a predictable path as Annabel's animosity turns to tolerance, then acceptance. The Australian setting makes a nice change, however, and a touch of holiday romance also adds appeal for the age group. Cohn uses pop-culture references that will soon date this, but until then, readers will identify with the mixed-up emotions that mixed families engender. Ilene Cooper Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

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Let me begin by saying I feel so sorry for anyone whose child is as selfish and horrid as the main character of this book! She has absolutely no redeeming qualities. Her snide remarks about everyone's clothing (at least one mention per page!) and comments about how awesome New York is and how dreadful every-place-that-is-not-New York is made me want to throw the book down and give up. But since I was previewing this for my daughter (after reading Dr Deb's review and unfortunately after my kiddo had gotten to the running away part), I had to finish it. Long story short, she's a brat who never apologizes (not with any sincerity, anyway). She's (hopefully) much more

superficial than the average 12-yr-old (at least mine, thankfully). Finally, any 12-yr-old who knows how to smoke without gagging (though it's an amusing story how she learned) and kisses a boy the DAY AFTER meeting him clearly needs better supervision! Blech! ...Yes, the story does wrap up "nicely" (albeit very unbelievably to the adult reader), but I agree with Dr Deb that the miserable experience of getting to that point was definitely not worth it. There are far better books for our daughters to read than this.

In a book named *The Steps*, I found that I love this book because it helps me understand more about kids who have divorced parents and stepbrothers and sisters. Now I know how difficult it is to have divorced parents and stepfamily. Another reason that I like this book is that this story can happen to someone in this world. I can compare to my friends' life who have the same difficulty. The main character's name is Annabel. She has divorced parents and tons of stepbrothers and sisters, half brothers and sister. She lives with her mom in New York. Her dad is living in Australia with his new family. She misses her dad a lot and want to visit him. Annabel hates her stepsister and brother, but she became to get along with them. I'm glad that I don't have a stepbrother or sister that would give me such a hard life. I love comparing books to other people around me. This story, I can compare to my friend who is going through same situation. After reading this book, I can help her more with her feelings and thoughts about her new family. Even though you have similar situation, you can think that your life can be better than others. This book is a perfect book for kids who is struggling with his/her family.

I first read this book because the name of the book "THE STEPS". I think it will be a interesting story. The story is about a girl name Annabel. Her dad got remarried and move to Austrilia with his new family--Annabel's step-mom, step-sister, and step-brother. During summer, Annabel went to Austrilia to visit them. She hates them, expecially Lucy--her step-sister, she thinks that she steal her dad from her. She try to make her dad to change his mind to come back to New York with her. But she failed, her dad is so happy with his new family. Annabel and Lucy ran away at night to go to Lucy's granny's. On the way, they became friends. After all Annabel found out that she should not make her dad unhappy, and her dad doesn't live with her doesn't mean he don't like her. So she dicide to let her dad live with his family. I like this story because it tells us a story about what's the meaning of a real family--make every happy is the most important thing. We should all know about this, then we all will have happy, truly families.

I was originally skeptical about this book. Cohn's other book (Gingerbread) was too pulpy and mildly depressing. It was a pleasant surprise, therefore, to find myself laughing nearly throughout the book. I like Annabelle's voice even though I don't think I'd like her in person. (Lucy is more my type.) She occasionally sounds like a know-it-all, but she somehow still comes off as the naive twelve-year-old she is. Perhaps that's what made me laugh. I also like the quick guide to the Australians' way. One thing that could bring this book down is the outdated pop-culture references. Like, these kids are twelve-year-olds in 2003. Why would they still care about Titanic or Leo? And 90210? Come on, even *I* can barely remember that. Why would they even know what it's all about? Might as well mention the NKOTB and Michael Jackson when he was still normal.

Annabel lives in New York with her mom, Angelia, and her Bubbe (grandma). Annabel's dad, Jack, had just recently moved to Australia with his new wife, Penny, and her two kids, Lucy and Angus and then they had Beatrice, Annabel's half sister. At first when Annabel arrived she was excited but she quickly decided that she hated her new steps. She thought that her dad was giving the steps too much attention and that he needed to give his real daughter more attention. She also thought that he loved them more because he let them call him dad, when Annabel calls him by his name, Jack. Annabel started liking her new step sister, Lucy. She was only a couple years different in age and she felt that she could help Lucy with her problems. Annabel and Jack had gotten in a fight. Lucy and Penny did too. So in an agreement they decided to run away to Lucy's old town, Melbourne. Lucy's grandma lived there and that's where they figured they could stay. At the time where they ran away they still didn't have that sisterly love that they wanted to have. But before they knew it, on New Year's Eve they became closer than ever. They had become Best Friends, but best yet..... True Sisters!!

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