

[PDF] The Perfect Distance: A Novel

Kim Ablon Whitney - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: The Perfect Distance: A Novel

Author: Kim Ablon Whitney

Released: 2005-10-11

Language:

Pages: 256

ISBN: 0375832432

ISBN13:

ASIN: B006CDS6E6



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Description:

From School Library Journal Grade 8 Up—Francie Martinez, 17, has the good fortune to work at the stables of one of the best equitation trainers in the country. Previous students have gone from firsts at the Maclay Finals in New York City to Olympic teams, and Francie dreams of following in those august footsteps. Her father, a Mexican immigrant, met her mother at these same stables and is now the head of all the grooms—though Mom left ages ago. Francie's acceptance as a student is not without peril, as Tara is being groomed for first-place wins and trainer Rob hardly pays Francie any attention at all. Her fellow students and her school friends bring all the modern-day pressures vividly to life, from pushy parents to alcohol, sex, and the privileges of the rich. In a sport filled with wealthy people, the teen has to make an extra effort to find her place and accept reality without giving up her dreams. The author rode in many similar equitation events, and currently acts as judge, which adds to the authenticity. As a result, the terminology is accurate, but assumes a

familiarity on the part of readers. The plot involves romance and making ethically wise choices in all areas of life. While sometimes the many characters are cardboard, the story will have strong appeal to horse lovers who've grown beyond Joanna Campbell's Thoroughbred series (Morrow/Avon) and should satisfy demanding K. M. Peyton fans.—*Carol A. Edwards, Douglas County Libraries, Castle Rock, CO*

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From Gr. 7-10. "I knew how many Mexican riders and trainers there were in America. None." Francie Martinez's father works as barn manager at the prestigious West Hills Stables, and she pays for lessons by pulling groom duty in her spare time—a situation that sets her starkly apart from her well-scrubbed, privileged fellow riders. With one year remaining to compete in the teens' equitation circuit, Francie is determined to pour all her energy into winning big. Keeping focused proves difficult, though, when the year also brings a new romance, social pressures, and conflicts with her father. Whitney's probing of race and class issues feels a little too pointed, and some characterizations are too broadly drawn. But Whitney inhabits Francie's character wholly and convincingly and gets the universals of serious competition just right—any athlete will recognize the imperious, unfeeling coach; the snotty front-runner; and the unparalleled thrill of hitting the zone. For another lovable novel about a gutsy rider, try K. M. Peyton's *Blind Beauty* (2001). *Jennifer Mattson*

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