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Not If I See You First



Synopsis

In the tradition of novels of Gayle Forman and John Green comes this extraordinary YA debut about a blind teen girl navigating life and love in high school. Parker Grant doesn't need 20/20 vision to see right through you. That's why she created the Rules: Don't treat her any differently just because she's blind, and never take advantage. There will be no second chances. Just ask Scott Kilpatrick, the boy who broke her heart. When Scott suddenly reappears in her life after being gone for years, Parker knows there's only one way to react--shun him so hard it hurts. She has enough on her mind already, like trying out for the track team (that's right, her eyes don't work but her legs still do), doling out tough-love advice to her painfully naive classmates, and giving herself gold stars for every day she hasn't cried since her dad's death three months ago. But avoiding her past quickly proves impossible, and the more Parker learns about what really happened--both with Scott, and her dad--the more she starts to question if things are always as they seem. Maybe, just maybe, some Rules are meant to be broken. Combining a fiercely engaging voice with true heart, debut author Eric Lindstrom's *Not If I See You First* illuminates those blind spots that we all have in life, whether visually impaired or not.

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Customer Reviews

I'll admit that as a blind person, when I first started reading this, I felt skeptical about Parker's portrayal. There were some definite red flags. Why on earth did she run around without her cane? I've been a runner, although by no means a sprinter, and I use my cane when jogging off-track

(which is all the time now that I'm an adult). And why did she have a designated buddy in school? That made me a little sick at first, even though I loved Molly, because why would Parker need a babysitter? I mean, I had friends who helped me out, and sometimes teachers assigned students to work with me on individual projects, but I was otherwise mostly independent, thanks to the work of specialists who set about adapting ways for me to access the curriculum. Finally, although I agree with Parker's list, I felt for her not only to focus on one, but also to broadcast it like all of those buttons on her vest, might scare sighted readers into thinking that all of us blindies are that uptight and push people away. There are ways to advocate for oneself, to ask for respect, that are respectful in turn and create allyship in community rather than fear or disillusionment in others' hearts. Imagine if any of my sighted friends had a manual of how I should treat them, whether because of their sight or some other attribute--I'd be scared to mess up, besides the obvious things that would hurt them or push their buttons. But as I continued reading, I had three epiphanies. I realized not every blind person's experience with the school system has been, or will be, the same as mine. I realized I wanted to know why Parker ran with such wild abandon, both literally and figuratively, and that I related to her need to break free more than I didn't, safety concerns notwithstanding.

Eric Lindstrom's *NOT IF I SEE YOU FIRST* is a YA novel about sixteen-year-old Parker Grant, who has lived through more trauma in her short life than most of us will ever experience. She lost her mother and her sight when she was seven, and she lost her beloved father at the end of her sophomore year of high school, just three months before the novel begins. But most traumatic of all, it seems, is the loss of her eighth grade BFF and boyfriend, Scott Kilpatrick, who apparently betrayed her when they were both thirteen. Parker has a die-hard set of rules by which she lives, and Scott broke the first one: "Don't deceive me. Ever. Especially using my blindness. Especially in public." Breaking this rule earns Scott the title of "Parker Enemy Number One," and she has vowed never to speak to him again, and never ever to forgive him. Much of this novel explores what it's like to be a blind teenager, maneuvering the ins and outs of high school, friends, and family without the ability to see. Parker is determined to be a self-sufficient young woman - she has actually figured out how to run on her own without crashing into anything and killing herself! She has a "Star Chart" she keeps in her bedroom to track (with little gold stars) the number of days she gets through without crying (since she sees crying as a form of weakness and loss of control). And she has a fabulous and supportive network of friends. But she can't seem to forget Scott, the boy who let her down. She tries dating a cute guy she meets in a shoe store, and for a while it looks like she might

actually find a way to move beyond that eighth grade moment of horror. But Scott is always there.

This was a wonderful, enjoyable, and great read. Parker Grant is hilarious and realistic and I just loved her character. She's blind and has been since she was 7 years old. She's now in high school and she does many things that "blind" people shouldn't do but she doesn't let it limit her. Parker has had to deal with so much in her young life. Her mother was drinking and drove the car that caused the accident that killed her mother and caused her blindness when she was just 7 years old. Her father was a wonderful man that helped her and was always there for her until 3 months ago when he died from an accidental drug overdose. He took pills for depression and anxiety (Parker was unaware) and ended up dying. Now her Aunt and her family have moved to the town and into the house to help Parker deal and take care of her. She is very straightforward and honest and she doesn't let her blindness limit her wants and needs. She knows her way around the house, around the town, and she runs early in the morning in a field. She doesn't stop doing things she wants to do or get people to take care of her. She wants to be able to take care of herself and be independent. She created a huge list of rules and she sticks to them. She had a best friend Scott and then they became more until he did something horrible to her and she cut him out of her life. She was 13 years old at the time and she was broken hearted about it. She has some really great friends and they are there for her. She's getting used to her family. She has two cousins, one is her same age and the other is younger and loves to hang out with her. Her Aunt wants to take care of her more than she wants and tries to do more for her than she wants.

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