



Breakaway

By Andrea Montalbano

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Breakaway By Andrea Montalbano

LJ knows her place in the world is on the soccer field. When she's out there scoring goals, everything's right. But being a big-shot on the field has started going to her head. She's been letting her temper get the best of her—both on the field and off, alienating everyone around her. Everyone except Tabitha, the popular girl who cares more about credit cards than yellow cards and spends most of her time on the bench. But when it's LJ on the bench instead of Tabitha, forced to be a spectator instead of a star, she realizes that sometimes it takes more skill and guts to make others look good instead of yourself. And that by losing a little glory, you can win more than just championships.

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Breakaway By Andrea Montalbano Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 5-8 Lily, 12, is the star of her soccer travel team. When her coach notices that her temper tantrums and self-centeredness prevent her from being the team player she could be, he benches her. There are several didactic monologues interspersed among some excellent play-by-play action scenes as Lily learns to overcome her disappointment and gain a better perspective. Montalbano brings a bit of humor to the story by describing parents of players as either Berries or Nuts those who occasionally glance up at a game between texting on their BlackBerries and those who are overly obsessed with their child's performance on the field. Even though Lily's thorough transformation appears to be a bit abrupt, soccer-playing readers will recognize some of her traits either in themselves or in others and enjoy this tale of friendship through teamwork. *Blair Christolon, Prince William Public Library System, Manassas, VA*

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From [Booklist](#)

Seventh-grade soccer star Lily James learns hard lessons about teammates and team playing when ball hogging earns her a two-game suspension at the same time that an angry, impulsive gesture leads to hours of washing dishes and windows in her father's restaurant to pay for a broken sign. Friendship issues, class differences, and the tensions of an extended family in a small house all play a part in this coming-of-age story, but its central concern is soccer, as both a physical and a psychological game. First-time novelist Montalbano, former cocaptain of her college team, writes convincingly, including appealing details of Lily's practice sessions with best friend Vee and new friend Tabitha as well as suspenseful play-by-play game descriptions that will be welcomed by middle-school soccer enthusiasts. Like Lily, though, they may want to ignore the excellent advice of her coach and her mother, given in homilies that go on just a bit too long. An awkward story line and too-convenient ending are redeemed by the fast-paced action, which is certain to appeal. Grades 5-8. --Kathleen Isaacs

Review

"Montalbano's love of the game is clearly evident in the detailed, technical descriptions of each play." - "Kirkus"

"An ideal pick for readers more interested in scoring goals than boyfriends." - "Publishers Weekly"

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Leslie Babcock:

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