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Painting The Black



Synopsis

In his senior year of high school, late bloomer Ryan Ward has just begun to feel the magic of baseball—the thrill of catching a wicked slider, of throwing a runner out, of training hard and playing hard. His friend Josh, the star of the team, has helped Ryan push his limits. But when Josh clearly pushes the limits too far, Ryan is faced with a heartbreaking dilemma: he must choose between his love for the game and his sense of integrity.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Grade 8 Up. During the summer before his senior year, Ryan Ward is thrilled when a kid his age moves in across the street. He's even more thrilled when he learns that Josh Daniels is a star athlete. The two play catch for hours and Ryan secretly dreams of catching for the varsity team in the spring. He watches in awe as Josh proceeds to become the school's starting quarterback and leads the football team to a terrific season, but he is unsettled by the aggressive side of his friend's personality. When baseball season finally arrives, Ryan makes the team as a third-string catcher. He eventually becomes a starter because he's the only one who can handle Josh's hard slider. Just before the championship game, Ryan stumbles upon and stops an assault on a girl in the school. He realizes that one of the masked assailants is Josh, but telling the authorities proves to be an agonizing decision. The book ends somewhat ironically, yet realistically, with Josh signing a

multimillion dollar professional baseball contract and receiving a tap on the wrist for his crime. Ryan, meanwhile, enrolls in the local junior college. Rather than producing a stereotyped high school jock, Deuker portrays Josh as a complex and multidimensional character. Ryan is a player who succeeds with his head, rather than through sheer talent. And while he learns about the subtleties of baseball, he also learns about the subtleties of life. A well-crafted sports novel that delivers without becoming didactic or boring. ?Todd Morning, Schaumburg Township Public Library, IL Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Gr. 8-12. After a disastrous fall from a tree, senior Ryan Ward wrote off baseball. But he is swept back into the game when cocky, charismatic Josh Daniels--a star quarterback with the perfect spiral pass as well as a pitcher with a mean slider--moves into the neighborhood. Josh is adept at placing his pitches on the line between fair and foul ("painting the black"), and in his sweep to sports fame, he lives his life much the same way. Ryan, whose spot on the team hinges on his ability to catch Josh's pitches, soon learns that more than a team slot is at stake. The well-written sports scenes--baseball and football--will draw reluctant readers, but it is Ryan's moral courage that will linger when the reading is done. Candace Smith --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I bought this for my students interested in sports. So far, the one boy who has read it really enjoyed it. He's a baseball nut.

I have read EVERY one of his books and they are FANTASTIC. I started when I was in high school and now with my 2 kids I get to put them to bed reading to them. Is it a sports book: yes but not the kind that you need to know about sports. He does an amazing job at bringing the story to life! The only problem is he doesn't write his books fast enough!

Great for the baseball lover. My 14 year old couldn't put the book down!

The book was amazing everybody should read it. I think this is one of my favorite books. So I hope you like it

Great!

This is a good book about a underdog that comes clean when it's hard to. This book is a story of pure courage. I highly recommend it.

One of my favorite novels of all time.

Ryan is in the summer before his senior year in high school, and he still feels like he was just visiting school this whole time. He never joined a team or organization, does okay but not great in his classes, and isn't sure where his life is going. When he was younger he used to love baseball and he was really good at it, but when he was twelve he fell out of a tree and broke several bones, including his ankle, which never quite healed right. Since then he hasn't played baseball. One day in the middle of the summer a new family moves in across the street. There is a guy Ryan's age named Josh, who is a real athletic superstar. He and Ryan become friends, and Josh convinces him that he would make a great baseball catcher. Josh tells him that teams always need catchers, because it's not a job with much glory and not many guys want to do it. Ryan gradually regains his love for the game of baseball and is eager to play again. He is thrilled with his new friend, whom he admires a great deal. At school, though, Ryan doesn't feel like he really fits in with Josh. Josh is always in the spotlight and he thrives on it. Furthermore, he often acts like a dumb jock, harassing girls and being loud and boisterous with his athlete friends. When both Josh and Ryan make the baseball team, though, things are at least good between them on the field. That is, until a confrontation between Josh and a female classmate puts Ryan in a bad position. I liked reading about baseball from a catcher's point of view. The author did a good job of explaining why it was such a good position to play. I liked Ryan's grandfather and the quiet way he affected Ryan's life. I also liked how Ryan took control of his life when Josh's focus shifted. Josh's character was obviously trouble, though, and Ryan knew it from the start of school. I didn't understand why Ryan continued to be loyal to him for so long after he saw what a jerk Josh was.

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