



The One Where the Kid Nearly Jumps to His Death and Lands in California

Mary Hershey

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“Mom didn’t think it was funny when I took off my leg at school, put it in my locker, and then tied a rag around my stump with fake blood on it. After that, though, the kids at school pretty much knew if anyone was going to be cracking jokes about my leg, it was gonna be me.”

So says thirteen-year-old Alastair Hudson in this darkly humorous coming-of-age story about the relationship between Alastair—who calls himself Stump to draw shocked attention to his missing leg—and his father, who left the family after the accident that resulted in the amputation five years earlier. When Alastair is sent to spend the summer with his dad and his dad’s new wife, father and son are forced to confront the truth of what happened years ago, finally allowing Alastair to move forward with his life.

The One Where the Kid Nearly Jumps to His Death and Lands in California Details

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From Reader Review The One Where the Kid Nearly Jumps to His Death and Lands in California for online ebook

Sharon Skinner says

Well-drawn characters. While the protagonist seemed a,most too self-aware for his age, I truly enjoyed getting into the head of an angsty, young teen with a prosthetic leg. His attitude and humor seemed perfectly real. Although, the one remaining loose thread at the end bothered me.

Lisa Nocita says

Alastair lives with his mom and her friend whom he calls Aunt Clem. His absentee dad has remarried and has invited Alastair to spend the summer with him in California. Alastair really doesn't want to go. He doesn't want to leave his mother (a recovering alcoholic) and he sure doesn't want to spend time getting reacquainted with his father, with whom he thinks he'll never measure up in his eyes because he isn't anything like his fitness obsessed, shallow father. Alastair reluctantly goes to California only to discover that his new step mother and he have more in common than he ever imagined. Skyla has two prosthetic legs to his one. Alastair thinks it must be his father's idea of a sick joke. In addition, Skyla is very wealthy and lives in a fantastic Oceanside house replete with its own staff. Alastair insists on being stump to annoy his father and does everything he can to make life difficult so he'll be sent home. Skyla's niece, Jesse, a teen soap star, asks Stump to be on their celebrity team for an adventure race charity fundraiser. Stump has eight weeks to get into shape and prepare for the race. "Now all he has to do is learn to swim in the ocean, win a battle of wills with his cantankerous coach, and confront father over the events that led to his life-altering accident." Of course, the road to self-improvement and enlightenment isn't a smooth one, but in the end, Stump comes away from his California visit a changed young man. Somewhat implausible but a fairly fun read, although it is hard to like Stump for most of the book. He comes off as a whiny sourpuss who refuses to give his father a second chance even though it's what he most wants. *Some mild language

Tristen says

I chose this book when I found it on a shelf at the library. In this book, Alastair Hudson, a thirteen-year-old amputee dreads going to spend the entire summer with his mother's ex-husband and his new wife. Life becomes slightly more bearable when he meets Jesse on the plane. He doesn't realize that this older girl that he has a bit of a crush is his stepmother's niece. He'll do anything to impress her, even if he has to learn to ocean swim with just his one leg. He also must mend his relationship with his father, even though it drives him crazy. My favorite quote is, "Sergio looked down all casual-like at my legs. 'So do you swim with or without your prosthetic?' 'I have a special swimming one with a secret four-horsepower propeller attached. It's retractable so the officials won't be able to see it,' I deadpanned." It is my favorite because it shows the funnier side of Alastair, which I prefer from the the angsty side. I think that the author's writing style was interesting and close to the real point-of-view from a teenage boy. However, I can't be sure since I myself am not one. I would recommend this book because it is funny, and I feel as if I am with the characters with myself. Alastair's story made me laugh out loud, and then want to cry because it was heartbreaking. This book was quite excellent.

7709tomas says

The One Where the Kid Nearly Jumps to his Death and Lands in California is a good book a kid dealing with his amputee leg, divorce, a girl and his dad who he always hated It is a great mix of characters and humor along with a good plot and ending. I would recommend this book to realistic fiction lovers.

Lisa says

When he was eight, Alastair lost his leg as the result of an accident that happened while he was on a skiing trip with his father. Shortly after, his parents divorced. Now that he's nearly fourteen, his father has invited Alastair to spend the summer in California to reconnect.

I'd like to stop here and note that this is exactly the same plot as *The Birthday Room* by Kevin Henkes, except in that book the boy had lost a pinky in a shop accident with his uncle. I don't think the plot similarity is bad, just amazing! Especially considering that they both just happened to be the first books I picked off the shelf on my most recent trip to the library, knowing nothing about either one. In spite of their similar themes, they are both very, very different books. *The Birthday Room* is understated, realistic, and has a kind of calm beauty and very sophisticated writing. In contrast, *The One Where the Kid . . .* is fast-paced, dramatic, action-packed, and funny. Both are good.

I liked how the characters in this book were flawed--and not in the "my flaws are actually adorable strengths" kind of way. Alastair, like many teenagers, expresses his emotions about the brokenness of the adults around him through actions that seem insane to those very same adults. He's so extreme and outrageous about it in the book that it's funny (for example: his response to his father's direction to put a shirt on before he cooks breakfast--which I won't spoil if you haven't read it), but it also gets to something very real about how teenagers behave.

And as always, it's nice to read a book with a character (multiple characters, in this case) who have some form of amputeeism.

Nicole says

I am really a 3 1/2 on this one. I did like it. It was funny and a quick read, I just didn't really like how one point was tied up at the end. Maybe it didn't need to be, but I would have liked that it was.

7709declan says

I thought this book was a very good book with a bit of a slow start. It's about this boy who, when he was little jumped off a ski lift and broke his leg really bad. So bad that to cut it off His dad and mom are divorced and they have some financial problems. This book is about Alastair trying to solve issues with his family and train for a marathon that he is only doing because of the pretty girl. I would recommend this book to people

who like casual books with not a lot of action.

Trevor says

One small part Whale Talk, another part One Fat Summer, The One Where the Kid Nearly Jumps to his Death and Lands in California is a book that touches on a lot of issues, some that whole teen novels have been written about, and amazingly does some justice to them all: summer romance, anger toward a distant parent, achieving goals, living with and/or overcoming a disability, parental substance abuse and recovery, losing loved ones, suppressed memories, anger issues...like I said, a lot is going on in the book!

Megan Anderson says

I really enjoyed this book. The narrator's voice was solid, his actions and personality were believable, and the conflict was real. There was a little too much coincidence going on in the beginning, but not so much that it distracted from the overall plot. A funny, enjoyable novel.

4/5 on here, 8/10 for myself

Mark says

I thought that the drama wouldn't work in theory, but the emotions played out nicely. This is another book where I turned the last page and said, "What the heck!" But not everything has to be resolved and that will be okay with me.

Cathy says

Alastair, who nicknames himself Stump lost his leg at age 8, after he jumped from a ski lift. He is now 13, his parents are divorced, and he must spend the summer with his father and the new wife, a very wealthy double amputee named Skyla. Stump struggles with the bitterness and anger he feels toward his dad for leaving his mom. He also develops a crush on Skyla's niece, teenage soap star Jessie; enters a triathlon to impress her; and meets a cranky, retired swim coach, who teaches Stump to swim and much more.

Vicki says

Alastair injures his leg in a fall when he was younger and had his leg amputated to save it. His parents separated, divorced shortly after, then when he is almost 13, he is sent to live with his father and new wife Skyla for the summer. Stump doesn't want to be there to reconnect with his dad and fights the visit every step of the way, even once he is there. Felt like a Danielle Steel book with the home he stayed in, meeting stars, and accomplishing almost the impossible. Good

Connie says

At age 8 Alastair laid a hundred dollar bill on the ski lift seat, raised the bar, and jumped 40 feet to the snow below. He so badly crushed one leg that it had to be removed. Five years later, his mother sends him to spend the summer with his father and new (legless) step-mother.

A mature read (subject, sexual content).

Deb says

Alastair, who jumped off a ski lift and shattered a leg and uses a prosthetic, is sent to California to spend the summer with his dad and his dad's new wife. What a surprise when he finds out she is a double amputee. "Stump" as he tells people he prefers to be called, has to work through a blinding anger towards his father, a crush on his step mom's niece and being coached for a charity triathlon by the world's meanest man. Very well written, Stump really grows up in the course of the summer, which is a good thing, because he was quite annoying at the beginning.

piratesPencil says

I read this book for the first time when I was a kid, and I thoroughly enjoyed it back then. And it has stood the test of time - I thoroughly enjoyed reading it now, too. Although it isn't THE best young adult book I've ever read, it's definitely one of the good ones.
