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Running Out Of Night



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Synopsis

A ChildrenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Book Review Seven Middle Grade Books for African American History Month PickÃ Â Fans of Elijah of Buxton, Trouble DonÃ¢â ¬â„¢t Last, and Stealing Freedom will be drawn to this tale of the incredible journey of an abused twelve-year-old white girl and an escaped slave girl who run away together and form a bond of friendship while seeking freedom.Ã Â Every day is a misery for a nameless, motherless Southern girl who is treated cruelly by her pa and brothers. Her life changes forever when a runaway slave named Zenobia turns to her for help and shelter. Longing for her own freedom, the girl decides to run away, and she and Zenobia set off on a harrowing journey. Along the way, Zenobia names the girl Lark, after the bird, for her ability to mimic its song.Ã Â Running by night, hiding by day, the girls are pursued by LarkÃ¢â ¬â„¢s pa and brothers and by ruthless slave catchers. Brightwell, another runaway slave, joins them, and the three follow secret signs to a stop on the Underground Railroad. When the hideout is raided and Zenobia and Brightwell are captured, Lark sets out alone to rescue her friends.A CBC Notable Social Studies Trade Book of the YearAn International Reading Association Best Chapter Book of the YearA Vermont Dorothy Canfield Fisher ChildrenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Book Award Master List Selection A Great Stone Face Book Award NomineeA New MexicoÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Land of Enchantment Book Award SelectionA Pennsylvania Young Reader's Choice Awards Selection"Lush, detailed, total-immersion storytelling."--Kirkus Reviews"Distinguished byÃ Â lively descriptionsÃ Â and dialogue."--Publisher's Weekly"A gripping historical novel . . . heart-stopping, heart-racing and eventually heart-easing.--Library Voice"Powerful debut novel."--International Reading Association"An essential read for those interested in American history."--San Louis Obispo Tribune"A gritty, engrossing tale.--Slo Coast JournalFrom the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

Customer Reviews

Gr 4Ã¢â ¬â œ7Ã¢â ¬â •When Zenobia, a fugitive slave, creeps onto the porch of an 1858 Virginia home, the white girl inside schemes to prevent her abusive father from spotting the escapee. Denied a name and mistreated by her motherless family, the girl quickly concludes that her circumstances look little better than plucky Zenobia's and the two resolve to flee together. Neither one has a route planned; still, equipped with determination, good-luck charms, and a prodigious amount of plot-finagling by Lovejoy, they continually elude the passel of slave catchers and incensed family members chasing them. Narrator Lark (her new friend gifts her the name) and Zenobia, joined by an older teen slave, aim for the Quaker town of Waterford, where Lark believes folks will aid in their escape. Throughout the somewhat haltingly paced tribulations they encounterÃ¢â ¬â •the town proves vulnerable to the one-dimensional villains trailing the group and illness or injury strikes all threeÃ¢â ¬â •Lark displays a charming resolve to survive as a trio, an attitude most audiences will find winning, if unlikely and possibly ill-advised. The rural, mid-19th-century dialect, coupled with the author's interest in ethnobotany, roots the story deeply in the houses, forests, gardens, and even streambeds of antebellum Virginia; Lark's knowledge of plants allows for a satisfying, flora-induced revenge on one slave runner. Unfortunately, a contrived showdown tidies away the rest of the menacing trackers and the abrupt ending feels a mite cheery for the reality of a poor, newly orphaned girl and two fugitive slaves who haven't even made it out of Virginia. Some readers will suspend their disbelief, however, to enjoy the triumph of these intrepid souls.Ã¢â ¬â •Robbin E. Friedman, Chappaqua Library, NY --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

" Lush, detailed, total-immersion storytelling." - Kirkus Reviews" What stands out most is the author's depiction of the rural Virginia setting. Lark's knowledge of the natural world leads to a satisfying, nonviolent resolution. An Underground Railroad story with a distinctive flavor." - Booklist

ReviewsÃ Â "Great historical fiction read." -Ã Â Wandering Librarians (wanderinglibrarians.blogspot.com) Ã Â "Written in a believably rough-edged dialect (a glossary is included) and distinguished by lively descriptions and dialogue, LovejoyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s story offers a tense account of the perils facing those who sought freedom in the lead-up to the Civil War." - Publisher's WeeklyÃ Â Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“The rural, mid-19th-century dialect, coupled with the author's interest in ethnobotany, roots the story deeply in the houses, forests, gardens, and even streambeds of antebellum Virginia.Ã¢â ¬Â• - School Library Journal "Rarely do page-turners written for middle-school kids also ignite excitement in adults. (A notable exception is the series of Harry Potter books.) Fewer still explore the secret sorrows of children's lives in the mid-1800s, whether enslavedÃ Â orÃ Â free.Ã Â Running Out of Night, a debut novel from CalifornianÃ Â Sharon Lovejoy, a veteran author-illustrator known nationally for her prizewinning nonfiction books on gardening and nature, gives you both. Like Rowling's Potter, her book follows the desperate quest of youngsters who've seen the darker sides of human nature. Instead of Harry, Hermione and Ron, it's preteen girls Lark and Zenobia who flee their grim lives in search of a sunnier, freer world." - Op Ed NewsÃ Â From the Hardcover edition.

May I just say that I don't usually write many book reviews. I should write more often because I truly appreciate reading reviews written by others when I am considering a book. Having said that -- I truly wanted to write THIS review. The story of Lark and her slave friend Zenobia moved me in such a way that I wanted others to have the same wonderful experience with this wonderful story. After reading this book -- I went back and bought it for EVERYONE on my gift list. Written for young adults -- this is very much a story that can be loved and appreciated by anyone. A coming of age story -- this is also a story about determination, the power of true spirit and the fulfillment of dreams. I loved every single minute of reading this incredible book. I think this should be required reading for our young people in middle school as they begin to learn history and the stories of those who made us all who we are today. I can't imagine that anyone could read this book and not be emotionally moved by the story...

I read young adult fiction very selectively, but the immersion in this time period attracted me along with the idea of flight. The title itself makes me cringe and look over my shoulder. Still, I was amazed at how suspenseful and compelling from the get go Running...was . How each chapter ending made for a page turner that carried me forward . The combo of bedtime reading and short chapters enticed me long past bedtime on numerous nights! I, in fact, read Running out of Night

while listening to the audible version of The Good Lord Bird by James McBride. Both speak from the voice of emerging adolescence one a girl and one a boy, leaving a childhood of poverty and hardship,using intelligence of all kinds to read people and the environment to tap into their inner resourcefulness in the midst harrowing of circumstances. The dialect used in both enhanced my understanding of the times and deepened my appreciation of the value of hearing the written word. Perhaps like poetry, some words are meant to be heard, particularly if getting into the dialect is hard. Im going to have my granddaughter start the book reading out loud. Running out of night is a story of both perseverance, and survival, and the amazing goodness that so often shows up just when you need it. I was left with a feeling of optimism and confidence that young people are so often so much wiser and more resilient at a younger age than we ever give them credit for..a lesson worth remembering as we l peer outwardly at the darkness and troubled times we see and hear about every day.I'm on the lookout for more young adult fiction that give insight into youthful resilience in difficult times.

My wife, Liz Krieger, a children's librarian for 38 years, and I wrote this review for my weekly history column in the San Luis Obispo County Tribune. We purchased three copies and had to buy eight more copies from to supply the eager readers at Hawthorne Elementary School where Liz volunteers: "A tall stand of orange-flowered jewelweed hummed with bumblebees. I yanked off a handful of the leaves and bent to the job of pickin off the knobbledly red fingers that circled the stem a few inches aboveground. "Emma looked on frog-eyed as I rubbed the jewelweed leaves and red fingers acrost my hands, neck, and face. "Gettin ready to pick some poison ivy. It don't never bother me, but I'm takin care jus in case it acts up on me this time." Lark is preparing one of the most appropriate acts of revenge in all literature against a slave bounty hunter in 1850's Northern Virginia. The poison ivy not only puts a "pox" on the bounty hunter, but proves to be an essential ticket for the Underground Railroad's escape toward freedom. Sharon Lovejoy's enthralling novel, Running Out of Night is the story of a motherless twelve-year-old white girl. Her "pa" and brothers call her "girl." She knows no other name and is forced to do their bidding as a starving servant. When "girl" encounters Zenobia, an escaped slave who has seen her own family separated and sold, the two bond. The girls run away together. Both understand that "girl" has a great advantage in the color of her skin, but share a life of misery. Hearing "girl" mimic the song of a lark, Zenobia names her after the bird. The pair are pursued by Pa, angry over the loss of "girl's" labor and eager for a large reward for a runaway slave of child bearing age. Soon other bounty hunters join the chase. All of Lark's and Zenobia's knowledge of the world of nature help the pair survive. They are

finally given shelter in the abolitionist Quaker community of Waterford. Hidden from prying eyes in the basement and attic, both Zenobia and Lark heal under the care of Auntie Theodate, where they get to know Brightwell, another escaped slave. Lark discerns that Zenobia, Brightwell and Auntie Theodate are her real family, a circle of friends who love her. But Pa and the bounty hunters are relentless. Lark hears a terrible struggle in the house from her attic hiding place. When she comes down, she finds her new family missing. She is determined to rescue them. The novel is set in Northern Virginia near the Maryland border. It's the South, but the village of Waterford is a real place, proud of its heritage of abolitionism as a key stop in the Underground Railroad. Founded in 1733 by the Quaker Amos Janney, the village thwarted the Confederacy during the Civil War. Sharon Lovejoy is descended from these Quaker families along the banks of Catoctin Creek. The creek flows into the Potomac and is now receiving attention for its distilleries producing premium whiskey. Her "voices of the Catoctin" are authentic. Her personal knowledge of the local traditions and folklore make Running Out of Night an essential read for those interested in American history. Sharon is well known for the Heart's Ease, the herb and garden shop she founded in Cambria, as well as best-selling garden, nature and children's books. Her knowledge of plants and animals is integral to the plot, especially in Lark's, Zenobia's and Auntie Theodate's potions and antidotes. Incidentally, if you suffer from Poison Oak, our Western version of Poison Ivy, you can choose from at least 17 different brands of jewelweed soap and salves on . It does indeed removes urushiol, the invisible oil from plants which causes the contact dermatitis from Poison Oak. Count on Sharon Lovejoy for some terrific insights into human nature and the world around us in this fun read.

Running Out of Night is a thrilling tale of two girls who are trying the find the life of freedom that they know they deserve. My ten year old daughter, who read the book for her book club, couldnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t put it down and when she finished it, declared it to be one of the best books that sheÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s ever read. My heart was also captured by Lark and her friend, Zenobia and the colorful descriptions of the flora of Virginia. The book is an extraordinary window into life in the time of legal slavery in our country and would be a great addition to any school curricula for this time period. Two thumbs up from both my daughter and I! Perfect for Age 10 to 100, it will keep you on the edge of your chair as you follow these girlsÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ adventure!

I ordered 5 copies of this book, one for me, the others for gifts. From the first paragraph to the last I was living "girl's" life, her fears, her caring heart. I was amazed at how Ms Lovejoy was able to make the story even more realistic by writing in the dialect of the people and time In Virginia. I felt I

had gone back in time and place and was right along with the girls all the way throughout their journey. It was so descriptive. Lark had no idea how many lives she touched during her travels and she so deserved the beautiful gift at the end of the story. I am now reading it to my grandchildren. Congratulations Sharon Lovejoy. Keep writing!

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