

I Funny: A Middle School Story

By James Patterson, Chris Grabenstein

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Jamie Grimm is a middle schooler on a mission: he wants to become the world's greatest standup comedian--even if he doesn't have a lot to laugh about these days. He's new in town and stuck living with his aunt, uncle, and their evil son Stevie, a bully who doesn't let Jamie's wheelchair stop him from messing with Jamie as much as possible. But Jamie doesn't let his situation get him down. When his Uncle Frankie mentions a contest called The Planet's Funniest Kid Comic, Jamie knows he has to enter. But are the judges only rewarding him out of pity because of his wheelchair, like Stevie suggests? Will Jamie ever share the secret of his troubled past instead of hiding behind his comedy act?

Following the bestselling success of the hilarious *Middle School, The Worst Years of My Life*, James Patterson continues to dish out the funnies in another highly-illustrated, heartfelt middle school story. (Includes more than 175 black-and-white illustrations.)

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal
Gr 4-7-Jamie Grimm is a funny guy, obsessed with creating and collecting joke material. He studies all of the top comedians and tries out his jokes on everyone, be it his classmates or the customers at his Uncle Frankie's diner. He hopes to enter the Planet's Funniest Kid Comic Contest even though just the thought of it makes him a nervous wreck. Readers learn that humor for Jamie is a means of survival-things aren't easy for him. He doesn't like to talk about why it all happened, but he had to move to a new city, to live with "the Smileys," his very unfunny aunt and uncle. At Long Beach Middle School, he is treated horribly by the resident bully. Steve Kosgrov is not only a notorious meany, but is also Jamie's new adoptive brother. Steve gets his kicks by locking him out in the cold and leaving him stuck in a sand dune unable to move. Jamie isn't able to move because he uses a wheelchair-he can't walk at all. The grimness of his situation is relieved by two good buddies, his encouraging Uncle Frankie, and his ever-present ability to see humor in every situation. Patterson's tale includes twists and turns that make for an engrossing read. Readers will be on Jamie's side all the way, cheering him on in the comedy contest, and also to win the girl of his dreams. Line drawings are sprinkled throughout, adding more humorous details.-Diane McCabe, John Muir Elementary, Santa Monica, CAα(c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

From Booklist
Built around the notion of a middle-grade stand-up comedian who delivers jokes sitting down because he is confined to a wheelchair, this tale is written as an extended monologue in which Jamie Grimm (get it?) introduces loyal school friends, his mostly loving adoptive family, and Stevie—his new brother, who is also a vicious bully both online and in person—then proceeds to savage them all indiscriminately from a talent-contest stage. Playing readers’ heartstrings like a banjo, Patterson and Grabenstein also chuck in two girlfriends and a first kiss, hints of a family tragedy strung out until near the end, an uplifting spontaneous routine delivered to the patients of a children’s rehab center, and, both in the narrative and in the line drawings on almost every page, dozens of gags both classic (Do zombies eat doughnuts with their fingers? No. They usually eat their fingers separately) and not so much (When kids in Grossville say, ‘Mommy, can I lick the bowl?’ their mothers say, ‘Be quiet, dear, and just flush’). In all, a brimming bucket of ba-da-bing! that hardly needs a celebrity author to crank up the audience numbers. HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: Patterson’s full-court press to capture the attention of every market in the reading public continues—and 25 million books sold for young readers proves it’s working. Grades 4-7. --John Peters

Review
Praise for *I Funny*:

A #1 *New York Times* bestseller
A 2014 Dorothy Canfield Fisher Award Nominee
A 2014 Maryland Black-Eyed Susan Book Award Winner

"....Poignant.... Readers learn about [Jamie's] devastating loss and recovery from a tragic event....The affecting ending, which reveals a more vulnerable Jamie behind the guise of his humor, celebrates Jamie's resilient spirit."
?***Kirkus Reviews***

"The broad humor that runs throughout this heavily illustrated story... masks personal pain, demonstrating resiliency in the face of tragedy."
?***Publishers Weekly***

"Play[s] readers' heartstrings like a banjo.... A brimming bucket of *bada-bing!*"?***Booklist***

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jason Dolly:

In this 21st hundred years, people become competitive in each way. By being competitive today, people have do something to make them survives, being in the middle of typically the crowded place and notice by simply surrounding. One thing that occasionally many people have underestimated the item for a while is reading. That's why, by reading a guide your ability to survive raise then having chance to stay than other is high. In your case who want to start reading any book, we give you this specific I Funny: A Middle School Story book as beginner and daily reading e-book. Why, because this book is more than just a book.

Angela Thomas:

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Erika Yoon:

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Mary Otter:

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