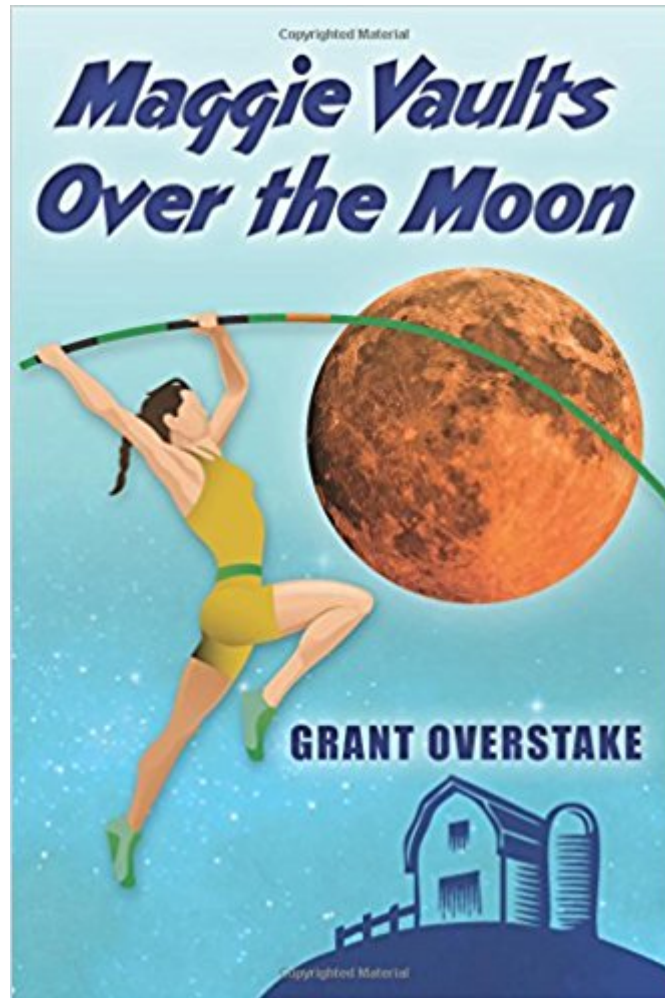




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Maggie Vaults Over The Moon



Synopsis

SOAR WITH MAGGIE! Maggie Steele is a gritty farm girl who pours her broken heart into the daring sport of pole-vaulting. Driven by a secret she cannot share with anyone, Maggie finds herself on a quest to soar waaay higher than critics think "a girl" should ever go. An enchanting work of magical realism with brilliant descriptions of a breathtaking sport, *Maggie Vaults Over the Moon* is a powerful and rewarding read for mid-grade to adults.

EVERYONE'S CHEERING FOR MAGGIE! "That one in a thousand books you'll carry with you forever!" -- Margaret Wheatley, 16, Florida "I've probably read it more than 20 times. I will never get tired of reading it, over and over, again and again." -- Taylor Millsap, 14, Illinois "The positive influence this book can have on young athletes is incalculable." -- Erica Bartolina, US Olympian, Coach of Champions "Maggie made me feel like I could accomplish anything!" -- Makayla Linebarger, Jr. Olympics Champion "I myself experienced loss when I was a young girl. Sports were my outlet and helped me through some of the hardest times of my life. This book captured me cover to cover. I highly recommend *Maggie Vaults Over the Moon*!" -- Becky Holliday, US Olympian "Every single person should be able to relate to Maggie." -- Jeremy Scott, US Olympian "One of the most pure and wholesome young adult books I've ever read!" -- Shannon Clark, Girls Gone Sporty Ambassador "Maggie's inspirational story will make any girl feel like they can accomplish their dreams." -- Taylor Marie Swanson, National Collegiate Champion "Instantly transported me back to my childhood. Will translate to anyone who allows themselves to be young at heart." -- John Rinkenbaugh, TV Producer, Kansas boy "A fantastic book! Well put together and very inspirational!" -- John Mayor, Olympic Torch-Bearer and British Champion "A beautiful story of triumph through adversity." -- Bill Vogrin, Newspaper Columnist "I highly recommend it for all teens, especially those seeking direction during the storm and stress of adolescence." -- Timothy M. Tays, PhD, Clinical Psychologist "A great family book!" -- Coach Joe Dial, Oral Roberts University & Dial Athletics "A great story of perseverance, grit, faith, and bouncing back after hardships." -- Ellie Spain, British Champ and Coach "A well-written tale of epic courage." -- Kim Ring, Middle School Teacher "I enthusiastically recommend it!" -- Barbara Gruener, National School of Character Coach "Getting to know Maggie Steele, her family, and the whole warm and caring community of Grain Valley was a pure delight." -- Nancy Breth, Author "I loved the book and wish I had written it. That's about as high a compliment as I can make." -- Kimbrook Tennal, High School Coach "The world needs more Maggies!" -- Jolene Froom, Sports Mom

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 - 12

Customer Reviews

"Girls who play sports and the coaches and families who support them will thoroughly enjoy this warm, uplifting story." -- Christine Brennan, USA TODAY, author of Inside Edge and Best Seat in the House "A fine young adult novel about perseverance in sports and in life." -- KIRKUS REVIEWS "An inspirational pick for young adult fiction collections." -- MIDWEST BOOK REVIEWS "Heartwarming and realistic, this book is a winner!" -- Nancy Julien Kopp, CHICKEN SOUP & GUIDEPOST "This inspiring tale celebrates the courage to turn tragedy and loss into something positive, and how the determination to master a sport can heal." -- Doug Bouma, Editor, VAULTER Magazine.

Former Miami Herald Sports Writer and newspaper editor, Grant Overstake competed in the decathlon for the University of Kansas Jayhawks. A multiple award-winner for excellence in writing, Maggie Vaults Over the Moon is his first novel.

"Maggie Vaults Over the Moon" is the PERFECT mood-elevator for any young person who has gone through, or is going through tough times - - in other words, EVERY Teen on the planet. Maggie is the perfect gift for any occasion for every young person you know. It is an uplifting, feel-good story about a young woman who overcomes gender bias, disappointment, loss and other obstacles by exploring her own identity and discovering her greatness was always there -

- it only had to be set free. What I liked most about the story was that it took the main character through a process of self-discovery that will serve as the perfect template for EVERY young person's own journey of self-discovery. This is more than "just a story." I will go so far as to predict that anyone of any age who reads this book will experience significant discoveries about their own potential greatness and ability for dream fulfillment. Wow! I'm STILL hovering a foot off the ground from reading "Maggie Vaults Over the Moon" ...which proves that all of us are still young in our hearts - - and, if we are open to new discoveries, can still find unexplored depths and potentials in ourselves that are always with us, if we would only set them free. I say again: WOW! In my opinion, this is an instant classic that will serve as an ideal gift for young people for years to come.

I love a good read, however, it has been a while since I've done a book review here. Before I even began *Maggie Vaults Over the Moon*, I gave author/fellow Brooks ID teammate Grant Overstake my word that I would review his uplifting fictional story of loss, family, meaning-making and of course-track and field. Per usual I tend to/can't help reading through a psychological lens. This time I read through an inquisitive one as well as this distance runner knows very little about the discipline of pole-vaulting. All I knew before reading is that it looks both scary and really cool at the same time! I have always secretly admired the grace and grit of a pole vault athlete as well. In the spirit of not giving too much away, Overstake's tale takes us to the plains of rural Kansas, a town called Grain Valley to be exact, and tells the story of Maggie Steele, an adolescent who loses her brother to a car accident early in the story. Maggie is then faced with the difficulty of helping her father run his farm while simultaneously coping with the loss of her brother and forming her identity and struggling to find her true ambitions and identity. Overstake's novel takes the reader on an oftentimes emotional 211-page journey of Maggie's senior year of high school as she comes to terms with the loss of her admired (who also happens to be a star football player) brother while trying to find her own identity and passion. The reader gets a glimpse of the isolating effects of loss, family conflict and resolution, and finding your voice through athletics. Throughout the book, we see Maggie retreat to the barn where she is taught pole-vaulting by her brother's voice working through her. I liked 'Maggie Vaults' central theme of the transformative power of sport; although I have been fortunate to this point to not have experienced such tremendous hardship, I too have found meaning in life by my participation in sports as the protagonist heals through training to be a pole vaulter and forming a new identity as an athlete. While some parts of the story draw more on fantasy-as Maggie's brother Alex "speaks to her" frequently throughout may seem far-fetched, the central messages from the story ring true in the form of faith, family, risk-taking and the gradual process of

what therapists call "restorying" (or changing their personal narrative from negative to positive) their lives. We see a young lady adrift and grieving at the beginning of the book transform to a well-adjusted, bound-for-success young woman. I almost cheered for this fictional character more than once while reading. Psychologically speaking, the notion of restorying is featured as this young woman struggles to determine her identity and find meaning in adversity. We often see her becoming more open with taking risks (as she became the only female pole vaulter on Grain Valley High's track team), and display good-old-fashioned resilience. I also picked up underpinnings of Elizabeth Kubler-Ross' stages of grief model as Maggie processes from denial to acceptance of her brother's death. One of the most uplifting themes of Overstake's work is that of believing in one's self and going "against the grain" (no pun intended) as the reader watches an "average farm girl" turn into a top athlete through her work ethic and trust in things she didn't understand (and I'm sure wearing Brooks running shoes helped too!). Despite a considerable fantasy element in *Maggie Vaults Over the Moon*, the principles and message are solid and clear: life is messy and unpredictable, however we choose whether to be the victim or the victor over circumstance. It appears that Maggie's idea of keeping her brother's memory alive was expressed in her athletic training. I would recommend this book to any young person interested in an uplifting and slightly sobering story. I did finish this book with a positive feeling. From a professional standpoint this would be a good resource for those coping with loss or difficult circumstances, especially adolescents and young adults. It is clear that Overstake understands the experience of a young person, especially an athlete. Professionals in sport or helping areas-including coaches and teachers- may also be interested in this often-entertaining and easy-read-text. I would also recommend this book to many of my high school athletes in my practice to help provide a clear example of the notion that circumstances are temporary and don't have to define you. I guess *Maggie Vaults Over the Moon* is another good example of what can happen if you stay the course.

It was refreshing to see a story written that did not have violence or any reference to tearing down anything. It did, however, have real life situations to trigger growth in the characters, and teaches cooperation gets people further than standing alone. Maggie's struggle to find her true calling after the death of her brother is a true life situation that people can identify with, making it believable. This story shows how things get better and better when people come together to overcome problems. It shows how our lives interconnect, and we don't live in a vacuum. I like that there is a Grandma that has wisdom to share in a loving way, teaching Maggie that love never dies, although it may change form. I think it is time for this story to be told. Those of us who have maintained an ongoing

relationship with relatives, friends, or loved ones long after their bodies are gone, know this to be a true story. It's time to let the cat out of the bag. Also, there is no fear, or scary bumps in the night to go along with this experience. I like that it raises and uplifts the characters, and the reader. I did not feel down after reading it.

In writing classes we are taught that writers should write what they know. Grant Overstake, author of "Maggie Vaults Over the Moon," is clearly intimate with his subject. He has written a fast paced, emotionally engaging YA novel set in rural Kansas. The characters are unique and believable--farm kids and small town athletes--and they propel the plot from tragedy to triumph. The setting certainly rings true, from hard farm life to small and huge track meets. It does not surprise me that such a fine story has emerged from Grant Overstake. I knew him as a teammate and friend on the KU track team in the 1970s (along with Steve Rainbolt, the current WSU head coach mentioned in the story). Grant was as kind as he was hardworking, and embodied the determination and wholesomeness he placed in his young protagonist, Maggie Steele. "Maggie Vaults Over the Moon" is an intimate read, and I highly recommend it for all teens, especially those seeking direction during the storm and stress of adolescence.

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