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This Kid Can Fly: It's About Ability (NOT Disability)



Synopsis

"At once beautiful and heartbreaking, Aaron Philip found a way to make me laugh even as I choked up, found a way to bring on my empathy without ever allowing me to feel sorry for him. An eye-opening debut." —Jacqueline Woodson, National Book Award winner and Newbery Honor author of *Brown Girl Dreaming* In this heartbreakingly honest memoir, Aaron Philip, a fourteen-year-old boy with cerebral palsy, shows how he isn't defined so much by his disability as he is by his abilities. Written with award-winning author Tonya Bolden, *This Kid Can Fly* chronicles Aaron's extraordinary journey from happy baby in Antigua to confident teen artist in New York City. His honest, often funny stories of triumph—despite physical difficulties, poverty, and other challenges—are as inspiring as they are eye-opening. Includes photos and original illustrations from Aaron's personal collection.

Book Information

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

Gr 5-8 •This memoir by a 14-year-old Tumblr artist and self-published author with cerebral palsy (CP) is both inspirational and amusing. Philip was born in St. John's in Antigua and Barbuda. When he was two years old, his motor skills were severely impaired, which caused him intense pain. To uncover what ailed him, his parents moved him to the United States, where he was

diagnosed with CP. This condition posed an extreme challenge for Philip until he started intensive speech, physical, and occupational therapy. His family tried their best to give him a stable life over the years, despite many hurdles. Because Philip received better care in the United States, he remained there while his mother and father took turns staying with him (one parent would return to St. John's to look after Philip's younger brother, Aren). Poverty and homelessness took a toll on the boy's friendships and school life. Nevertheless, he maintained a close relationship with his brother, made new friends at summer camp, and created a successful and still active Tumblr blog, "Aaronverse," where he writes about his experiences with CP and the discrimination that those with disabilities face. Philip also dabbled in making kawaii art (a form of very cute Japanese artwork), which later led to him self-publishing his graphic novel, *Tanda*. The blog's visibility and appreciation gave him the chance to visit and present his work at the Tumblr headquarters. Philip is a courageous young person whose motivation, intelligence, and creativity come through easily.

VERDICT Fans of memoirs and those who are interested in learning more about CP will appreciate this humbling and heartwarming read. —Jess Gafkowitz, New York Public Library

“This book will inspire many children to work a little harder and dream a little bigger. It inspired me.” (Cammie McGovern, author of *Say What You Will*) “Following Aaron’s journey as he overcame countless adversities with endless humor and positivity was nothing short of awe-inspiring. I am delighted to know the world will get to read his story.” (Shane Burcaw, author of *Laughing at My Nightmare*) “This story of how a boy with cerebral palsy and his family navigate an indifferent social system is proof that the human spirit has no boundaries.” (Sonia Manzano, Sesame Street actor and author of *Becoming Maria: Love and Chaos in the South Bronx*) “This inspiring glimpse into the life of a real kid goes beyond disability to celebrate his remarkable ability.” (Booklist) “Philip’s simple, chatty account of both physical and societal challenges...will motivate readers with and without disabilities to support accessibility and inclusion.” (Kirkus Reviews)

This is a terrific introduction for a middle- or high-schooler (or even us older folks) to a life that is completely different--yet familiar, warm, and friendly. Bursting with charm, Aaron is a 13-year-old New Yorker who was born in the Caribbean with cerebral palsy and came to the U.S. seeking medical treatment and, ultimately, other social services. His parents' struggle to do everything they can for him--including long periods of separation--is truly inspiring. But the driving force of this

easy-going, companionable memoir is Aaron's glimmering personality--his creative energy, persistence, and abiding sense that all things are possible. I look forward to his next adventures, and after you read this you will too.

Very well written! I enjoyed the trip to Aaronville.

wonderful book

This book is amazing and extremely inspiring. I couldn't stop reading it and was so touched and amazed by it. I definitely recommend buying it!

This is a heartfelt, beautifully written story about a boy coming of age with disabilities but real ABILITIES.

This book is absolutely incredible. Hilarious and moving at the same time

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