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Review: Savvy

Rachel Schwedt

Liberty University, reschwed@liberty.edu

Janice A. DeLong

Liberty University, jadelong@liberty.edu

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Law, Ingrid, *Savvy*. Dial Books for Young Readers, 2008. ISBN: 9780803733060, Ages 11-13

Awards: Newbery Honor, Publishers Weekly Best Book of the Year, New York Times Bestseller

Description

The Beaumont family is unique. On their thirteenth birthday, each member inherits a special gift from their mother's line which they call their "savvy". Mibs is well aware of the abilities of her family and her extended relatives but is anxious to discover her own. On the eve of her big day, however, Mibs' father is seriously injured in an accident and her birthday plans are interrupted. Thinking that her yet-to-be-discovered gift might save the life of her father, the young teen slips away and hides on board the bus of a Bible salesman who she believes is going to the city where her father is kept in the hospital. Joined by her brothers and the children of the preacher, Mibs is dismayed to find the bus going in another direction away from the desired destination. The resulting road trip proves most entertaining as quirky and likable characters are introduced and Mibs' gift is revealed.

Critique

Law has created a charming, entertaining story that reads like a modern-day tall tale. The giftings inherited by the Beaumont family are unique and sometimes outrageous. In discovering their nature and how to control them the family members discover much about themselves while learning the value of self-control. Mibs learns that no matter how gifted she is, there are no easy answers to the difficult situations that occur in life. On the journey to reach Mibs' father, all of the wacky, but believable characters on the bus encounter situations that encourage them to believe in themselves and to care for others. The young reader may discover with the characters that relationships are more important than personal giftings. Altogether, it is a delightful book.

Character Themes: Individuality, Self-respect, Family Loyalty, Spunk