



Odessa Again

Dana Reinhardt

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Fourth grader Odessa Green-Light lives with her mom and her toad of a little brother, Oliver. Her dad is getting remarried, which makes no sense according to Odessa. If the prefix "re" means "to do all over again," shouldn't he be remarrying *Mom*? Meanwhile, Odessa moves into the attic room of their new house. One day she gets mad and stomps across the attic floor. Then she feels as if she is falling and lands . . . on the attic floor. Turns out that Odessa has gone back in time a whole day! With this new power she can fix all sorts of things--embarrassing moments, big mistakes, and even help Oliver be less of a toad. Her biggest goal: reunite Mom and Dad.

From the Hardcover edition.

Odessa Again Details

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Author : Dana Reinhardt

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From Reader Review *Odessa Again* for online ebook

Maria Antonia says

Odessa's mom and dad are newly divorced and that means a lot of changes for Odessa and her brother, Oliver. Her new attic bedroom gives her the ability to allow for her change things about her day. I like the magic in this book and also the realism. In some ways this book was trying to be a little Parent-Trap. (And I love The Parent Trap movie!) But I like how it ultimately didn't quite go that route with the happily-ever-after ending. Not that the ending was miserable. Just... realistic.

This review was originally published at my blog.

Mari says

A solid choice for booktalking to 3rd and 4th graders, especially if you need to have a book with particular girl appeal. With a great hook, likeable characters, and situations spot on for kids at this age, I think it will be a big hit. If I were rating it on my reading preferences, I might only give it a 3. However, I think it is so well tuned to its target audience that it needs to have a 4 star rating.

Pat says

This book showed me that children of divorce really do always hope in their heart of hearts that parents will get back together. It's heartwarming and bitter sweet.

Sara says

This is kind of a gentle children's version of Groundhog Day, which is awesome. I liked that it was highly conceptual fantasy (girl has the ability to send herself back in time a certain number of hours by jumping on a specific spot on her floor), mixed with super realistic family drama. Would make an excellent book discussion book -- you could talk a lot about what is worth going back in time and changing. I also liked the depictions of a divorced family and how it affects kids, and sibling rivalry/love. This could be a good book talk!

Kidsmomo says

Review by Karen, intended for young readers:

What would you change if you could travel back in time? But wait! Before you start envisioning big changes like preventing wars or thwarting the rise of Hitler, just know that you can only travel back 24 hours. And then the next time you do it, you can only travel back 23 hours — and then 22, and then 21, and so on...

That's what happens in *Odessa Again* by Dana Reinhardt.

When Odessa discovers the magical power of her new bedroom after moving houses, she first focuses on fixing her personal life — like opting out of a bold new haircut after she tries it the first time and realizes it looks terrible, and avoiding an embarrassing moment with her crush.

But after a while, Odessa starts to feel like maybe she's been given a gift that she's been wasting. As the hours tick down, she begins to be more choosy about when to use up time travel. And what if she's been given this opportunity for a reason — a very specific reason: to save her family?

I won't go into more detail about what's at stake for Odessa and her family because I think you'll enjoy Odessa's process of exploration and discovery — after all, Odessa doesn't start out knowing what she'll eventually focus on! But if you do want more info before you start reading, just check out the synopsis on the book cover; it definitely reveals more about what Odessa wants to change by the end of the story.

I recommend this book for fans of Wendy Mass' Willow Falls books, *All the Answers* by Kate Messner, and *The Fourteenth Goldfish* by Jennifer L. Holm. In other words, if you like books about family and friendship — with just a touch of magic — then *Odessa Again* will be a great pick for you!

This review also appears on Kismomo.com.

Laura McNeal says

This wonderful novel reminds me of how happy I used to be when the Scholastic book orders would arrive and my teacher would sort out the loot and I would find on my desk brand new glossy editions of Beverly Cleary novels. The kid that I was and the adult that I am now are in complete agreement: *Odessa* is a sweet, funny, timeless book with a magical premise.

Maryam says

It was really interesting. Odessa is a 4th grade girl who is sick of her younger brother (Oliver) bothering her, one night she pushed him and ran up to her room and jumped so hard she went back in time. This book was really easy to read and it didn't have any complicated words.

Miss Sarah says

Odessa is unhappy about her current life with divorced parents. One day after being sent to her room she falls through the floor to yesterday. Can she change life? Does she want to?

Nicole says

Odessa Again by Dana Reinhardt

Wendy Lamb Books, 2013

Fantasy

196 pages

Recommended for grades 3-6

Fans of *A Year Without Autumn* and *11 Birthdays* will enjoy this time travel story. Here we have Odessa, parents recently divorced, father getting remarried and mother moving into a new house. These kinds of changes are the real deal issues so many of our students are dealing with, and they can be heavy on young shoulders. None of Odessa's family issues are taken lightly, but the book does not have an oppressive feel due to the fantasy element. Odessa finds a spot in her attic bedroom that she can jump through to go back in time 24 hours. When she does it a second time it is 23 hours earlier. Each time she jumps she loses an hour on how far back she can go. Once Odessa figures this out she has a lot of choices to make on how to use her opportunities. Odessa starts with fixing little things around her and her friends or school situations, often very little things. When Odessa realizes that she can do more with this discovery she begins focusing on not just herself, which is when Odessa begins to grow.

I wasn't enamored with the writing or the story, but I know that kids will find this idea very, very cool!

Lisa W. says

Eh. Clunky writing at times, telling rather than showing what the characters did. I wish I could give it a 2.5. Remarriage and a light fantasy (girl stomps on floorboard....goes back in time 24 hours. Why? Who knows) I didn't mind that they did not explain the time travel mystery, wish the writing would have been strong. A good pick for girls and people who enjoy family stories. Illustrated, quick read. Positive portrayal of divorce family with parent co-parently well and cordially. Worth a try for kids who enjoy school stories, fan of *Junie B* and similar fiesty girls.

Booklist Reviews

Odessa Green-Light's life has been tougher since her parents' divorce. Her dad is remarrying, and Odessa, her mom, and little brother, Oliver, have to move to a new house. At least Odessa gets to bunk in the attic, but once there, she has a surprising experience. She falls through the attic floor and goes back a day in time. At first, this just seems weird. Then Odessa begins to see the possibilities that come with reliving a day—if you can change things for the better. Of course, Odessa—and readers—soon sees that changing the past comes with consequences for the future. And not always good ones. The story runs on familiar themes: the desire to have parents reunite; an annoying sibling; the possibility of a first boyfriend. While the time-travel aspect adds another dimension (pun intended), it is laboriously explained, and even then doesn't always add up. Still, this *Groundhog Day* redo for the younger set does pose some intriguing questions about what's important in life and whether you want the power to make other people's decisions for them.

Susan Dunn says

Cute. After her parents divorce, Odessa, her little brother and her mom have to move to a new house. Luckily

for Odessa, her attic room turns out to have a magic floor. She can jump through it and go back a day. This comes in very handy as over the course of her fourth grade year she makes some embarrassing and cruel mistakes and is able to correct them - but she only has a limited number of times to jump. Can she get to a happy ending before her do-overs expire? This would be a great book discussion/booktalk title for kids.

Shiralea Woodhouse says

I found this book cute and enjoyed the "do-overs" element; liked that we see Odessa grow and get a little wiser as the book goes on. For me, the most unbelievable thing in the book wasn't the going back in time, it was divorced parents who got along. That happens about as much as time travel. I found myself hoping she would actually get her parents back together - I mean hey, as long as we're in a fiction story... :)

Nancy says

Okay. What would you do if you could do it all over? That is the question posed by this book. Not time travel in some senses, just a chance to correct mistakes. It was interesting, but I wasn't completely captivated.

Cheryl says

Who doesn't like the idea of do-overs?

Odessa Green-Light is a typical fourth grader. She's nine years old (almost ten you know), has a toad of a younger brother named Oliver, has a best friend, a crush on her math partner, and her parents are divorced.

Odessa, Oliver and their mom move into a new house and by accident Odessa finds she can go back in time for "do-overs."

"Odessa Again" tells the engaging tale of what Odessa chooses to do with her new powers, using them first for her own gain and then starting to help others.

I thought the characters were pretty true-to-life, not always perfect and not always making right choices.

This book is marked for readers ages 8 - 12 years old and I think that is pretty darn close. The book feels age appropriate to me. There are some discussions about divorce that are handled well. There is mention of makeup and crushing on a boy, which is probably for the higher end of the age bracket but there's nothing out-of-line.

I think young girl readers will really enjoy this tale.

Also, there are charming illustrations scattered throughout by Susan Reagan.

Karen says

I bought this book for my daughter, Odessa, because I was thrilled to find out there was a book with her name in the title. She was thrilled too! I finally got around to reading it and I loved it. It's the perfect book for girls wanting "do-overs" in their life. 4th grader, Odessa learns that some things can be redone by the magic in her attic but other things can't. A cute story about coming to terms with life changes, dealing with them and finally accepting them. Now, since my daughter is in 4th grade, I'm hoping she'll read it soon too.
