

Loser



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著者:Jerry Spinelli

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Amazon.com Donald Zinkoff is one of the greatest kids you could ever hope to meet. He laughs easily, he likes people, he loves school, he tries to rescue lost girls in blizzards, he talks to old ladies. The only problem is, he's a loser. Until fourth grade, Zinkoff's uncontrollable giggling in class, sloppy handwriting, horrible flute playing, bad grades, clumsiness, and ineptitude at sports go largely unnoticed. When he blows a race for his team, however, his transition to loserdom is complete: "[Loser] is the word. It is Zinkoff's new name. It is not in the roll book." Fortunately, he doesn't really notice. As he did in *Stargirl*, Newbery Medal-winning author Jerry Spinelli again explores the cruelty of a student body and how it does and doesn't affect one student, pure of spirit. Presumably if *Loser* makes one child view a "different kid" as a three-dimensional character, Spinelli will consider his book successful. The

author recounts Zinkoff's story--a case study of sorts--in short sentences from a deliberately reportorial point of view, documenting the first years of the boy's life and his evolution into a loser. What makes the book charming and buoyant is that the reader, like Zinkoff's parents and his favorite teacher, appreciates the boy's oblivious joie de vivre and his divine quirks. What is less compelling about the novel is the "let this be a lesson to us" heavy-handedness that accompanies the reportorial approach. Still, Spinelli comes through again with a lively, often moving story with humor and heart to spare. (Ages 8 to 12) --Karin Snelson --This text refers to the Hardcover edition. From Publishers Weekly In a finely measured performance, prolific screen actor Buscemi brings an appropriately understated emotional current to Spinelli's tale about Donald Zinkoff, a generally happy, spirited and clumsy boy known to his classmates and neighbor kids as the biggest loser around. Though he has no real friends, can't seem to do anything right and is often misunderstood or even disliked by his teachers, Zinkoff never loses his positive outlook on life. By creating such an unusually good-natured protagonist, Spinelli can show the ugly, cruel behavior of other children without making Zinkoff into a pathetic victim. This tack may well encourage listeners to consider how they treat their friends, classmates and teammates. In a great balancing act, Buscemi's reading perfectly matches the book's poignant theme while at the same time conveying the sense of fun and adventure with which Zinkoff views the world. From the start, listeners will want to know how things turn out. Ages 8-12. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title. See all Editorial Reviews

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