



2018

The Game Can't Love You Back

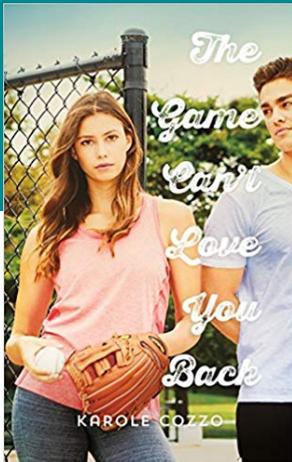
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Book Review

The Game Can't Love You Back

Author

Karole Cozzo

Illustrator

Reviewer

Meagan Andrus

Rating

Dependable

Level

Young Adult

Pages

310

Year

2018

Publisher

Swoon Reads

ISBN

9781250163899

When Farmington South and Farmington East high schools are forced to merge due to an accidental fire, Eve Marshall and Jamie Abrams are dismayed to learn that each school's sports teams will be merging as well. Jamie is the captain of the East baseball team; Eve is the former star pitcher and only female member of the South baseball team. Their competitive natures dictate that they have to fight each other, but the fact that they're now teammates says otherwise. At first it's incredibly difficult for Eve and Jamie to even be in the same room together, but slowly their defenses start to come down. Eventually, they realize that there's a lot to be admired about the other person, and both develop feelings. But Jamie's been a player in matters other than baseball, and Eve is slow to trust others and let them in. Both Eve and Jamie have to make some difficult adjustments in their attitudes and in their actions if they want to be able to win not only baseball games but also the other's heart.

This book does a pretty good job of fulfilling its genre of young adult romance, it follows tropes nicely and delivers on dramatic and romantic moments. Through most of the book, Eve and Jamie are pretty cool and relatable characters, both having dreams and goals as well as difficulties and trials. The slow-burn romance is interesting and sweet, and the focus on sports will appeal to a certain demographic of readers. However, this book lost points due to the fact that Jamie never has to apologize for continually flirting with other girls and being a total player. In the end, it is only Eve who has to apologize and change for being too untrustworthy and unwilling to display her feelings for Jamie in public. This didn't make sense and seemed a bit sexist. The side characters were also not well developed, and existed only to serve purposes for propelling drama or filling an extra scene. Overall, this book is pretty good, but would have been better with a different ending that called out both Jamie and Eve for their mistakes.

Severe language, moderate sexual content.