



The Allegra Biscotti Collection

By Olivia Bennett

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Emma Rose is SO not a diva.

She doesn't want her turn on the catwalk-she'd rather be behind the scenes creating fabulous outfits! So when a famous fashionista discovers Emma's designs and offers her the opportunity of a lifetime-a feature in Madison magazine (squeal!)-Emma sort of, well, panics. She has only one option: to create a secret identity.

And so Allegra Biscotti is born.

Allegra is worldly, sophisticated, and bold-everything Emma is not. But the pressure is on. And Emma quickly discovers juggling school, a new crush, friends, and a secret identity might not be as glamorous as she thought.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 5-8—This book manages to make the wildly implausible seem possible. When Emma, 14, becomes the hottest new fashion designer for the Voguelike Madison magazine, she does it through hard work and the help of an old hand. She's given herself the nom de plume "Allegra Biscotti" to cover up that she's the girl the editor met at her father's lace warehouse. Emma comes off as a believable teen. She likes a boy who seems unattainable and disregards Charlie, her supportive friend and accomplice in deception. Holly, her other BFF, has become part of an in-crowd Emma has no desire to join. But the luscious descriptions of the clothes Emma imagines are the best aspect of the book. Tiny sketches accompany most of them and add charm to the pages. Trying to come up with three alluring new designs, the protagonist lets her grades slide, gets in trouble with her parents, and ends up enlisting the aid of the capable Marjorie, an office administrator who was a professional seamstress. Emma, Marjorie, and Charlie are well rounded but other characters are vague, including the somewhat stereotyped editor and the snobby clique that attracts Holly. Still, kids interested in fashion are sure to become fans of the Allegra Biscotti collection.—Tina Zubak, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, PA. (c) Copyright 2010. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

From Booklist

Fashionistas, rejoice! Allegra Biscotti (aka eighth-grader Emma Rose) has arrived on the scene. A fashion lover and designer, Emma spends most of her time sketching at her father's lace warehouse in the Garment District, especially now that her best friend has taken up with the cool crowd. Then, a miracle. The editor in chief of one of the hottest fashion magazines spots one of her dresses and falls in love. Thinking her eighth-grade self isn't going to cut it, Emma invents Allegra Biscotti, a fashion-forward designer who takes on a life of her own, complicating Emma's to no end. It's nice to have a young chick-lit book that's about something other than middle-school angst (although there's plenty of that, too). Here, it's fashion, fashion, fashion, and readers will learn something about the industry even as they're caught up in the story of Emma trying to live her dream. Pencil-and-wash pictures of Emma's designs dot almost every page, adding to the fun. Grades 5-8. --Ilene Cooper

Review

"Emma, the affable protagonist of this effervescent series launch, faces familiar eighth-grade quandaries. Her best friend is cozying up to superficial popular girls, one of whom has Emma's crush in her sights. Her grades are plummeting, and her mother constantly nags her to study more. It's what Emma is focusing on rather than schoolwork that lifts the novel from being standard middle-grade fare. A talented fashion designer and seamstress, Emma spends after-school hours sketching and sewing at her father's lace company. When a high-profile fashion editor is captivated by Emma's designs, Emma, worried she won't be taken seriously, passes them off as the work of the fictitious Allegra Biscotti. The ruse quickly spins out of control: the editor touts Allegra as a designer to watch and insists that she create--on a tight deadline--three original designs to showcase in her magazine... Credible characterizations and dialogue keep the novel real. For Project Runway aspirants, Bennett slips in detailed descriptions of the teens' outfits and Emma's designs, which appear in spot art. Ages 8-12. (Nov.)" - ***Publishers Weekly***

"Gr 5-8—This book manages to make the wildly implausible seem possible. When Emma, 14, becomes the hottest new fashion designer for the Voguelike Madison magazine, she does it through hard work and the help of an old hand. She's given herself the nom de plume "Allegra Biscotti" to cover up that she's the girl the editor met at her father's lace warehouse. Emma comes off as a believable teen. She likes a boy who

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""ALLEGRA BISCOTTI COLLECTION by Olivia Bennett; ages 9-11 is about a 14 yr old who becomes a fashion designer; Coco Chanel step aside!" The voice is perfect for projecting the personality of the main characters. I especially liked the personalities of the Ivana-bees! I remember those girls in school!" – Judith Lafitte, Octavia Books" -

""The wild adventures of Emma Rose will keep readers laughing. Young fashonistas will appreciate Emma's keen eye for style, and might even inspire girls to try their own hand at design. Allegra Biscotti is a must for all Tween collections."

--The CATS Meow (Baker & Taylor Newsletter) Rita Reale, Children's Librarian

" -

"This novel features likeable characters, snappy dialog, and an entertaining plot. Many teens will relate to the subplots of the shifting friendships, new crushes, and attempts to outsmart adults. Sketches of outfits scattered throughout the book add to the fun... Younger teens, especially those interested in fashion, will enjoy this fun, fast-paced read." - *VOYA*

"This one's for fashionistas! When one of Emma Rose's homemade designs is spotted by a fashion editor, Emma has to make up a secret identity as a sophisticated designer and finds that balancing school, boys and a glamorous career is a lot more complicated than she though (right, Miley?). " - *Pixie magazine*

As a mother, I was surprised by how much I liked these books. The stories were very entertaining, but I actually liked the messages even more. Both books were very clean and while they did delve a bit into crushes, it was all very sweet. At first I was worried because Emma and Charlie seemed to be creating a lot of stories (and lies...); however, Emma did eventually tell her parents about Allegra Biscotti's identity. I liked that Emma got punished for lying, but I really loved that her parents listened to her and supported her love of fashion. In addition, there were so many important messages about friendship and staying true to one's self. I don't think tween girls can hear either of those things too many times. --Booking Mama

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Megan Martelli:

Reading a e-book can be one of a lot of action that everyone in the world likes. Do you like reading book consequently. There are a lot of reasons why people enjoyed. First reading a e-book will give you a lot of new info. When you read a e-book you will get new information because book is one of numerous ways to share the information or perhaps their idea. Second, studying a book will make anyone more imaginative. When you reading through a book especially fictional works book the author will bring someone to imagine the story how the characters do it anything. Third, you are able to share your knowledge to other people.

When you read this The Allegra Biscotti Collection, you may tell your family, friends and soon about yours reserve. Your knowledge can inspire the mediocre, make them reading a reserve.

Jerry Montgomery:

The Allegra Biscotti Collection can be one of your starter books that are good idea. All of us recommend that straight away because this reserve has good vocabulary that can increase your knowledge in language, easy to understand, bit entertaining but still delivering the information. The writer giving his/her effort that will put every word into enjoyment arrangement in writing The Allegra Biscotti Collection although doesn't forget the main point, giving the reader the hottest along with based confirm resource data that maybe you can be among it. This great information can easily draw you into completely new stage of crucial imagining.

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