



Little Victories: Autism Through a Father's Eyes

Yvon Roy

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Yvon Roy's inspiring graphic memoir *Little Victories* is about his relationship with his autistic son, Oliver.

Roy and his wife were filled with grand dreams for their baby son's future, but they soon noticed that Oliver's speech and development were delayed. Testing offered a heartbreaking diagnosis: Oliver was autistic, and required an array of special services and training.

Though both parents did their best, the resulting strain led to divorce and shared custody. Roy guided his son, reinforcing lessons and filling in gaps in the professional services that Oliver was provided with. Roy learned to accept his son, even while continuing to challenge him.

Its art fastidious and detailed, the book adopts a casual style that directs attention to the story. Its illustrations portray important moments in creative ways, as when Roy receives his son's diagnosis: successive panels show him staring at a cityscape from a hill, watching as the buildings collapse. It's a powerful metaphor for the emotional impact of the news. In this way, the text captures hard moments well. Elsewhere, Roy tells Oliver "I wouldn't swap you for any other," and says "farewell to this son that never appeared, and welcome to the one who decided to come live with me."

Though some of its word choices are awkward (Oliver's extended tantrums are said to go on "for long," and Roy says that "women don't fight themselves" over a dad with a handicapped child), *Little Victories* is a graphic memoir that shows that autism doesn't have to be a barrier to a happy, loving parent-child relationship.

PETER DABBENE (July / August 2020)

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