

## **Dumplin'**

**Julie Murphy**

**Reviewed by: Anika 16**

**Star Teen Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity**

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Being a fat girl isn't easy, but Willowdean never let that get in her way. Though that all changes when she gets a crush on Bo, a hot jock. Thankfully, Bo likes her back, but everything goes downhill as she doubts her body and her confidence around him. Willowdean still grieves for aunt, Lucy, and her mother isn't making life any better. Will's mother is head of the City Clover beauty pageant and is obsessed with having the perfect body, a goal she forces onto her daughter. Willowdean, sick of it all, enters the beauty pageant and get her confidence back. She going to show the world that she can be a beauty queen too. She's going to rise above those who brought her down and prove to that she can be fat and beautiful.

Dumplin' has an incredibly important message about body positivity. I learned that there'll always be someone with a better body, so we should stop chasing perfection and start chasing the things we truly want. Willowdean knew no one would give her the same respect as everyone else, so she went after it herself through the pageant. She didn't let anyone get in the way of that and that's what makes Willowdean so special. We are more than what we appear to be. Loyalty was a major theme in this book as well. Good friendships last and we shouldn't let our jealousy and stubbornness get in the way of that.

Despite this, there are a few things in this book to watch out for. Dumplin' has some mature language and themes, like sex and bullying, which is why I recommend it for anyone 14 or older. Dumplin' progresses rather slowly, but it would make a great gift for Dolly Parton fans!

### **Recommended Titles:**

Puddin' by Julie Murphy (Sequel to Dumplin')

It's Kind of a Funny Story by Ned Vizzini

Speak by Laurie Halse Anderson

All the Rage by Courtney Summers