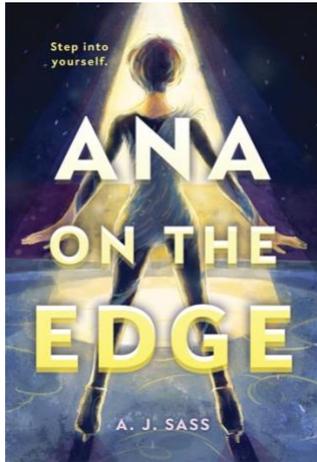


Book Resume: Ana on the Edge



***Ana on the Edge* by A.J. Sass**

Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2020

ISBN: 9780316458610 (Hardcover), 9780316458627 (Paperback)

*Age Range: 8-12 (Suggested by Publisher)

BOOK SYNOPSIS

Perfect for fans of Melissa and Ivy Aberdeen's *Letter to the World*, this heartfelt coming of age story introduces a nonbinary athlete navigating a binary world.

Twelve-year-old Ana-Marie Jin, the reigning US Juvenile figure skating champion, is not a frilly dress kind of kid. So, when Ana learns that next season's program will be princess themed, doubt forms fast. Still, Ana tries to focus on training and putting together a stellar routine worthy of national success.

Once Ana meets Hayden, a transgender boy new to the rink, thoughts about the princess program and gender identity begin to take center stage. And when Hayden mistakes Ana for a boy, Ana doesn't correct him and finds comfort in this boyish identity when he's around. As their friendship develops, Ana realizes that it's tricky juggling two different identities on one slippery sheet of ice. And with a major competition approaching, Ana must decide whether telling everyone the truth is worth risking years of hard work and sacrifice.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

★ “Sass masterfully balances Ana's passion for competitive figure skating with her journey to coming out. ...Sensitive and realistic.” —Booklist, starred review

“Sass renders scenes on and off the ice with vivid descriptions, and writes nuanced, layered portrayals of characters.” —Publishers Weekly

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“The tone of the story remains hopeful as [Ana] works toward a new understanding of herself. The personal connection of the author, himself a figure skater who identifies as nonbinary, to the story is evident within its pages in both the nuances of figure skating and Ana's interrogation of gender.” —The Horn Book

“Vulnerable and affirming.” —Kirkus Reviews

“Sass has created dynamic, original characters who are believable and fun to follow... You can't help rooting for Ana...” —The New York Times Book Review

“A lovely, necessary story of self-discovery and friendship.” —Ashley Herring Blake, author of Stonewall Honor book *Ivy Aberdeen's Letter to the World*

“Heartfelt, nuanced and engaging, *Ana on the Edge* is both an insider's look at the world of competitive figure skating and a sensitive exploration of the protagonist's nonbinary identity. Highly recommended.” —Barbara Dee, award-winning author of *Maybe He Just Likes You* and *My Life in the Fish Tank*

“*Ana on the Edge* is a poignant exploration of the importance of being seen for who you are. Ana will glide into your heart and open your mind to the richness of the full gender spectrum.” —Ami Polonsky, award-winning author of *Gracefully Grayson* and *Spin With Me*

“Sass's gorgeous debut fills a much needed void on LGBTQ+ middle grade shelves.” —Nicole Melleby, award-winning author of *Hurricane Season*

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- Booklist Editors' Choice
- Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection
- ALA Rainbow Book List Top Ten Choice for Young Readers
- Bank Street College of Education 2021 Best Book of the Year
- New York Public Library Favorite Trans, Nonbinary & Gender Nonconforming Title of 2020
- Chicago Review of Books 2020 Notable Debut by Trans, Non-binary, and Gender Non-conforming Authors
- Nominee for Massachusetts Children's Book Award, Connecticut Nutmeg Children's Book Award, Michigan MISelf in Books Award, Wisconsin WSRA Just One More Page Award, and Washington Sasquatch Award

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

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- [A. J. Sass on ANA ON THE EDGE \(podcast\)](#)
- [A. J. Sass on ANA ON THE EDGE \(video\)](#)
- [Q&A With A. J. Sass, Ana on the Edge](#)
- [Interview With A. J. Sass, Author of Ana on the Edge](#)
- [A. J. Sass – an interview about Ana on the Edge \(podcast\)](#)
- [A. J. Sass – ANA ON THE EDGE YouTube book launch, in conversation with Ashley Herring Blake \(video\)](#)
- [Interview with US Figure Skating](#)
- [All paths to self-discovery are valid, however winding](#)

RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

- [Mosaic Community Library: Banned and Challenged Book Spotlight: Ana on the Edge](#)
- [Banned books battle hits close to home in Fauquier and Rappahannock](#)

AUTHOR STATEMENT

I was a voracious reader when I was a child. From the moment I learned to sound out written words, I wanted to read anything and everything I could get my hands on. Reading offered me the opportunity to expand my knowledge beyond what I already knew while growing up relatively sheltered in small towns throughout the US Midwest and South. Reading let me learn about the lives and perspectives of others, both real and fictional. It was also wonderfully entertaining.

I read often and widely growing up, yet my reading choices were frequently limited by what I could find on the shelves in local libraries and bookstores: almost they were almost exclusively stories told from straight, cisgender perspectives. I knew I was queer by my early teens, but I struggled to find resources to help me unpack how I was feeling. All the stories I read were about straight and cisgender characters and their experiences. Over time, the lack of representation left me feeling alone, isolated, and even ashamed. Without access to representation, I couldn't be sure my identities were even valid in a way my non-queer classmates never had to contend with.

The first time I read a book centering a queer character, I was just out of graduate school—already an adult. The character's experiences with their identity weren't identical to mine, yet this book opened up my world and let me know I wasn't alone. As more books like this became available, I suddenly had many opportunities to envision a future for myself where I could be out and take pride in my authentic

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self. Queer representation in books was a gift to me as a reader, and it's a gift I am humbled to be able to give readers now as an author.

Ana on the Edge is a story about a twelve-year-old kid, in many ways not unlike myself at the same age. The main character, Ana, is navigating the sport of figure skating but initially lacks the vocabulary to explain why its gendered elements sometimes make her feel uncomfortable. It's a story about friendship, family, self-discovery, and coming out. In the years since *Ana on the Edge* released, I've heard from a myriad of readers both young and old, trans, nonbinary, and cisgender, about how Ana's story made them feel seen or helped them understand what someone who is trans and/or nonbinary might be experiencing. It is a story and a resource that I desperately needed when I was a young teen asking the same types of questions Ana asked within the book.

Now, my book and so many others are being challenged and banned throughout the US, at a time when trans and nonbinary youth are witnessing so many proposed bills and laws attempting to force them back into the closet—or to never come out at all. This hits me on a deep and painful level as someone who once was a kid who often didn't see a future for myself and felt hopeless about ever getting to be my authentic self. I'm grateful that books exist today with representation that allows kids to see themselves within their pages. But continued attempts to challenge and ban books like mine are harmful to marginalized communities, and they set us all back as a society.

***A NOTE ON AGE RANGES**

A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

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