



Front and Center (Dairy Queen Book 3)

By Catherine Gilbert Murdock

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After five months of sheer absolute craziness I was going back to being plain old background D.J. In photographs of course I'm always in the background . . .

But it turns out other folks have big plans for D.J. Like her coach. College scouts. All the town hoops fans. A certain Red Bend High School junior who's keen for romance and karaoke. Not to mention Brian Nelson, who she should not be thinking about! Who she is done with, thank you very much. But who keeps showing up anyway . . .

Readers first fell in love with straight-talking D.J. Schwenk in *Dairy Queen*; they followed her ups and downs both on and off the court in *The Off Season*. Now D.J. steps out from behind the free-throw line in this third installment of the Dairy Queen series.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Product Description

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Amazon Exclusive: A Letter from Catherine Murdock



Dear Amazon Reader: The Dairy Queen series began with a dream and ends with a pizza. In late 2003, I had a dream about a girl playing football. As I'd been studying screenwriting for eight years, I immediately began to craft this idea into a script. Then, all too aware of my script failure rate, I decided to attempt a "practice novel" using everything I'd learned about character development, plotting, dialogue, and description. Today, I can offer aspiring authors this hard-earned advice: If you want to write halfway decent books, start by writing truly horrendous screenplays. I set *Dairy Queen* in Wisconsin, as I have family there and so can visualize the landscape, and I laid it out as a traditional three-act script, the only story structure I knew. I never intended to write a second book--I really love the vagueness of *Dairy Queen*'s ending--but when the publisher asked if I had a sequel in me, what could I answer but "Yes"? I love *The Off Season*'s ending as well, but readers (may I mention how utterly fantastic the fan mail is?) wanted more. So--boom--I found myself writing a third. All of a sudden I had a trilogy. Given what I'd learned about college sports recruiting from the first two books, it seemed only natural to examine this in *Front and Center*, while of course continuing the saga of D.J. Schwenk's love life. So many stories have as their conflict "Will the hero(ine) get the scholarship? Will s/he get the love interest?" And of course you already know the answers on page 1. To me, a much more challenging story, both to read and to write, would be "Does she *want* a scholarship? And which love interest will be it be: the dreamboat who keeps breaking her heart, or the safe, fun guy who's not quite Mr. Right?" Call me old fashioned, but I like a little mystery in my narrative. Which is why I'm also not going to tell you how the pizza fits in. But it does. Really. Sincerely, *Catherine Murdock*

(Photo © Greg Martin)

From School Library Journal

Grade 8–11—This final installment in the "Dairy Queen" trilogy kicks off with Wisconsin junior D.J. Schwenk back at school, having spent several weeks away helping big brother, Win, with his rehabilitation. She's catching up with classes and best friend Amber (also newly returned). D.J.'s excited and nervous for basketball season, which might score her a much-desired college scholarship and a less-desired position literally calling the shots on court. Her ex, Brian, is neither out of sight nor off her mind. But reluctantly famous D.J., who generally craves anonymity, wants a boyfriend who acknowledges her in public. Enter energetic friend Beaner, an attention magnet interested in actual dating. When recruitment letters pour in, talented athlete D.J. feels the weight of obligations and expectations (yet again) from well-meaning family, friends, recruiters, coaches, and from herself. Will she be ruled by fear or will she step up and make the choices, whether between colleges or guys, that'll make her happiest? The self-conscious teen is socially anxious, hyper aware, and cleverly observant. Her fans won't be disappointed, but new readers may occasionally feel out of the loop, compelled to read the prequels for a more invested experience. Fortunately, Murdock successfully integrates fresh trials and pressures, well-developed primary and likable peripheral characters, and amusing introspection into the backstory. Occasional doormat D.J. is ultimately a responsible, realistically flawed, funny, endearing, and strong heroine worth rooting for whether on the court or on the page—*Danielle Serra, Cliffside Park Public Library, NJ* END

Review

"The particulars of farm life, high school relationships, and college decisions are imparted with uncommon realism, and Murdock showcases the unexpected drama of everyday characters making mundane but essential life decisions. D.J.'s voice is intimate and compelling, her story both universal and unique, familiar and eye-opening. Here is a worthy send-off for a one-of-a-kind character."--*Horn Book*

"[D.J.'s] self-deprecating and humorous voice is still as fresh the third time around.." --*Booklist*

"Murdock successfully integrates fresh trials and pressures, well-developed primary and likable peripheral characters, and amusing introspection into the backstory. . .D.J. is ultimately a responsible, realistically flawed, funny, endearing, and strong heroine worth rooting for whether on the court or on the page."--*School Library Journal*

"Front and Center is a perfect coming of age story and a completely satisfying conclusion to the three-book series."--*Jen Robinson's Book Page blog*

"This was a great novel with a lot of humor, but also a lot of serious situations, and relatable characters that I loved reading about."--*BookDivas.com*

"A fantastic end to a terrific series...A+"--*Lauren's Crammed Bookshelf blog*

"You won't want to miss it."--*Abby the Librarian blog*

"Front and Center by Catherine Murdock is a satisfying conclusion to the Dairy Queen trilogy with a message that lasts long after you've read the last page. By emphasizing the importance of family, friendship, and support, all of which are sometimes overlooked in young adult literature, this book will motivate its reader to reach out and take risks."--*Feed Your Imagination blog*

"I haven't read the first two books in this series, but I had no problem falling in love with DJ, her family and her friends."--*KISS THE BOOK blog*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Carrie Hunter:

Book is to be different for every single grade. Book for children right up until adult are different content. As it is known to us that book is very important normally. The book Front and Center (Dairy Queen Book 3) seemed to be making you to know about other understanding and of course you can take more information. It doesn't matter what advantages for you. The reserve Front and Center (Dairy Queen Book 3) is not only giving you more new information but also to become your friend when you experience bored. You can spend your personal spend time to read your reserve. Try to make relationship with all the book Front and Center (Dairy Queen Book 3). You never sense lose out for everything in case you read some books.

David Black:

A lot of people always spent their free time to vacation or even go to the outside with them loved ones or their friend. Did you know? Many a lot of people spent that they free time just watching TV, or even playing video games all day long. If you would like try to find a new activity this is look different you can read a new book. It is really fun to suit your needs. If you enjoy the book that you simply read you can spent the whole day to reading a publication. The book Front and Center (Dairy Queen Book 3) it doesn't matter what good to read. There are a lot of those who recommended this book. They were enjoying reading this book. In the event you did not have enough space bringing this book you can buy the particular e-book. You can m0ore very easily to read this book from a smart phone. The price is not too expensive but this book provides high quality.

Eric Baur:

Are you kind of stressful person, only have 10 or 15 minute in your time to upgrading your mind expertise or thinking skill actually analytical thinking? Then you are experiencing problem with the book when compared with can satisfy your short period of time to read it because all of this time you only find publication that need more time to be read. Front and Center (Dairy Queen Book 3) can be your answer mainly because it can be read by a person who have those short free time problems.

Lyndsey Lafferty:

On this era which is the greater man or who has ability in doing something more are more important than other. Do you want to become certainly one of it? It is just simple approach to have that. What you are related is just spending your time not very much but quite enough to possess a look at some books. One of several books in the top collection in your reading list is Front and Center (Dairy Queen Book 3). This book and that is qualified as The Hungry Hillside can get you closer in getting precious person. By looking right up and review this guide you can get many advantages.

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