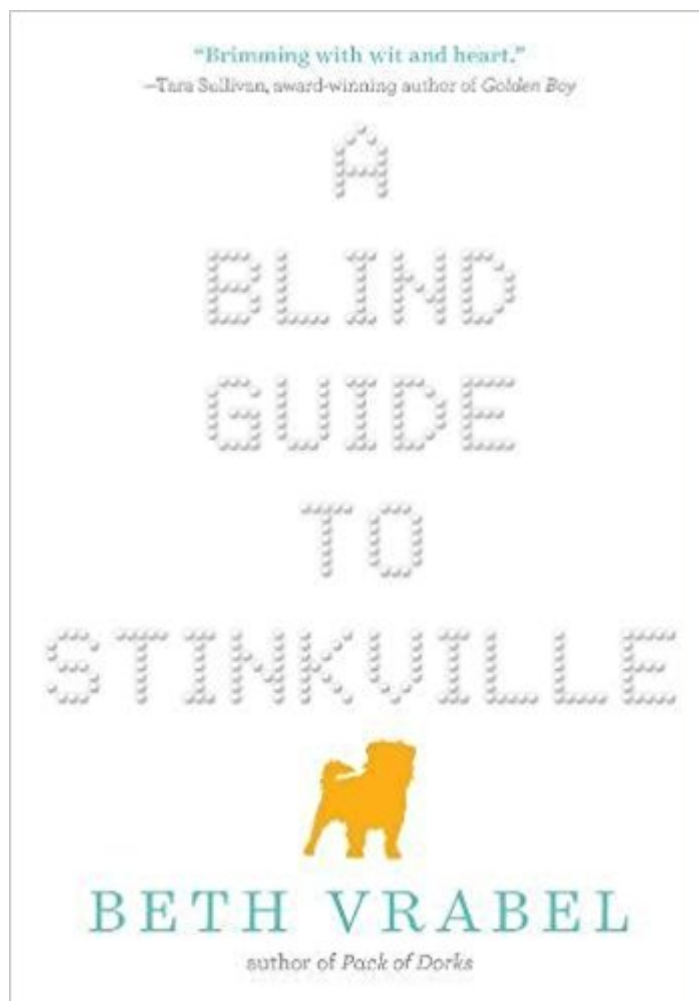


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# A Blind Guide To Stinkville



## Synopsis

Before Stinkville, Alice didn't think albinism or the blindness that goes with it was a big deal. Sure, she uses a magnifier to read books. And a cane keeps her from bruising her hips on tables. Putting on sunscreen and always wearing a hat are just part of life. But life has always been like this for Alice. Until Stinkville. For the first time in her life, Alice feels different like she's at a disadvantage. Back in her old neighborhood in Seattle, everyone knew Alice, and Alice knew her way around. In Stinkville, Alice finds herself floundering; she can't even get to the library on her own. But when her parents start looking into schools for the blind, Alice takes a stand. She's going to show them and herself that blindness is just a part of who she is, not all that she can be. To prove it, Alice enters the Stinkville Success Stories essay contest. No one, not even her new friend Kerica, believes she can scout out her new town's stories and write the essay by herself. The funny thing is, as Alice confronts her own blindness, everyone else seems to see her for the first time. This is a stirring small-town story that explores many different issues; albinism, blindness, depression, dyslexia, growing old, and more; with a light touch and lots of heart. Beth Vrabel's characters are complicated and messy, but they come together in a story about the strength of community and friendship. This paperback edition includes a Q&A with the author and a sneak peek at the upcoming *The Blind Guide to Normal*.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

## Customer Reviews

Gr 4 • Born with albinism, Alice has only 20/200 vision with glasses. Before moving to Sinkville, aka Stinkville, her near blindness wasn't a problem. Having grown up in Seattle all her life, she knew everyone and knew her way around. With no baseline knowledge of Stinkville, no friends, and her family too busy coping with their own problems to help her, Alice must find her own way. When a writing contest offers her a chance to prove she can do anything, Alice and her dog, Tooter, set out to find their own place in their new home. Will they succeed? Will they win the contest? Will she make new friends? Alice is a realistic and easy-to-relate-to character. The dynamics that develop between her and the townsfolk easily draws readers into Alice's new world. The author does a great job of mixing humor with more serious topics like depression, disability, and old age. Readers who enjoy realistic fiction and humor will find much to appreciate. VERDICT An engaging middle grade read for most library collections. • Kira Moody, Whitmore Public Library, Salt Lake City, UT --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"A Blind Guide to Stinkville is a delightfully unexpected story with humor and heart. Vrabel tackles some tough issues, including albinism, depression, and loneliness, with a compassionate perspective and a charming voice." #151;Amanda Flower, author of the Agatha Award-nominated Andi Boggs Series #147;Brimming with wit and heart, A Blind Guide to Stinkville examines the myriad ways we define difference between ourselves and others and asks us to reexamine how we see belonging. • #151;Tara Sullivan, award-winning author of Golden Boy "Most commendable is Vrabel's focus on compromise and culture shock. Disorientation encompasses not only place and attitude, but also the rarely explored ambivalence of being disabled on a spectrum. Alice's insistence that she's 'not that blind' rings true with both stubbornness and confusion as she avails herself of some tools while not needing others, in contrast to typically unambiguous portrayals. Readers who worry about fitting in #151;wherever that may be #151;will relate to Alice's journey toward compromise and independence." #151;Kirkus Reviews

A Blind Guide to Stinkville arrived at my door late in the afternoon. I offered it to my 10-year old daughter who was just about to start her reading for school, but she was too deep into another novel to start something new. As a lover of middle grade fiction I thought I'd read a few chapters...7 hours later I was in bed unable to put the book down. The rational adult side of my brain was saying, "Go

to sleep! It's 11:15, and you have an early day tomorrow." But the other side of my brain said, "Are you kidding? Only 50 pages left!" I was rooting for Alice and worried about Tooter. I had been laughing and crying with all of the amazing characters Beth Vrabel created in Stinkville for 199 pages, and I wasn't about to put the book down for a little extra sleep. Sure, I was a little groggy when my alarm went off this morning, but it was so worth it. I highly recommend this charming and heartwarming story about fitting in and finding your own strength to middle graders and any adult who loves middle grade fiction.

I chose this book for the book club that I run at the school because I loved it so much. I read this book with my daughter, and was pulled in by the characters, the pace of the story (it was a page turner!) and the quality of the story. The location of the story, a paper mill town called Sinkville, is beautifully painted by Beth Vrabel's words through the characters and their stories. At the heart of the story is Alice, a lovely, honest and very strong character with a caring heart, going through some tremendous change. This story will pull you in and make you feel as if you are a resident of Sinkville, through your tour guide, Alice. And even though Alice has albinism, this is hardly at the core of the story - it doesn't define her, it's just something she happens to live with. I cannot recommend this book enough, particularly for parents. It's great story to read out loud to your kids, and even more fun to discuss!

With just reading the first page of *A Blind Guide to Stinkville*, I knew this was going to be a perfect, age-appropriate book for my eleven year old boy. With a dog named Tooter, adequately named for wiping his butt all over the floor and constantly farting, it couldn't be any funnier to a silly little boy. The book captures the attention of both child and adult for very different reasons. The child is enthralled by the jokes and funny events such as the dog peeing on a bratty girl, while the adult is concerned over more serious issues such as a depressed Mother who has seemed to give up on life and her family. The content is perfect for middle-school kids learning about serious issues such as the civil rights movements in the South, visual impairments, albinism, law suits, and dyslexia. All of these issues were beautifully woven into an adorable story about a girl named Alice attempting to fit into a new town.

What a great book to introduce students to the legally blind kid's world! And so much more. Interesting friendships, history of southern civil rights movement, a favorite pet, and a parent's depression. All dealt with in a sensitive, and caring narrative. I loved Vrabel's first two books and

can't wait to read her YA.

I loved this book! It would appeal to middle grade all the way up to adult readers. You will root for the characters throughout this novel. They make you laugh and cry. The writing is beautiful too.

What a unique setting and story, with so much history and characters to love. A great choice for fans of Lisa Graff or Lynda Mullaly Hunt.

Another very relatable story, and a delightful read !

Wonderful book, Terrific author, can't wait for her next book!!!!!!!!!!

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