



Honey, Do You Need a Ride? Confessions of a Fat Runner

Jennifer Graham

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When Michael Scott fantasized about his ideal life on "The Office," he said, "My wife is a runner and it shows." Jennifer Graham is not that wife.

In fact, she's not anyone's wife anymore, and she's been running for more than 10 years without losing any weight, getting any faster or looking any more like a runner. Moreover, she looks *so* unlike a runner that sometimes, when she's out trotting happily on the road, a passing car slows and the driver will ask if she needs a ride home.

Despite the indignity of it all, Graham believes that somewhere within her walrusy husk, there's a kernel of an athlete, if only she had a big-name coach, like, say, Alberto Salazar.

Or Steve Prefontaine.

Well, yeah, he's been dead for more than 35 years, but that's a minor metaphysical challenge more easily overcome than making a thick, slow mom skinny and fast.

Graham, a newspaper columnist with the heart of Erma Bombeck, the soul of Anne Lamott and the girth of G.K. Chesterton, shares her experiences of growing up fat, becoming an improbable athlete in adulthood, and battling daily with a malevolent scale that mocks her physical ambitions. Coached by the spirit of the great Prefontaine, she tries to run away from a difficult divorce while training for the same half-marathon she'd run 10 years earlier. Along the way she learned some lessons that will resonate with anyone who ever blew up a marriage, chased a donkey, or kicked a scale.

Praise for *Honey, Do You Need a Ride? Confessions of a Fat Runner*

"Jennifer writes like an old friend speaks, in a voice you know and love. Her descriptions of running heavy, whether with added weight or added burdens, make her experience universal to runners and non-runners alike. Her overcoming spirit makes you want to cheer for her, run with her, or eat a pint of ice cream with her! Ultimately, it's not the size of the body but the size of the heart that counts. And this runner's heart is huge."

-Kristin Armstrong, mother of three, Contributing Editor for Runner's World, Mile Markers: The 26.2 Most Important Reasons Why Women Run

"Here's to the mid-pack runners, the back-of-the-pack shufflers, the start-slowly-and-taper-off champions. Just remember: there's a lot more of us than there are of them (those tall skinny Shirtless Wonders). And Jennifer Graham tells our story beautifully, with unflinching honesty and laugh-out-loud humor." -John "the Penguin" Bingham, author of The Courage to Start, No Need for Speed, and An Accidental Athlete

"Jennifer Graham might be surprised when the sinewy running tribe she longs to conform to becomes readers of her book, because you don't have to be a 'fat runner' to enjoy this moving memoir. If you've ever fallen in love with running; if running is a constant companion; if running has been a lifeline through bad times, then you'll identify with Graham's story. Okay, maybe not the donkeys or the paranormal coaching, but when you're done reading you'll wish you could join Graham on a run, just so you can hear more."

-Kara Douglass Thom, author of Becoming an Ironman and Hot (Sweaty) Mamas: Five Secrets to Life as a Fit Mom

"Jennifer Graham is the hilarious, pee-your-pants running partner you wish you had. She'll make you want to move to Boston just to pound out a few miles alongside her and slam down a ginormous hot-fudge sundae

with her post-run. If you love running, laughing, eating, and reading in equal measure, you'll love this book." -Eileen Button, author of The Waiting Place: Learning to Appreciate Life's Little Delays

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