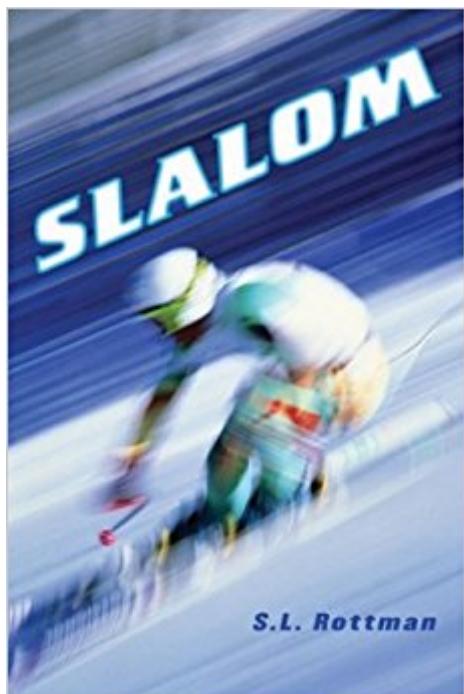


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# Slalom



## **Synopsis**

Sandro Birch is a born skier. In fact, his mother met his father on the slopes of a posh resort, and she's told the story so many times he's sick of it. Handsome Italian Olympic hopeful saves All-American Scholarship Girl. Except the handsome Italian left the All-American Girl with the bills and a baby on the way. Seventeen years later, Sandro and his mother are still living at the ski resort. She thinks Alessandro Senior, her true love, will come back; Sandro knows he won't, and spends all of his after-school time working, saving up to leave. Then fate steps in. Alessandro does come back. And suddenly townie Sandro Birch has a shot at the ski team, a girlfriend, and a real family--if he conquers his anger and learns how to trust. S. L. Rottman's fast-paced sports action and sharp characterization are sure to keep readers turning the pages.

## **Book Information**

Hardcover: 256 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## **Customer Reviews**

Grade 7 Up  œFate plays a quirky hand in this novel set in a Colorado resort town. Sandro Birch, 17, has grown up listening to his mother Tiffany tell of her whirlwind romance long ago with a handsome, mysterious Italian skier, a tryst that led to her son's conception. Scorning this sappy story, Sandro is angry that he and his mother have been stuck in Borealis, working low-paying jobs and banking on the dream that her soul mate would eventually return. Then, Alessandro reappears, and Tiffany surrenders her heart and home to a mystery man whom Sandro is expected to obey and call Dad. With urging from the coach, the teen joins the high school ski team, competes with his top

rival, and begins to enjoy the status that victory brings. Sandro's love of skiing is evident in his brisk, evocative descriptions of the sport. Through it, he even begins to gain respect for his newfound father, although that gain is tested when Alessandro vanishes again, leaving hefty credit card charges, and Sandro must play parent to weepy and indecisive Tiffany. Alessandro finally returns for good, offering a rather lame explanation for his absence. The novel misses its potential as a sports story by focusing so heavily on the tiresome and implausible adult relationship that has essentially been on hold for 17 years. Chris Crutcher's *Whale Talk* (Greenwillow, 2001) is a better choice for a sports story with attitude. —Susan W. Hunter, Riverside Middle School, Springfield, VT  
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Gr. 6-8. Even before the snow flies, teen skiers can enjoy this fast-paced story, which takes place in a fictional mountain town, perhaps modeled on Vail or Aspen. Sandro, who works at a ski shop to help his single mom make ends meet, must come to terms with the sudden appearance of his father, a glamorous Italian ski racer who left Sandro's mom without ever knowing she was pregnant. At the same time, Sandro is having his own girl problems and feeling pressured to join the ski team, even though he can't afford to. The resolution is a bit too neat to be satisfying, but passages conveying both the excitement of ski racing and the pleasure of cruising the trails will appeal to skiing fans, and the jam-packed story line will keep the interest of kids who prefer to read by the fire.  
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This is a great book that I highly suggest for you to read. I say that because the whole time I was reading this book I was interested, there wasn't a dull moment while reading this. The story has a great plot twist when his father comes back in his life after all of these years. In conclusion you should read this book because it is very interesting.

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