



Shooting the Moon

By Frances O'Roark Dowell

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JAMIE THINKS HER FATHER CAN DO ANYTHING....

UNTIL THE ONE TIME HE CAN DO NOTHING.

When twelve-year-old Jamie Dexter's brother joins the Army and is sent to Vietnam, Jamie is plum thrilled. She can't wait to get letters from the front lines describing the excitement of real-life combat: the sound of helicopters, the smell of gunpowder, the exhilaration of being right in the thick of it. After all, they've both dreamed of following in the footsteps of their father, the Colonel.

But TJ's first letter isn't a letter at all. It's a roll of undeveloped film, the first of many. What Jamie sees when she develops TJ's photographs reveals a whole new side of the war. Slowly the shine begins to fade off of Army life - and the Colonel. How can someone she's worshipped her entire life be just as helpless to save her brother as she is?

From the author of the Edgar Award-winning *Dovey Coe* comes a novel, both timely and timeless, about the sacrifices we make for what we believe and the people we love.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Starred Review. Grade 5–8— "The Army way is the right way." So says Jamie Dexter's father, The Colonel, a die-hard officer who has raised Jamie and her older brother, TJ, to be proud believers in the U.S. military. Stationed at Fort Hood, TX, in the summer of 1969, Jamie's family is tested when TJ decides to forgo college and volunteers for the Medical Corps in Vietnam. The spirited 12-year-old wishes that she could go, and she is shocked to discover that The Colonel disapproves. When TJ sends rolls of film home from the front, Jamie learns how to develop them. They are chock-full of pictures of his surroundings and his favorite subject, the moon, but over time she's less eager to develop the increasingly disturbing images. As Jamie learns about the war from soldiers at the fort's rec center and watches her father grow disenchanted with the Army, her firm worldview is shaken. The clear, well-paced first-person prose is perfectly matched to this novel's spare setting and restrained plot. Dowell captures Jamie's growing self-awareness and maturity with the slightly detached, wistful tone of a memoir related well after the fact, and the precise clarity of a developing photograph. This thoughtful and satisfying story is more a novel of family and growth than of war. Readers will find beauty in its resolution, and will leave this eloquent heroine reluctantly. This is Dowell's most cohesive and engaging novel yet.—Riva Pollard, *American Indian Public Charter School, Oakland, CA*

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From [Booklist](#)

Twelve-year-old Jamie Dexter and her brother, TJ, have grown up with the Army: their dad is a colonel. So Jamie is puzzled when neither the Colonel nor their mother is thrilled to learn that TJ has enlisted. After all, he's going to war in Vietnam, where Jamie would like to go if she weren't so young. But then TJ, a photographer, begins to send her rolls of film to develop that gradually reveal the horrors of what he's seen. This is a sparse, beautifully written story about learning to truly see people, situations, and emotions as they are, not as we want to see them. Through lovingly drawn, complex characters and explicit details about photography, Dowell introduces a war, and the issues surrounding it, that will seem familiar to contemporary readers in spite of the historical setting, and she invites young people to reflect on the many shades of gray that Jamie confronts. Grades 4-8. --Frances Bradburn

About the Author

Frances O'Roark Dowell is the bestselling and critically acclaimed author of *Dovey Coe*, which won the Edgar Award and the William Allen White Award; *Where I'd Like to Be; The Secret Language of Girls* and its sequels *The Kind of Friends We Used to Be* and *The Sound of Your Voice, Only Really Far Away; Chicken Boy; Shooting the Moon*, which was awarded the Christopher Medal; the Phineas L. MacGuire series; *Falling In*; the critically acclaimed *The Second Life of Abigail Walker; Anybody Shining; Ten Miles Past Normal; Trouble the Water*; and most recently the Sam the Man series. She lives with her husband and two sons in Durham, North Carolina. Connect with Frances online at FrancesDowell.com.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Nathan Herr:

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