



RUNAWAY by Tania Kelly Roxborough
New House Publishers, 80 pages

Review for **Runaway**

"Jeremy, aged around thirteen, runs away from his latest foster home to find his distantly remembered father whose name he's seen in a newspaper cutting. He is joined by eighteen year -old Megan who acts as a buffer against his feelings of loneliness and uncertainty and provided the mechanism by which Jeremy is able to to obtain the train and ferry tickets needed for his journey south. The idea is good and the novel's opening chapter, which sees Jeremy stealing away from his foster home, effectively draws the reader in. Like wise , the developments and subsequent break down of the relationship between Jeremy and his father is believable, There are some drawbacks to the story, however. Too many coincidences for one: Megan is going in the same direction as Jeremy to meet up with her boyfriend; a friendly driver takes them most of the way; the man Jeremy thinks might be his father turns out to be so. Secondly, Jeremy's voice is sometimes overlaid by the author's. The street-wise, cigarette smoking Jeremy of the first chapter seems at odds with the one who later says to Megan: 'My father...he's part of the answer of who I am, where I'm from.'" What is in part an engaging portrait fo loss and rejuvenation reads at other times like an object lesson. A worthwhile purchase nonetheless." Bill Nagelkerke, Christchurch *Magpies* No 4 September 1998.

I found this book very effective as it deals with the same sorts of issues youth face in the world today. This book is about a 13 year old boy called Jeremy who is now more than every determined to find the father who walked out on him 10 years earlier. The only information he has is that his father's name is Tom.

Everything seems to be catching up on Jeremy after the death of his mother and he has moved from foster home to foster home finding no stability. So in his desperation he goes in search of his father in the hope that he will find a new and better life.

Early on in his travels he comes across a girl called Megan. Megan is also looking for a loved one - her boyfriend. Megan invites Jeremy to travel with her. During their travels they run out of money and stow away on the Picton ferry and then end up hitch-hiking down the South Island where they meet Megan's boyfriend. Jeremy stays with him for one night until he decides he must go in search of his father. He sets off and gets a stroke of luck as one of the people Megan's boyfriend works with knows Jeremy's dad and gives him a ride to his house. Jeremy decides to stay but unfortunately things don't quite go how he expected them to. I would recommend this book for people aged 9 - 13.

(Reviewed by Rose O'Connor Nayland College [NZ Writers' Website](#))
