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Better Endings New Beginnings



The Chancer Chronicles

Three stories of second
chances and hope for a boy
and his dog.

- **"My Invisible World"**
by Morasha Winokur
- **"Wounded in the Womb"**
and **"Nuzzle"**
by Donnie Kanter Winokur

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: First of a kind book on FASD.



Eleven year old reveals "My Invisible World" of life with her brother, his disability and his service dog.

ATLANTA, Georgia (September 1, 2009) — Through the eyes and words of an eleven year old sister, two separate stories within the same family are told. Being the sibling of a child with special needs has its own unique challenges that often go unrecognized, unseen. Winokur's "My Invisible World" speaks a gentle truth with unashamed honesty that many families face daily behind closed doors. In addition, this young author exposes a hidden public health crisis that impacts each of us. This completely preventable disability can occur when a pregnant woman drinks alcohol. Up to 1 out of 100 live births are affected by prenatal alcohol exposure and it is the leading known preventable cause of intellectual disability. Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs) are life-long birth defects. An individual may live with neurological, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral damage. This devastating legacy is 100% preventable if a pregnant woman does not drink alcohol.

As the "typical" sister, Winokur wrestles with the angst of whether or not it is better to remain translucent in her existence, or whether she should embrace the visibility that having a service dog in the family creates. Not only is an eleven year old boy's hidden disability validated by the service dog – but the effort it takes for an entire family to support this person becomes perceptible. The unconditional presence and specifically trained skills of an irresistible 90 pound Golden Retriever help to heal not only Winokur's brother, but each member of the family in unexpected ways.

As one eleven year old reader said, *"OMG I love it!!! Morasha's words are really powerful and you can feel how she feels!"* Available September 2009, online through major suppliers. Published by micro publisher Better Endings New Beginnings in Minneapolis, their mission is accomplished – 'to provide a voice for the voiceless.'

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My Invisible World - life with a brother, his disability and his service dog

(Juvenile Non-fiction—Fall 2009)

Being the sibling of a child with special needs has its own unique challenges that often go unrecognized, unseen...especially when the disability itself is invisible. As the "typical" sister, Morasha Winokur candidly shares her story about the invisible life that exists within a life that others think they know. Hidden dreams and hidden challenges become understood and embraced when a specially trained Behavioral Assistance Dog for Morasha's brother joins the family. Through the unconditional presence and skilled companionship of Chancer, an irresistible 90 lb. Golden Retriever, healing happens for not only Morasha's brother, but for each member of the family in unexpected ways.

Nuzzle - the best job for a dog. Ever:

(Children's Picture Book—Spring 2010)

Through the eyes, ears, nose, paws and voice of Chancer, a service dog, children will learn how this irresistible 90 lb. Golden Retriever helps to raise his special 'human' boy. Children and adults will understand the daily challenges faced by an 11-year old living with the life-long, hidden birth defect, a fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD). This sensitive and humorous portrayal of adoption, disability and the unconditional relationship between a boy and his assistance dog, will change forever the way you think about brain injury and second chances.

Wounded in the Womb - a story of adoption, disability and the hope we found on four paws

(Adult Non-fiction—Spring 2010)

Parents of children with special needs exist on a landscape often filled with seemingly bottomless holes of despair and mountains of obstacles that defy climbing. When a diagnosis of the birth defect, fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) is given to their adopted 4-year-old son, the Winokur family travels an emotionally treacherous path that leads to a surprising compass towards a brighter future. This mother's story of uncompromising devotion to her family and the urgency she feels to help her son cope with his invisible disability, reveals how resilient parental spirit can grow. This true story of a service dog named Chancer, and his remarkable ability to connect with a brain-injured boy - will create new places inside your heart and your head for celebrating the animals that help heal our deepest wounds.

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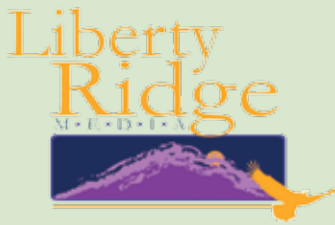
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Q&A

Why did you decide to write My Invisible World?

When I was eight years old, I wanted to write a book, so I did. It took me three years and I just finished at eleven.

What do you want readers to know?

I want people to experience while they are reading my book, what life is like when you live with a family member with a disability.

What's your favorite thing to do for fun?

Hang out with my friends, talking and just being together.

It is important to have good friends when your life can be stressful.

Morasha, do you have any dreams for this book?

I hope this becomes a really good thing and that people know about FASD and it gets out to a lot of people. FASDs are 100% preventable and my generation can stop it from happening to more babies. We ALL have to know about it.

I hope people read it and think "Oh, if I see someone who is disabled, I shouldn't talk about them or make fun of them." I want the bullies to stop being bullies to people who have differences.

I hope my book can make life easier for people like my brother.

Iyal, do you have any dreams for this book?

I want people to know that I am a really good boy and that I like to do normal kinds of things that all kids do. Chancer is my dog, and he is the best dog ever!

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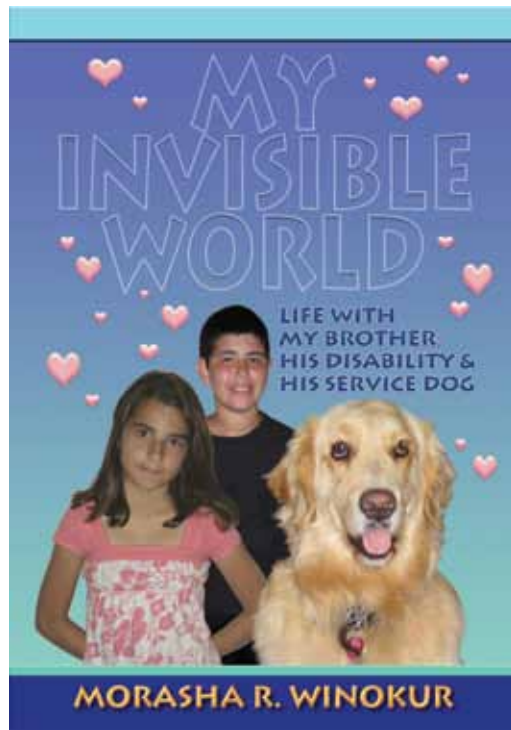
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My Invisible World

Life with my brother, his disability and his dog

by Morasha Winokur



Trade Paperback

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Size 6x9

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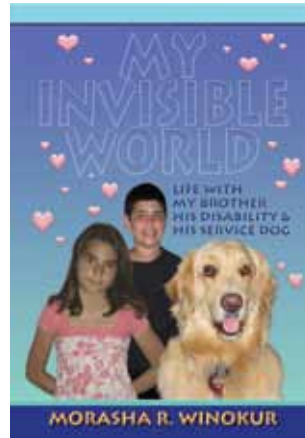
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Book Reviews

My Invisible World

Life with my brother, his disability and his dog



by Morasha Winokur

"Eleven-year-old Morasha Winokur makes two invisible worlds—the life of a child with special needs and the life of his sibling—come alive. Although specifically written regarding fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD), her well-communicated observations are applicable to other diagnoses. As a result, "My Invisible World" should be recommended reading for all school personnel, pediatric healthcare providers, and health policymakers. Bless Morasha for her quietly emotional, loudly effective improvement of my own vision."

Yvonne W. Fry-Johnson, MD, MSCR

"Morasha, you really nailed it. I bet there are a lot of other kids with brothers or sisters they love who are also challenging. I'm so glad I got to know you, Chancer and your whole family and that we got to work together on this book. I love Iyal, he is a great kid with a huge heart. I hope because of your writing, it will make a difference in the lives of many kids. You are a strong young woman and congratulations on taking the risk to tell your story. Much love."

Jodee Kulp, award winning author, [The Whitest Wall](#)

"OMG I love it!!! Morasha's words are really powerful and you can feel how she feels!"

Maddie –11 year old reader

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Book Reviews - My Invisible World (continued)

Morasha Rael Winokur rocks. She's authentic. Morasha knows that her brother's constant babbling isn't his fault, but sometimes she just wishes she could be a regular eleven-year-old girl. Not exactly possible, when brother Iyal, born with FASD, is unpredictable and emotional no matter where he is. At times, part of her wishes he would just shut up, while another part says, "But deep inside, I love him so much."

There are plenty of "That's not fair" times for Morasha, but also amazing amounts of family love, insight, and support. And an FASD service dog named Chancer for Iyal. With Chancer, Morasha says, she has a chance for a life of her own.

Read this book and I guarantee you'll never think the same about the outcome of drinking while pregnant. But it's much more. It's an opportunity to meet a delightful family that advocates for children with FASD.

Morasha's book is the "must have" of the 2009 holiday season and the coming year. A perfect gift, regardless of whether the reader has family or friends with special needs."

Judith Vorfeld

My Invisible World is a wonderful book. It provides a caring and thoughtful perspective on living with a sibling who has developmental challenges. Morasha is a very insightful, honest and intelligent author.

When you realize how old she is it is absolutely incredible. I think this is a "must-read" for families, young people, professionals and anyone who wants to read about a remarkable family, a remarkable young lady, and living with someone who has FASD. It is really a great read! For the professionals....it does provide an invaluable perspective on how siblings affect each other.

Eve Bogan

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Book Reviews - My Invisible World (continued)

"I found the message and deliverance of this book so powerful and heartfelt. The unconditional sibling love and respect displayed by this young lady reminds us that love truly has no boundaries. Whether you are learning to cope with a disability in your own family, or simply interested in reading a great book that shows immeasurable strength and courage, this is a must read! Great for children and parents, alike."

Melissa Lacquement

An honest and sensitive assessment of life for the sibling of a special needs child. Eleven year-old Morasha puts into words the burdens faced growing up with a brother affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). The reader learns how the whole family embraces the challenges of living with an FASD child and finds support in a specially trained service dog, named Chancer. This book provides insight, and is an appropriate read, for any parent or sibling of a of special needs child - not limited to only FASD affected families.

J. Michael Williams

Morasha has written a difficult and heartfelt story about her life and the affects of her brother's illness on her and her family. She shares her feelings very openly and candidly. This is a great book to share with others, especially children. This book should be in every elementary and middle school library in the county. Morasha tells it like it is!

Richard Liebman

Heartfelt voice of a young sister's love and her own internal struggle of acceptance with her sibling's disability. Wonderful read for inspiring authors, siblings and parents. Wish elementary schools would use this book for their student's curriculum and writer's workshops. There are so many lessons embedded in this 11 year old Morasha's story: embracing diversity, empathy, self-acceptance, siblings, growing up, being an agent of change, and the importance of prevention. My son read it to me as his homework, but the lessons have only begun to start to take root.

Gailynn Gluth

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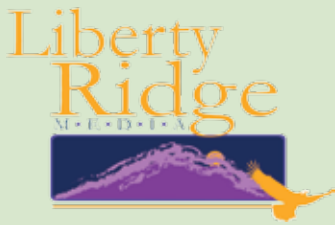
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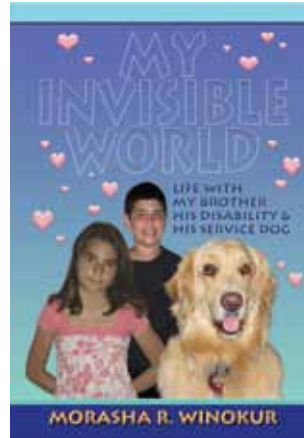
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Book Excerpt

My Invisible World

Life with my brother, his disability and his dog



by Morasha Winokur

"When my mother and I go out shopping I usually get asked, "What's the matter?" because people think something is wrong with me. They just can't get it into their head that it's okay for people to all be different and some people need to wear glasses, or use a wheelchair for better abilities.

I reply, "Nothing, the service dog is for my brother, but we just wanted to take him for a walk. My brother is not here right now."

The person who asks that question responds "oh", or nothing at all and turns away.

I get that a lot.

It's really quite annoying.

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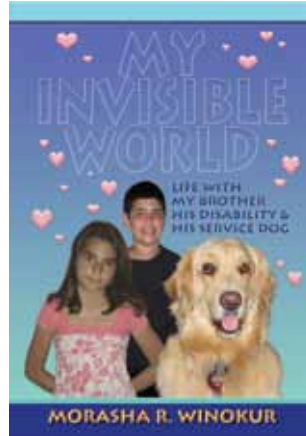
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About the Author

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Life with my brother, his disability and his dog



by Morasha Winokur

Morasha's Bio

Morasha's life in the United States began at 14 months when she was adopted from Russia by her parents, Donnie and Rabbi Harvey Winokur. As a toddler, Morasha created elaborate stories about her "former" life in Russia setting the stage for developing a vivid imagination and irresistible style of expression. At eleven years old, Morasha is in sixth grade at a public school in Roswell, Georgia. She lives with her parents, her brother, Iyal, his service dog, Chancer and two cats, Manhattan and Eilat.

Speaking opportunities

Morasha's mom, Donnie Kanter Winokur, Executive Director of NOFAS Georgia, is available to speak to organizations about the writing of "My Invisible World" and about fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD).



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