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Leaving Home

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Reviewer:

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Editor's Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

3

The devastation of Aids upon a community is encapsulated in this story, set in Malawi, of one boy's experience of coming to terms with death and bereavement. When only child Sam's mother dies from the dreaded disease, Sam's aunt insists that he go and live with her and her children. Until this moment, he's had a comfortable urban childhood of video games, books and computers. But now he's to be part of a wider household of cousins and orphans sharing a one-room hut with no electricity, miles from nowhere. Everything is new and bewildering, and grieving for his mother while adjusting to his new life is hard, especially since he's aware that some, like older boy Macdonald, are hostile towards him. Accusing Macdonald of stealing his shiny new trainers, a parting gift from his mother, makes matters worse, and he's left lonely and isolated ? and at odds with everyone.

Sam's emotional journey is painful. He has to learn how to fit in ? and that means sharing and forgetting about his previous life. The story is sure to find a warm response in young readers, especially since, though the circumstances may differ, the feelings and responses that Sam experiences are those of Everychild.

Running Order:

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