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Luke and Jon

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~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

Winner of National Book Tokens? one-off Not-Yet-Published prize, chosen by booksellers, this first novel does not disappoint. Lucidly written, it describes the growing relationship between the two adolescent boys of the title, both of whom have lost their mothers. Luke goes to his new school where his friend Jon is mercilessly bullied because he looks so shabby and seems unable to defend himself. He is also the only carer for his senile grandparents, and gets bullied for that too, so anticipating the sad findings of the recent survey carried out by the Princess Royal Trust for Carers and the Children's Society, revealing that more than two-thirds of young carers face taunts from fellow pupils. Add into the plot an alcoholic father and a dead mother who suffered from a bi-polar condition and the wish that this talented author should occasionally lighten up cannot always be resisted. It is also puzzling that a novel so concerned with bullying should still leave this issue comparatively unresolved. But on the positive side this is sensitive writing that spurns clichés and stereotypes while keeping readers totally involved to the last page. Not recommended for its sense of humour, it still wins through by the sincerity of its writing and a general sense of strong conviction.

Running Order:

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