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Too Much Trouble

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~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

Winner of the 2010 Frances Lincoln Diverse Voices Award, **Too Much Trouble** recounts what it is like to be a child immigrant in 21st century England, outside 'the system' and below the radar of the social services. Emmanuel and Prince are brothers who are sent to live in England when both their own and their parents lives are at risk in their African homeland. An uncle is supposed to look after them but, involved in a drug racket, all he does is provide them with an empty house to live in and occasionally money with which they feed themselves junk food. Emmanuel, aged 12, tries hard to keep himself and his younger brother out of trouble in school, but eventually events compel them to run away to London where they fall in with gang of pickpockets and petty thieves run by a Fagin-like character. While this part of the narrative seems somewhat implausible, it provides drama which should maintain interest for young readers, while not masking the plight of children who for one reason or another do not have a place in normal society.

For **Too Much Trouble** Avery has drawn on the experiences of pupils he has taught. While it is shocking to think that children in supposedly developed countries can be in the position of Emmanuel and Prince, the novel moves at a good pace and is a gripping story, not without humour. It will, perhaps, help more privileged readers, child and adult, and not only in England, to realise why some children in their school or neighbourhood may be different in some way from the norm.

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