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Under the Skin

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

This is a deceptively simple story about the horrors of racial prejudice and atrocities committed in the name of political stability told partly through the letters that Omar writes to his cousin Chat. Omar's family fled to England after his father, a doctor, was tortured and stripped of his profession and possessions. Although the family are free of the persecutors in their home country, they encounter new ones here in England ? particularly their vitriolic neighbour Mrs. Brown.

Omar writes to Chat of kind and helpful people, a safe home and a best friend, Sam. He does this to reassure his cousin who, like him, has seen his home destroyed and his friends and family killed. In fact, Sam is really his arch-enemy who tries to bully him mercilessly. When Sam comes to an understanding of Omar's refusal to betray his principles and learns more about his suffering, it is clear that when Chat and his family arrive they will find the two boys real friends. Tolerance and openness are celebrated quietly here, but the more powerfully for it. Particularly suitable for readers of 9 + who are struggling, reluctant or dyslexic.

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