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# Heroic

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Reviewer:

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

3

Novels set in the current war in Afghan are now starting to come through, with no holding back on the frustration and danger experienced by combatants on one side and an often resentful local populace on the other. Phil Earle's story is excellent on the mounting terror felt by young soldiers in a situation which could quite literally blow up in their faces at any moment. Narration switches between eighteen-year old Jammy, out in Afghanistan, and Sonny, his younger brother left behind on a British sink estate. Written in tough, staccato prose, there is much to admire here even though the total project starts to run out of steam well towards the end. What goes wrong is the characterisation of the main players, with Sonny on one page sounding and acting like an unreformed hooligan and on the next coming over as a concerned Youth Worker as his older brother, once back home and suffering from Post-Traumatic Syndrome, finally cuts loose. This inconsistency, plus over-insistent writing when it comes to describing thoughts and emotions, particularly where relationships between the two brothers are concerned, robs this otherwise worthy effort of that final satisfaction obtainable from a really good read from start to finish.

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