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Look Both Ways

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~~Editors Choice~~

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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

?A tale told in ten blocks? ? in ten short stories we meet the pupils of the local High School who all live in these blocks down the road. Boys, girls, friends or not, as they walk they talk, dream, worry ? or even imagine a school bus falling from the sky. Here young readers will see themselves reflected both facing very real situations or in their thoughts. We meet Jasmine and TJ as they walk and talk, their friendship a bulwark before a fractured home life; Fatima using lists to cope; Satchmo whose fear of dogs overwhelms him and others from their class and the Low Cuts, picking pockets...for what? This is the stuff of the everyday and here presented unadorned. The language is contemporary and colloquial, rich in the poetry and vocabulary of this school world. Though the setting is specific ? an urban American High School - nevertheless the characters, their hopes, wishes, problems, anxieties and friendships are individual and universal. Young readers will respond to the personal truths that lie behind the lives of the characters who come spilling out of this school bus that has fallen from the sky ? a clear metaphor to bind it all together. Adults may feel for the teachers who make the occasional appearance ? nether ogres nor saints, they too are people ? doing their best. This is an unusual and refreshing book that should find its way into every school library ? and classroom.

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