

[PDF] If You Come Softly

Jacqueline Woodson - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: If You Come Softly
Author: Jacqueline Woodson
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Description:

From Publishers Weekly Once again, Woodson (*I Hadn't Meant to Tell You This*) handles delicate, even explosive subject matter with exceptional clarity, surety and depth. In this contemporary story about an interracial romance, she seems to slip effortlessly into the skins of both her main characters, Ellie, an upper-middle-class white girl who has just transferred to Percy, an elite New York City prep school, and Jeremiah, one of her few African American classmates, whose parents (a movie producer and a famous writer) have just separated. A prologue intimates heartbreak to come; thereafter, sequences alternate between Ellie's first-person narration and a third-person telling that focuses on Jeremiah. Both voices convincingly describe the couple's love-at-first-sight meeting and the gradual building of their trust. The intensity of their emotions will make hearts flutter, then ache as evidence mounts that Ellie's and Jeremiah's "perfect" love exists in a deeply flawed society. Even as Woodson's lyrical prose draws the audience into the tenderness of young love, her perceptive comments about race and racism will strike a chord with black readers and open the eyes of white readers ("Thing about white people," Jeremiah's father tells him, "they know what everybody else is,

but they don't know they're white"). Knowing from the beginning that tragedy lies just around the corner doesn't soften the sharp impact of this wrenching book. Ages 10-up.

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From School Library Journal Grade 7 Up-Two 15 year olds, Jeremiah (Miah) who is black, and Elisha (Ellie) who is white, meet during their first year at an exclusive New York prep school and fall in love. Both teens are also dealing with difficult family situations. Miah's father has left his mother for another woman, and Ellie is trying to fight through her feelings about her mother, who twice abandoned her family for extended periods. The teenagers must also deal with the subtle and not-so-subtle bigotry that they are subject to as a mixed-race couple. Miah and Ellie go about working through their problems, both individually and together, and their relationship continues to blossom, giving readers a shared sense of contentment. Thus, the tragic climax will leave them stunned. Woodson's lyrical narrative tells the story through alternating voices, Ellie's in the first person and Miah's in the third. This fine author once again shows her gift for penning a novel that will ring true with young adults as it makes subtle comments on social situations.

Tom S. Hurlburt, La Crosse Public Library, WI

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