



Web of Lies

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~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

The title of Beverley Naidoo's new novel offers a hint that it is the sequel to her award-winning **The Other Side of Truth**. It continues the story of Femi and Sade, the refugee children of a Nigerian journalist, forced to flee their country after their mother is murdered by the agents of the late ruling military dictatorship. This second book is concerned not so much with the family's unresolved status in Britain, although this continues as a nagging anxiety, but with the children's survival at school and on the London streets. Femi is caught up in a gang, and is the witness to a serious assault that almost results in murder. The tragedy of Damilola Taylor springs to mind; and, once again, Naidoo shows her ability to take stories that are hot off the press, give them emotional depth and raise questions about the state of society and our own responsibilities to each other. **Web of Lies**, like its predecessor, brings together the personal and the political, linking the pressures that children and parents live under whether in Britain or Africa. Shifting between Sade's and Femi's points of view, it's also a compelling thriller, whose menace builds as Femi is drawn further into the gang's clutches and his actions and loyalties become determined by his own lies. Naidoo's advocacy of living with integrity, a sense of justice, and care for others is all the more impressive for treating children seriously: as people who are faced with challenging moral decisions every day of their lives, and who sometimes fail to live up to their own highest standards. In Femi and Sade's 'Papa', Naidoo provides an admirable, though entirely believable, source of adult emotional strength and moral conviction.

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