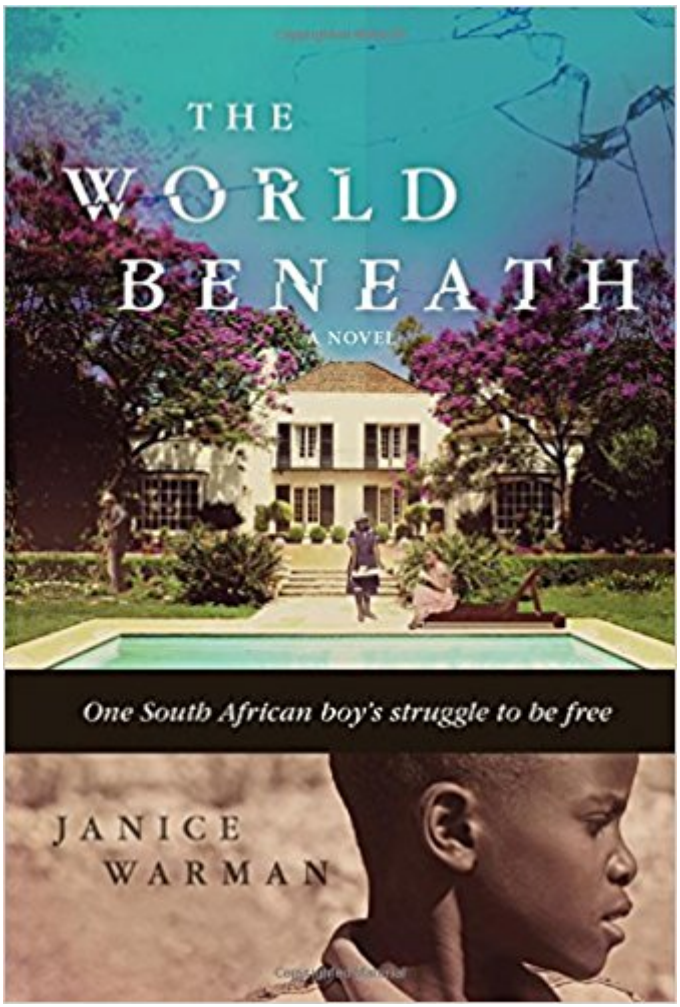
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The World Beneath: A Novel



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Synopsis

At the height of South AfricaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s anti-apartheid struggle, a boy must face life decisions that test what he believesÃ¢â ¬â •and call for no turning back.South Africa, 1976. Joshua lives with his mother in the maidÃ¢â ¬â„¢s room, in the backyard of their wealthy white employersÃ¢â ¬â„¢ house in the city by the sea. He doesnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t quite understand the events going on around him. But when he rescues a stranger and riots begin to sweep the country, Joshua has to face the world beneathÃ¢â ¬â •the world deep inside himÃ¢â ¬â •to make heartbreaking choices that will change his life forever. Genuine and quietly unflinching, this beautifully nuanced novel from a veteran journalist captures a childÃ¢â ¬â„¢s-eye view of the struggle that shaped a nation and riveted the world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 6-9-Set in 1970s South Africa, this tale is about Joshua, a young boy struggling to survive the racial legacy of apartheid. Joshua’s mother works as a maid at the estate of a wealthy white family where they live. He works hard to go unnoticed, until he unintentionally stumbles across a black man trying to evade capture by police. Joshua decides to hide this man without truly understanding the dangers involved. Through this narrative, Joshua witnesses the unravelling of his society and dabbles on the edge of his own morals when pushed to respond to the oppression. The sequence of events often moves too quickly, and characters lack depth, detaching readers from potentially emotional plot points. Joshua’s perspective introduces kids to South African history, but without guidance or a previous understanding of apartheid, much of the content’s nuances may be missed.

Still, the work serves to address a critical aspect of world history and can be a valuable addition to school libraries. VERDICT This book is recommended for use in the classroom as well as for libraries with larger collections and where historical fiction is popular.-Paige Rowse, Needham High School Library, MAÃ Â (c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

A good complement to nonfiction about apartheid South Africa, a little-explored place and period in children's literature.Ã¢â ¬â •Kirkus ReviewsSet in 1970s South Africa, this tale is about Joshua, a young boy struggling to survive the racial legacy of apartheid...the work serves to address a critical aspect of world history and can be a valuable addition to school libraries.Ã¢â ¬â •School Library JournalThrough the eyes of an innocent boy trying to fathom the injustice and brutality of apartheid, as well as his own potentially violent role in the struggle, Warman presents a gripping personal portrait of a horrific chapter in South AfricaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s history.Ã¢â ¬â •Publishers WeeklyIn this slim, tightly constructed novel, Warman stays true to the narrow perspective of the naive country boy observing an uprising in a city he scarcely knows.Ã¢â ¬â •Bulletin of the Center for Children's BooksThe succinct and specific prose will transport readers to a pivotal moment in history...Through a childÃ¢â ¬â„¢s eyes, Warman perfectly captures the discovery of white privilege and the intentional creation of two distinct worlds just as their dividers come crumbling down.Ã¢â ¬â •BooklistSouth African journalist Janice Warman introduces young readers to that terrifying circumstance in "The World Beneath," a humane and thoughtful exploration of a young Xhosa boyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s political awakening...Spanning two turbulent years, this novel for readers 11 and older movingly depicts moments of moral courage in a society on the edge of violent upheaval.Ã¢â ¬â •The Wall Street Journal

This novel was thin and was a fast read. I picked it up on a whim as the cover had been calling to me for weeks. There was something about the covers design and colors that attracted my attention. I wish I could give this novel glowing reviews since it has perked my attention for so long but unfortunately I thought the novel was just touching on the surface of a much deeper issue. I also was craving more information about the characters and their lives, why couldnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t the author elaborate more? The novel showcased the inequality that was occurring in the 1970ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s in Africa as seen through the eyes of young Joshua. His mother was a maid trying to earn enough money to provide for her other children who live with her parents. Separated from his siblings, Joshua tries to stay out of the eyes of the wealthy owners as he tends

to a few chores around the quarters. ItÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s his inquisitive mind and his childlike ways that spin this story off into another direction as Joshua runs an errand for the lady of the house and he finds himself distracted while trying to stay invisible. Joshua soon realizes that the world is a bigger place with problems that he never knew existed. ItÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s about rights and who is entitled to them and for young Joshua this is a new concept and one that he didnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t understand. I wished the author would have given more history and explanation of the time period and the characters as I thought parts of the novel were confusing and not as well addressed as they could have been. I did like the character of Joshua, his inquiring mind and his attitude brought the novel together.

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