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Mustafa's Jumper

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

A timely and touching story of the growing friendship between two children from very different backgrounds.

Milo isn't extra clever, or extra naughty, or extra anything. He tends to stay in the background, but when Mustafa, a young refugee who speaks no English, joins Milo's class Milo steps forward to befriend him. The other children in class think making friends with someone who doesn't speak English will be difficult, but Milo proves them wrong, soon the two boys are in the playground throwing a ball to one another and having great fun.

Gradually the friendship between the two boys grows and both become more confident. Mustafa is quick to learn and soon has the whole class in fits of laughter with his funny stories. Mustafa gets sad sometimes too and Milo understands 'Sometimes sad people just want you to sit next to them. It's not a hard job'. A day arrives, however, when Mustafa seems especially sad, he has found out he has to return to his country and there is nothing anyone can do about it. Milo finds it difficult to understand and badly misses his friend, his mum tells him 'Mustafa will always be in your memories'. The next day in class Milo discovers Mustafa's school jumper and hangs it on the peg next to his own where it remains to remind Milo and the rest of his class what a very special person Mustafa was.

This beautifully written story manages to introduce a difficult subject to younger readers in a moving and gentle way. The absence of a happy ending does need to be borne in mind, however, as some children may find it upsetting.

The story is based on Coral Rumble's poem **Mustafa's Jumper**, which won the **Caterpillar Poetry Prize** in 2018. There is a section at the end of the book which contains the poem and information about refugees and migrants for young audiences reading the book.

Source URL (retrieved on Apr '20): <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/240/childrens-books/reviews/mustafa%E2%80%99s-jumper>

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