

[PDF] Bronx Masquerade

Nikki Grimes - pdf download free book



Books Details:

Title: Bronx Masquerade
Author: Nikki Grimes
Released: 2003-12-29
Language:
Pages: 176
ISBN: 0142501891
ISBN13: 978-0142501894
ASIN: 0142501891

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Description:

Open Mike Friday is everyone's favorite day in Mr. Ward's English class. On Fridays, his 18 high-school students dare to relax long enough to let slip the poets, painters, readers, and dreamers that exist within each of them. Raul Ramirez, the self-described "next Diego Rivera," longs "to show the beauty of our people, that we are not all *banditos* like they show on TV, munching *cuchfritos* and sipping beer through chipped teeth." And while angry Tyrone Bittings finds dubious comfort in denying hope: "Life is cold. Future?...wish there was some future to talk about. I could use me some future," overweight Janelle Battle hopes to be seen for what she really is: "for I am coconut / and the heart of me / is sweeter / than you know" They are all here: the tall girl, the tough-talking rapper, the

jock, the beauty queen, the teenage mom, the artist, and many more. While it may sound like another *Breakfast Club* rehash, Grimes uses both poetry and revealing first-person prose to give each character a distinct voice. By book's end, all the voices have blended seamlessly into a multicultural chorus laden with a message that is probably summed up best by pretty girl Tanisha Scott's comment, "I am not a skin color or a hank of wavy hair. I am a person, and if they don't get that, it's their problem, not mine." But no teen reader will have a problem with this lyrical mix of many-hued views. (Ages 12 and older) --*Jennifer Hubert* --This text refers to the edition.

From Publishers Weekly When a high school teacher in the Bronx begins to host open-mike poetry in his classroom on Fridays, his students find a forum to express their identity issues and forge unexpected connections with one another. Grimes's (*Jazmin's Notebook*) creative, contemporary premise will hook teens, and the poems may even inspire readers to try a few of their own. The poetic forms range from lyrics penned by aspiring rapper Tyrone to the concrete poem of a budding Puerto Rican painter Raul (titled "Zorro" and formed as the letter "Z"). Ultimately, though, there may be too many characters for the audience to penetrate deeply. The students in Mr. Ward's English class experience everything from dyslexia and low self-esteem to teenage motherhood and physical abuse. The narrators trade off quickly, offering only a glimpse into their lives. Not even Tyrone, who breaks in after each student's poem to offer some commentary, comes fully to life. The students' poems, however, provide some lasting images (e.g., overweight Janelle, who is teased for her "thick casing," writes, "I am coconut,/ and the heart of me/ is sweeter/ than you know"). Any one of these students could likely dominate a novel of his or her own, they simply get too little time to hold the floor here. Ages 12-up.

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