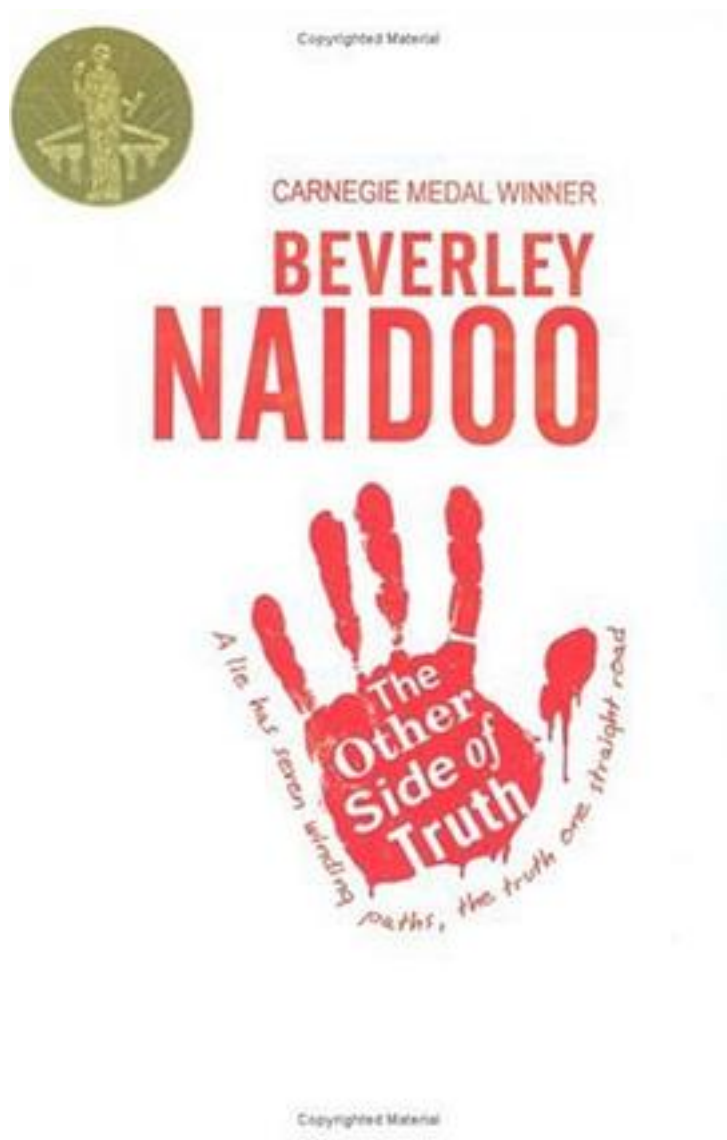


The Other Side of Truth



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著者:Naidoo, Beverley

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From Publishers Weekly Sade, the 12-year-old protagonist of Naidoo's sophisticated and emotional novel, must flee her native Nigeria with her younger brother after their mother is killed in a shooting. Their father, a muckraking journalist in trouble with the military government, was the target. Sade and 10-year-old Femi soon find themselves stranded in London, abandoned by the woman paid to smuggle them into the country, and at the mercy of mostly friendly, but foreign government agencies, foster families and teachers. Her father finally surfaces in England, only to be detained for illegally emigrating. Sade must learn quickly how to fight for what she holds dear, including her father's safety. The inclusion of real facts about African countries, such as the government's execution of Nigerian activist writer Ken Saro-Wiwa, makes Naidoo's story more poignant, while the immediacy of the parallel story, in which Sade must deal with similar obstacles on a smaller scale (e.g., powerful school gangs), makes the novel more accessible. Flashbacks, letters written between father and daughter, and Sade's constant memories of her mother's sayings, add texture. Readers may be challenged by some of the British English, but they will find it easy to understand Sade's joy at reuniting with her father in prison, and likely find her determination exhilarating. Ages 10-up. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition. From School Library Journal Gr 5-8-With political insight, sensitivity, and passion, Naidoo presents the harrowing story of two Nigerian children caught in the civil strife of their beloved homeland in the mid-1990s. Eighth-grader Sade Solaja and her fifth-grade brother, Femi, are hastily stowed out of Nigeria after their mother is shot and killed by assassins' bullets meant for their outspoken journalist father. The children are abandoned in London and are unable to locate their uncle, a university professor who has been threatened and has gone into hiding. Picked up first by the police and then by immigration authorities, the youngsters remain silent, afraid to reveal their true names and background. They are placed in a foster home where kindness does not relieve their loneliness and alienation. School is a frightening plunge into Western culture, relaxed discipline, ethnic harassment, and peer intimidation. When their father, who has illegally entered the country, contacts them from a detention center, the children are jubilant. However, their excitement is overshadowed by his imprisonment and subsequent hunger strike. Sade enacts a plan to tell "Mr. Seven O'Clock News" her father's story. Public attention and support follow, prompting his release. Tension and hope alternately drive the story as Sade and Femi grapple with an avalanche of decisions, disappointments, and discoveries. Traditions temper Sade's despair as she remembers times at Family House in Ibadan, and her mother's quiet admonition to be true to yourself. Through these compelling characters, Naidoo has captured and revealed the personal anguish and universality of the refugee experience. Gerry Larson, Durham School of the Arts, NC Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. See all Editorial Reviews

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