



Crongton Knights

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News/Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

Readers who enjoyed the author's **Liccle Bit** are in for a treat ? this sequel is even better. Seen this time from the eyes of amiable, chubby fourteen-year old McKay living in a bleak estate, its descriptions of gang warfare and urban riot have the ring of uncomfortable truth. But what makes an often grim picture also entertaining is the distinctive, often jokey vocabulary used by all characters. ?Words? are ?lyrics, ?doors? are ?drawbridges?, ?rooms? are ?dungeons? and ?expecting bad news? is to anticipate ?the logs spilling over the toilet seat.? Continual banter is laced with excellent near-the-knuckle jokes, sustained without a break over nearly 300 pages. Hard swearing, though, is not an issue, with ?freaking? standing in for its better known, still less acceptable counterpart.

Behind the vocabulary there is also a gripping story where group loyalty is put to the severest test when McKay and his young friends take on an older boy from a rival gang. He is about to go public with some highly damaging photographs of Venetia, a beautiful fellow pupil trying to extricate herself from a disastrous relationship. Much of the plot revolves around their perilous journey taken with the aim of wresting the mobile phone in question back before any harm is done. There is also the problem of coping with Nesta, McKay's explosive older brother who is in serious trouble of his own. Assorted parents, some more sympathetic than others, must also be appeased.

Things threaten to get nasty for the five teenagers involved when they finally come up against some truly terrifying gang-master villains, intent on proving hard and pitiless when they think the occasion demands. Some useful addresses of where to find help in the real world with some of the personal or social problems raised in this fine novel are included on a back page. But young readers could also learn plenty of useful lessons about survival from this story alone, which never lets up and has much of value to say.

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