

Every Body Has a Story

Beverly Gologorsky

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Set against the backdrop of the economic crash, *Every Body Has a Story* is an exploration of how our identities evolve when under immense pressure. Following Lena, her family, and their close friends through employment insecurity and the eventual loss of their home, Beverly Gologorsky's novel puts a human face on the collective crisis of 2008.

Lena, Zack, and their two adolescent children live a comfortable, working-class life. Along with their friends Dory and Stu, they have worked hard to build their American dream. Companions since their childhood in the projects, the couples are more kin than friends. As economic stresses affect them all, macrocosmic strains manifest on an intimate, interpersonal level.

Spending time inside the head of each character, the book is a poignant exploration of the diverse ways that human beings respond to pressure. The players present various perspectives on subjects from the intersection of masculinity and money to the experiences of a generation coming of age in an era of economic instability.

This is, gloriously, not an "inspirational" tale of unbelievable grace under pressure. Rather, it's a relatable novel full of characters who don't always behave well. This is both the book's triumph and its occasional downfall; there are stretches where it's easy to lose sympathy for the characters, as they are less than noble in response to the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.

However, the characters' fallibility makes the eventual climax and resulting character growth even more resonant. The novel offers redemption for its characters without regarding them as anything other than human in the face of great pain.

Every Body Has a Story holds a reminder that we all carry the complexities of our unique stories. Offering insight into humanity and its rough edges, this book will not disappoint.

JESSIE HORNESS (May/June 2018)

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