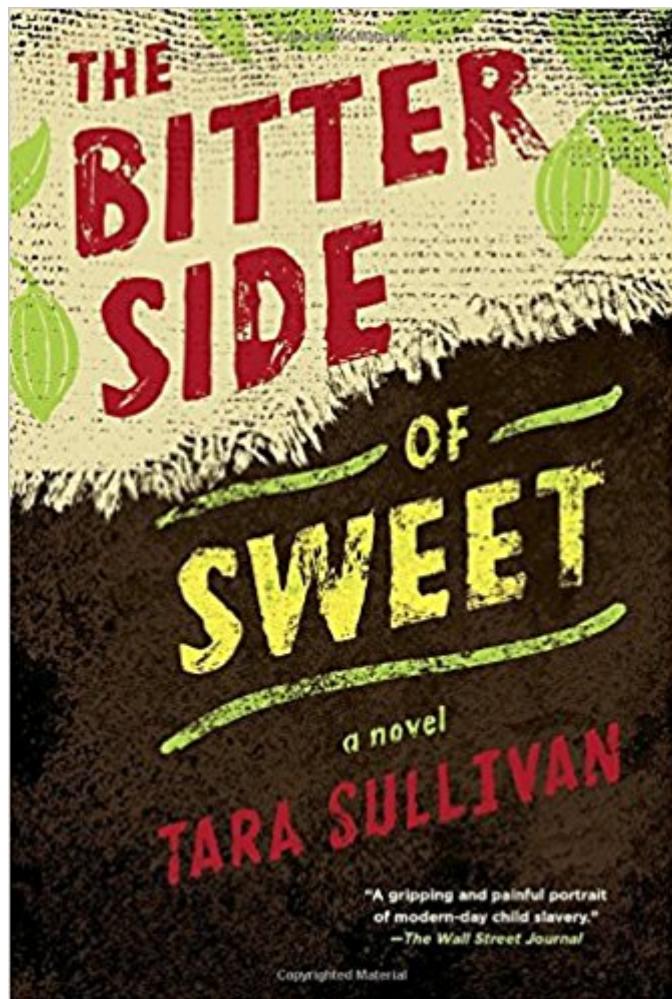


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The Bitter Side Of Sweet



Synopsis

For fans of Linda Sue Park and *A Long Way Gone*, two young boys must escape a life of slavery in modern-day Ivory Coast. Fifteen-year-old Amadou counts the things that matter. For two years what has mattered are the number of cacao pods he and his younger brother, Seydou, can chop down in a day. The higher the number the safer they are. The higher the number the closer they are to paying off their debt and returning home. Maybe. The problem is Amadou doesn't know how much he and Seydou owe, and the bosses won't tell him. The boys only wanted to make money to help their impoverished family, instead they were tricked into forced labor on a plantation in the Ivory Coast. With no hope of escape, all they can do is try their best to stay alive until Khadija comes into their lives. She is the first girl who's ever come to camp, and she's a wild thing. She fights bravely every day, attempting escape again and again, reminding Amadou what it means to be free. But finally, the bosses break her, and what happens next to the brother he has always tried to protect almost breaks Amadou. The three band together as family and try just once more to escape. Inspired by true-to-life events happening right now, *The Bitter Side of Sweet* is an exquisitely written tour de force not to be missed. A gripping and painful portrait of modern-day child slavery in the cacao plantations of the Ivory Coast. • The Wall Street Journal A tender, harrowing story of family, friendship, and the pursuit of freedom. • Kirkus Reviews, A starred review

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 7 Up • Escape for 15-year-old Amadou and his eight-year-old brother, Seydou, doesn't

seem likely. The boys were hoping to pay off the family's debt but instead were tricked into picking cacao daily. They are forced to meet unreasonable quotas or be beaten or left with no supper. The boys see little hope for freedom until Khadija shows up. She is the first girl to enter the camp, and she is a fighter. The three band together to escape. The trio are appalled to learn that the cacao pods that they were forced to harvest are used to create candy that is enjoyed by rich children. This story is not only intense but also educational, as listeners might think twice about the chocolate that they purchase, where it comes from, and what sacrifices were made to obtain it. J.D. Jackson's narration relays the intensity of each day faced by the children. VERDICT Readers of *Copper Sun* by Sharon Draper will especially enjoy this title, as it sheds light on a true problem on the Ivory Coast. ["An engaging story that will engender empathy in readers": SLJ 1/16 starred review of the Putnam book.] ¦ •Karen Alexander, Lake Fenton High School; Linden, MI --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Praise for *The Bitter Side of Sweet*: ¦ A ¦ "A gripping and painful portrait of modern-day child slavery in the cacao plantations of the Ivory Coast." ¦ •The Wall Street Journal * ¦ "A tender, harrowing story of family, friendship, and the pursuit of freedom." ¦ •Kirkus Reviews, starred review ¦ * ¦ "In crisp, accessible prose, Sullivan draws readers into a most compelling story of survival under unspeakable hardship, bravery, and teamwork." ¦ Absorbing and important. ¦ •Booklist, starred review ¦ * ¦ "[A] heart-wrenching survival tale." ¦ •Publishers Weekly, starred review * ¦ "An engaging story that will engender empathy in readers." ¦ •School Library Journal, starred review * ¦ "Curriculum connections abound and even reluctant readers will be drawn to the suspenseful plot and distinctive characters." ¦ •SLC, starred review ¦ "First-world readers will learn much about how their pleasures are underwritten by the labor of their third-world peers." ¦ The resolution...is an as-good-as-it-gets kind of compromise that leaves much room for the activism advocated for in the author's note that follows. ¦ •The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books ¦ "This beautiful story of love triumphing over cruelty and profit stands out as an excellent book discussion choice or classroom study." ¦ •VOYA

I enjoyed this book very much. It was as good or better than her first book. I was not aware of the problems with the chocolate business. Ms. Sullivan's books have both been very informative regarding issues that are not well known. I am looking forward to her next book.

Super fast shipping and a great book!

Amazing story and a fantastic read. Came in perfect condition and I loved the book. Couldn't put it down, I would recommend.

The book came in a timely fashion and was exactly what I expected.

My daughter loved it

Great thought-provoking story that is very well-written.

great story

my 12 year old loved it

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