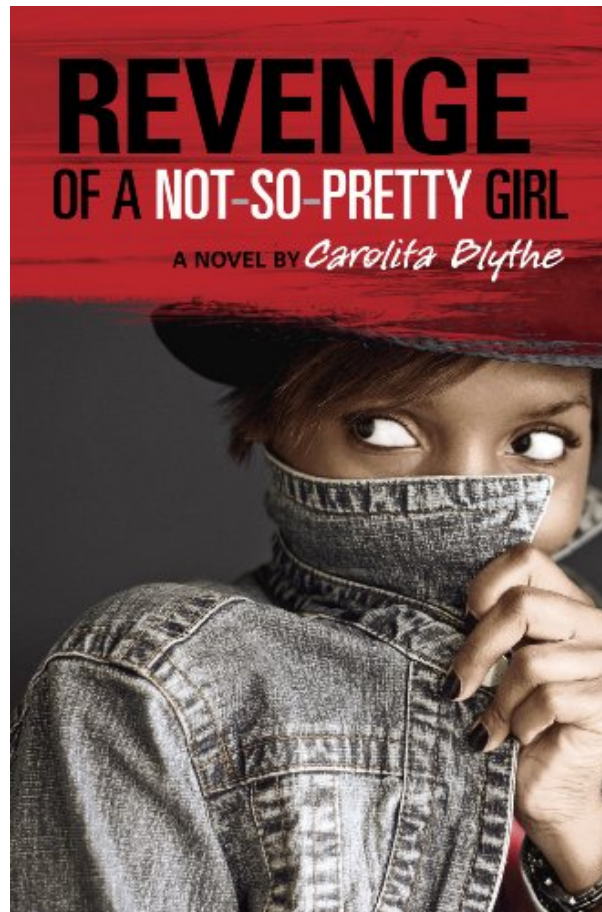
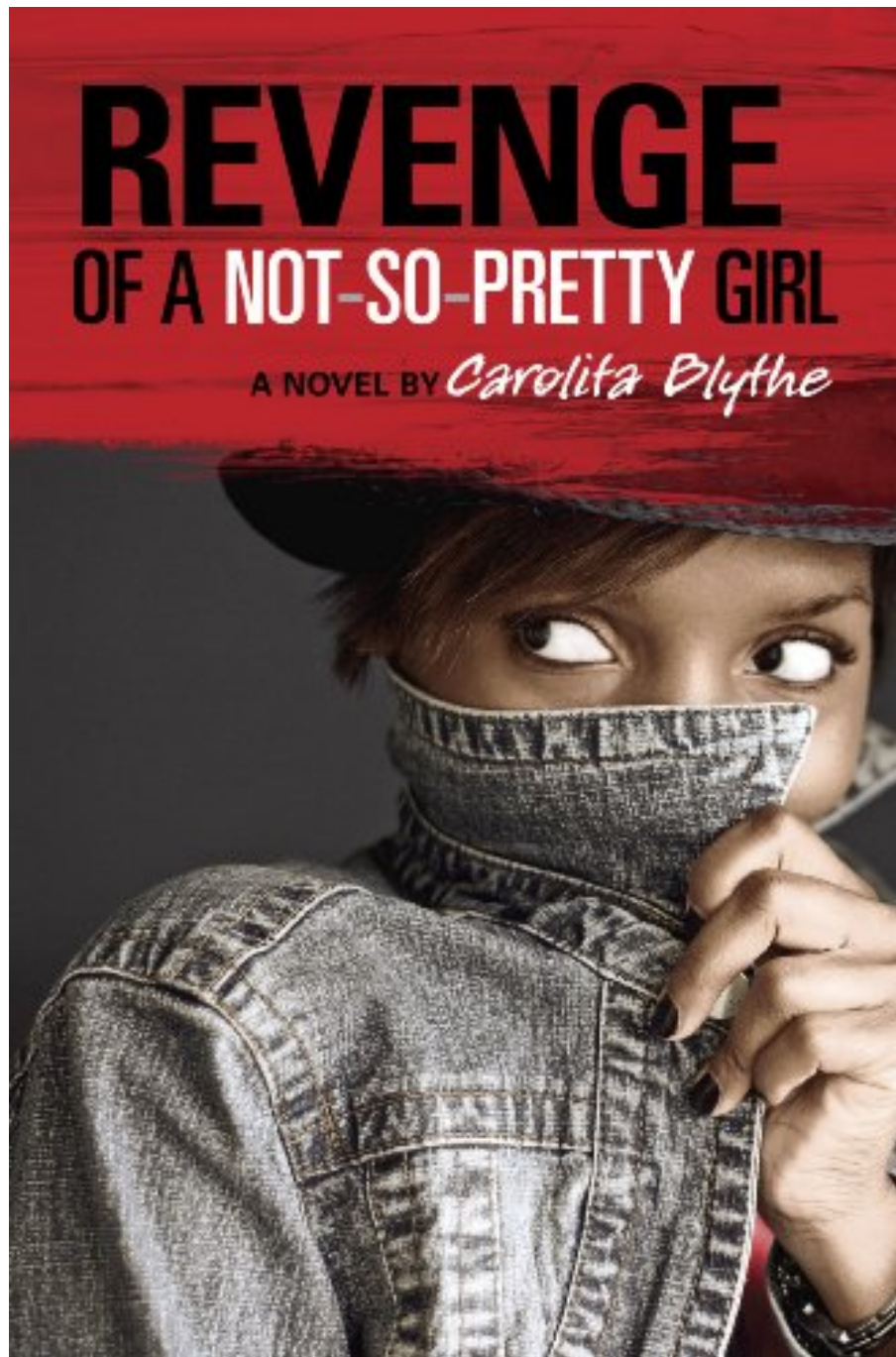


REVENGE OF A NOT-SO-PRETTY GIRL BY CAROLITA BLYTHE



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From School Library Journal

Gr 7-10-Faye, 14, feels worthless and oppressed. Her father, a struggling musician, left her and her mother years earlier, her mother is full of anger and takes it out on the teen, and her two neighborhood friends have convinced her that if you aren't attractive, the only way to make it in life is to take what you want. The novel, which is set in 1984 Brooklyn, opens with Faye and her friends staking out a former movie star's apartment so they can take her money. The robbery goes awry and the elderly lady ends up sprawled across the floor. Faye finds herself returning to the scene of the crime a few days later. What ensues is a journey to find herself. Faye befriends the old woman and begins to question her life choices. Faye's mother is realistically flawed, as are all of the adults in the novel, and Blythe offers no easy solutions for turning one's life around. The tough-talking Faye slips up and her road to maturity isn't smooth. This realistic portrayal of emotions, decisions, and hardships will appeal to teens who are also struggling with their identities.-Tammy Turner, Centennial High School, Frisco, TX(c) Copyright 2013. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

From Booklist

If beauty is on the inside, Faye certainly doesn't have much going for her at the start of this book, set in Brooklyn in the mid-1980s. She and her friends rob an elderly woman who they believe was once a movie star. During the robbery, Faye accidentally injures Evelyn quite severely. Haunted by guilt, and desperate to find a way to escape her mother's abusive home as much as she can, Faye returns to the apartment to check on Evelyn, and the two develop the most unlikely of friendships. This is a classic coming-of-age story wherein Faye must face her own burden of responsibility and break free from the detrimental expectations of others. Peppared with '80s pop-culture references, but otherwise untethered to the era, the book sometimes feels dated instead of retro. But Faye's personal growth and her eventual escape from a dark home life are rewarding, as is the quirky friendship between Faye and Evelyn, from which Faye learns much about responsibility and individuality. Grades 6-9. --Heather Booth

Review

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believable journey.”

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REVENGE OF A NOT-SO-PRETTY GIRL BY CAROLITA BLYTHE PDF

Fans of Walter Dean Myers and Rita Williams-Garcia's *One Crazy Summer* will cherish this gripping story of an African American girl living in 1980s Brooklyn, who overcomes abuse and neglect in discovering real friendship, self-respect, and that pretty and mean don't always win.

Girls who are pretty have a way of looking down their perfect noses at anyone they feel isn't worthy of sharing the air with them. They have a way of making regular girls like me feel inferior for not winning the gene pool lottery. Tormenting them is my way of getting even.

Everyone knows that pretty equals mean, and Evelyn Ryder used to be a beautiful movie star—never mind that it was practically a lifetime ago. There's no time limit on mean. So if you think I feel guilty about mugging her, think again.

But for something that should have been so simple, it sure went horribly wrong.

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A Bankstreet Best Book of the Year

"Definitely a page-turner!"--Seventeen.com

"Exhilarating . . . compelling and believable."—Kirkus Reviews, Starred

"A well-told story of an empowering friendship."—The Bulletin, Recommended

"This realistic portrayal of emotions, decisions, and hardships will appeal to teens who are also struggling with their identities."—SLJ

"Blythe, in her first book for teens, explores karma, guilt, morality, and taking responsibility for one's actions. . . . the story provides a thoughtful glimpse of what it's like to reevaluate one's life at any age."—Publisher's Weekly

"This is a classic coming-of-age story . . . Faye's personal growth and her eventual escape from a dark home life are rewarding."—Booklist

From the Hardcover edition.

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Most helpful customer reviews

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Every detail, physical and emotional, is true-to-life

By Teen Reads

Faye is on the lookout for the woman she and her friends plan to rob. Their ring-leader, bossy Caroline, planned the heist after she learned there was a retired movie actress living in this Brooklyn apartment. A famous actress should have tons of cash, and the other girls are very excited. Faye's feeling reluctant. It's a bit different when they've stolen from mean, privileged teens, who flaunt their good looks and possessions in Faye's face. Gillian, the third person of their team, spots the actress on her way, but says, "...I gotta tell you, though, she doesn't look like a movie star to me."

When Faye spots their intended victim trudging up the stairs to the vestibule, she sees what Gillian means. This is a tiny, ancient lady with a hump on her back and white cotton-candy hair. She isn't dressed well and doesn't look like she belongs in this swanky apartment building, which happens to be not far from Faye's home but is an entire world apart in terms of classiness. This woman looks like she would fit in the shabby apartment Faye shares with her mother. From the old lady's appearance, she could even be homeless. Now

Caroline insists on carrying the woman's bag of groceries into her apartment. When Faye and Gillian enter, their victim is propped against the wall with the groceries strewn over the floor. She insists she only has the few dollars that were in her purse, but the girls search her apartment. Caroline, frustrated, goes berserk, throwing crockery against the floor. After the old lady hands over bills hidden in a cookbook, Faye idly picks up a framed photograph. The woman lunges at Faye, who pulls back, accidentally knocking her down. The elderly lady hits her head on the edge of the table and slides to the floor.

As Faye walks to her home, she feels as if she is in a nightmare. The scene in which the little old lady strikes her head and crumples lifelessly to the floor replays in her mind repeatedly. Even at home, as she rushes to accomplish chores her mother expects done, she can feel her heart pound. As usual, Mama is anything but a comfort and Faye could never confide in her. Mama is forever the opposite of affectionate, now yanking Faye along to church where Faye wonders if she will flare into flames, murderer that she is.

Faye's absent father pays for her to attend a Catholic high school. In her religious studies class the next day, her nemesis, Sister Margaret Theresa Patricia Bernadette (who insists on being addressed with every one of her names) writes the word "KARMA" on the blackboard in foot-high letters. Keisha, Faye's best friend, jokes around, mouthing "karma" and widening her eyes as if she is a star in a horror flick. However, the concept of karma suddenly has a terrible personal meaning for Faye --- and as the nun discusses how actions can lead to rude awakenings, Faye's world closes in on her. By the time she's out of school, she feels as if she is actually going insane. She is impelled to the old lady's apartment, where she stands with her hand on the door knob. If the knob turns, she'll know the old lady died and that Faye is a true murderer, but Faye could never predict the twists and turns her life will soon take.

I was hooked from page one of this layered, nuanced page-turner, which weaves themes of conscience, family connections, friendship and more into a stunning coming of age story. Author Carolita Blythe never missteps as we enter Faye's life. Every detail, physical and emotional, is true-to-life. Faye is not only a totally real and sympathetic person, she is also both witty and refreshingly complex, making *REVENGE OF A NOT-SO-PRETTY GIRL* a story that lingers long after the tale is finished.

Reviewed by Terry Miller Shannon

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

This is an amazing book. I thought I'd be reading it for ...

By Deanne

This is an amazing book. I thought I'd be reading it for a week or so, taking time to read a chapter or two at night, but I rarely put it down and finished it in a weekend. Carolita Blythe knows how to tell an emotional, page turning story. This inspirational book is full of heart and soul. I can't recommend it enough.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Beautiful and emotional

By Jessica A. Kaser

Beautifully written tear jerker about love and redemption and a sad little girl and a lonely woman who become unlikely friends. This book is touching in many ways and does a great job of describing the loneliness and sadness of both a teenager and an elderly woman.

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