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Angel on the Roof

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~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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When an angel lands on the roof of 32 Paradise Street, (attracted by the name), a golden feather floats downwards, past several people living in the various flats, until it is found by Lewis Brown, who lives in the basement. Lewis has one leg that doesn't work as well as the other, and doesn't go out much, but he sees that the feather is not from Mr Gantry's pigeons and goes up to the roof, slowly, to investigate. Lewis tells the angel his troubles - how he wishes he could make friends, how Dan Sharples turns up the music on his headphones and doesn't speak to him, how his Mum keeps badgering him to go out. The angel and Lewis become great friends, though the angel doesn't ever speak, and Lewis enjoys being up on the roof with him, gazing at the sky and seeing life going on around them. Lewis borrows an old coat belonging to his Dad and puts it on the angel, so that they can go out, and that pleases his Mum. People in the flats start being kinder and more helpful to each other, and Dan actually stops on the stairs and talks to Lewis. Eventually, Lewis asks the angel for a miracle to make him strong, which is not possible, but the angel takes Lewis on a night flight all the way to the sea, a truly memorable night before the angel has to leave. As the book ends, the people are continuing to be nicer and more co-operative with each other, and Lewis and Dan often go swimming together. Lewis, who enjoyed looking out at the world, grows up to be a successful artist, and is said to 'paint like an angel'.

This delightful story is illustrated by Shirley Hughes in her familiar style, but in navy blue ink, with no other colour, just gentle swirls of gold around the angel, edging his wings and obscuring his face. The simplicity of the drawings is moving and effective. The publisher offers this as a perfect story for Christmas, but there is no mention of Christmas at any point, and its message of kindness that spreads kindness is surely for any time. This book will suit newly confident readers, and lovely for an adult to read aloud.

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