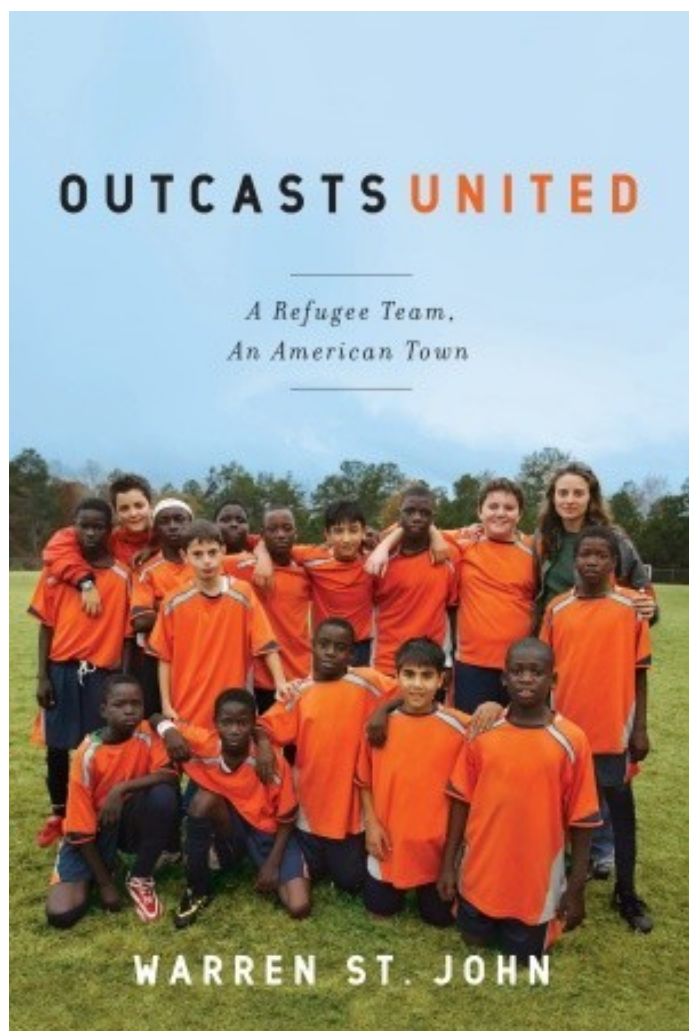

Warren St. John

Outcasts United: A Refugee Team, an American Town



Title: Outcasts United: A Refugee Team, an American Town

Author: Warren St. John

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Description

The extraordinary tale of a refugee youth soccer team and the transformation of a small American town

Clarkston, Georgia, was a typical Southern town until it was designated a refugee settlement center in the 1990s, becoming the first American home for scores of families in flight from the world's war zones—from Liberia and Sudan to Iraq and Afghanistan. Suddenly Clarkston's streets were filled with women wearing the hijab, the smells of cumin and curry, and kids of all colors playing soccer in any open space they could find. The town also became home to Luma Mufleh, an American-educated Jordanian woman who founded a youth soccer team to unify Clarkston's refugee children and keep them off the streets. These kids named themselves the Fugees.

Set against the backdrop of an American town that without its consent had become a vast social experiment, *Outcasts United* follows a pivotal season in the life of the Fugees and their charismatic coach. Warren St. John documents the lives of a diverse group of young people as they miraculously coalesce into a band of brothers, while also drawing a fascinating portrait of a fading American town struggling to accommodate its new arrivals. At the center of the story is fiery Coach Luma, who relentlessly drives her players to success on the soccer field while holding together their lives—and the lives of their families—in the face of a series of daunting challenges.

This fast-paced chronicle of a single season is a complex and inspiring tale of a small town becoming a global community—and an account of the ingenious and complicated ways we create a home in a changing world.

Insightful reviews

Patti from Charlotte: Having lived in Clarkston, Georgia, the setting of the book, for several years in the early 1980's and having been a 'soccer mom' for the better part of the last ten years as well, this book 'spoke' to me on many natural levels. However, the depth of the story extended far, far beyond those simple parameters and to the many backstories of Luma Mufleh and the refugee families that she encountered during her own exodus from her native land. Never again will I sit on the sidelines of a soccer game in my collapsable chair under my umbrella, Diet Coke in hand, without thinking of the small army of lives touched by her hand on other soccer fields of the Southeast. The hardships that the Fugee teams encountered to play this "Beautiful Game" stretched much further than the simple creature comforts seemingly important to my suburban world. In documenting her story and those other stories of her journey, Warren St. John quoted her friend and assistant (an understatement!) Tracy Ediger aptly, "No one person can do everything, but we can all do something." This book is a challenge to do just that, from adjusting our attitudes to opening our eyes to the real games of the modern world.

Griffen Moore: This book is about a refuge soccer team who have moved from war torn

countries and are living and learning in America. These kids go through the adversity of gangs, poverty, and missing parents but they still come together and make something incredible happen. I really enjoyed the book once I read the entire thing. At first reading it I was bored how they kept the story dragging by going into depth of each team member's family for an entire chapter and not just telling the story as a team. But as I got into Part Two and Part Three of the book I started to enjoy it and sometimes had a hard time putting the book down unless a good show was on TV and the occasional bowl of ice cream. I thought the book was very well written and even though the book provided a picture of the team at the beginning you could really just picture the players playing the game. Warren St. John's skills at giving you a perfect image of every scene is incredible. I was very surprised because usually for me nonfiction books are harder to visualize in my head compared to fiction. In conclusion I would recommend this book to someone else but I would forewarn them of the slightly dull beginning and thrilling ending.

Kathy Scantle: I loved this book, especially since I am familiar with the story. I met the main character, Luma, once and could tell right away she has a profound impact on the refugees she works with. Luma is from an aristocratic family in Jordan. She came to the USA for college. After she graduated from Smith college, she decided she wanted to stay. Her parents were very upset (her father disowned her) but later those wounds were healed. Fate brought Luma to Clarkston, Georgia, a small southern town outside of Atlanta which is home to many refugees. I taught at Clarkston High School so I know the character of the refugee children. They were always so polite, so studious, and so much more respectful of teachers than the American children. The kids were flown to Atlanta from war torn countries such as the Congo, Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, the Sudan. etc. One young boy from Sudan who I knew came here when he was 10 years old and had never had formal education. (That was typical.) One of the teachers at Clarkston High School offered night classes to the refugee families where he taught things like -- how to use a refrigerator and what goes into a refrigerator.

Luma was very taken by the refugee families and started a soccer team. This wasn't an ordinary soccer team -- Luma helped her team members adjust to their new country, taught them discipline, provided tutoring for their school work, and became involved with the families. This was her passion. She started a small school for the refugees and is currently involved in fundraising to expand the school.

I thought the author, (a reporter for the New York Times, who came to Clarkston to write an article and instead stayed a year and wrote this book), did a good job of explaining the past and present culture of the refugees . I thought he was particularly adept in explaining the motives behind so many people in the book, including Luma herself, Tracy, Clarkson's mayor, sheriff, and even the local grocer. A good read.

Jacob Clark: The e-book used to be okay it wasn't the best yet no longer the worst. Luma had many tough demanding situations in her existence she came around right here for school. Her kin was once in Jordan dwelling there way of life she by no means left Clarkston due to football

and her hometown. She labored particularly difficult to get the place she is this present day via starting a ice cream parlor, being a waitress, and being a football coach. attempting to existence her existence multitasking

Maricruz Bravo: Maricruz Bravo10/7/09Prof. Shannon ScottGT 1000The novel through Warren St. John "Outcast United" is a narrative of a refugee boy's football group and their coach, Luma Mufleh, a refugee from Jordan. Luma is characterised via her choice to make the men be successful as a team. Her decision could occasionally be careworn with durability and insensible traits, yet deep within her she has a delicate and gentle center whose merely goal is to make the lads satisfied and winning as individuals and football players. The story's subject matter is set the stumbling blocks encountered in a swift altering global and it additionally talks approximately how every little thing is feasible if one determines oneself to accomplish regardless of the objectives are. The subject matter is portrayed during the crew of refugees who've to house the changes, variations and their transitions to their new environment. After analyzing the e-book through Warren St. John "Outcast United" my philosophy of existence used to be reaffirmed. There are continuously going to be hindrances in one's life, yet below any situation may still one provide up. issues in lifestyles take place for a reason, even supposing occasionally that cause isn't really inevitably identified immediately. This novel made me discover that every thing is conceivable if one determines oneself to accomplish it. i've got consistently believed in that, yet after analyzing "Outcast United" and seeing how these boys triumph over themselves in such tricky situations confirmed me how in the event that they could, everybody can. It additionally confirmed me the demanding situations and problems that individuals face in making a group whilst having so little in common, yet as soon as again, the choice performs a tremendous role. The coach, Luma is a refugee in Clarkston who needed to deal additionally with the demanding situations refugee encounters whilst residing in one other country. She needed to how to care for the cultural conflict among her Jordanian history and the recent tradition during which she was once being brought to. Nevertheless, she overcomes the demanding situations and stumbling blocks and realized tips to coexist in her new environment. one of many methods she handled her new truth was once by way of dedicating her time to teach football to refugee boys who she observed enjoying in a carpark of an outdated house construction referred to as the Lakes. She not just coaches them, yet mentors them, educates them and is helping them with their model to the hot environment, which she had already discover ways to deal with. She additionally is helping them via bringing them meals and must have that their households can't come up with the money for and/or the social provider corporations weren't capable of deliver. all through Luma's character, the reader get to understand her precise purpose of training the men and explanation why the lads play soccer. Luma discovers that football is the best way for the lads to distract and never consider their new reality, in their new domestic and environment. it's the means that boys use to hook up with the opposite refugees. I relate myself with Luma and the lads as a result of my foreign event right here at Tech. I left my domestic state to return to the USA to study. not just did I depart my country, but additionally I left in the back of my culture, my language, my family, and my selfmade food. I got here into an unknown international to me, i didn't understand what to anticipate out of the collage and all that it conveys. At first, the sensation of solitude used to be major all all through my day. I overlooked everything, even my cat. As just like the boys enjoying football to be able to hook up with others within the similar situation, I obtained concerned with a number of foreign scholar businesses for you to meet scholars in my comparable situation. I

additionally relate to the e-book simply because although my scenario used to be now not precisely like that of the refugees i will be able to a minimum of have a small notion in their feelings, in their confusion, in their problems while adapting to a brand new atmosphere the place virtually anything, if now not all, isn't like what you're used to. One day, my GT one thousand instructor stated that she favorite those that studied in a language except their own. In that moment, I felt happy with myself, pleased with my actions, pleased with my choice of overcoming my worry and examine at one other country. i'm truly a type of scholars whose local language isn't English and nonetheless right here i'm learning Civil Engineering in a single of the main honorable associations of the USA of America. during this event i'm studying what Luma and the men discovered of their event as refugees. i do know that hindrances are consistently going to be found in my life, yet to be able to be successful i do know that i must triumph over those demanding situations simply because stumbling blocks are installed one's course for a reason. If i need to be triumphant right here at Tech and as a certified as an entire i need to pay attention to these problems that would come up in the course of my life, yet I even have to understand that my choice of succeeding has continually to be higher than the phobia to fail simply because if one wishes whatever and if one works for it with out letting the terror win the race, one will in achieving one's goal.

Becky: i like any ebook that has to do with refugees and refugee resettlement and for those who upload a consider good, against-all-odds activities story, you recognize it will be a winner. upload a few stable musical historical past and there would not be a dry eye within the house. This publication advised the tale of a football crew of refugees from around the world and the struggles they confronted as a way to develop into a team. The components i discovered the main attention-grabbing have been within the dynamic among the refugees and the folks of the small city of Clarkston, GA (just outdoors Atlanta) who immediately have been met with huge numbers of refugees being resettled of their community. i might heard a bit concerning the resettlement application in Clarkston, simply because they do resettle such a lot of refugees there, so i actually loved the extensive inspect how resettlement works in Clarkston. i actually cherished gaining knowledge of the children at the group and their backgrounds and to determine all of them come jointly through the book. whereas the trainer of the group had a totally diversified approach of doing issues than i might (super competitive, verging on mean, my method or the road sort person) I nonetheless relatively loved her and revered how a lot she did for the workforce and the refugees.

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