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It does not necessarily take a fist to create a punch in the gut. This fourteen-story YA fiction anthology delves into the experience of being bullied—socially, emotionally, physically, psychologically, and sexually. The school hallways, walks home, and house walls are no longer the boundaries for intimidation and harassment. With the rapid-fire response time of social media and smartphones, bullying has lost all limits, and the lines among truth, lies, and real accountability have become blurred. Featuring some of the hottest voices in YA literature, both bestselling and on the rise, *Cornered* includes works from Kirsten Miller (*New York Times* bestseller *The Eternal Ones*), Jennifer Brown (*Hate List*), Elizabeth Miles (*Fury*), Jaime Adoff (*The Death of Jayson Porter*), Lish McBride (Morris Award finalist *Hold Me Closer, Necromancer*), Matthue Roth (*Losers*), Sheba Karim (*Skunk Girl*), Kate Ellison (*Butterfly Clues*), Zeta Elliot (*A Wish After Midnight*), Josh Berk (*The Dark Days of Hamburger Halpin*), and James Lecesne (*Absolute Brightness* and founder of the Trevor Project).

Contents:

Nemesis by Kirsten Miller

On Your Own Level by Sheba Karim

The Shift Sticks by Josh Berk

Everyone's Nice by David Yoo

Defense Mechanisms by Elizabeth Miles

Sweet Sixteen by Zetta Elliot

Like Kicking a Fence by Kate Ellison

How Auto-tune Saved My Life by Brendan Halpin

The Ambush by Matthue Roth

Inside the Inside by Mayra Lazara Dole

But Not Forgotten by Jennifer Brown

The Truest Story There Is by Jaime Adoff

Still Not Dead by James Lecesne

We Should Get Jerseys 'Cause We Make a Good Team by Lish McBride

Cornered: 14 Stories of Bullying and Defiance Details

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From Reader Review Cornered: 14 Stories of Bullying and Defiance for online ebook

Aelvana says

Full disclosure: I got this book solely for the Lish McBride story at the end, and didn't read any of the rest of them. Reading about particularly cruel bullies does bad things to my blood pressure.

We Should Get Jerseys 'Cause We Make a Good Team - This is Frank's story, set between Hold Me Closer, Necromancer, and Necromancing the Stone. So it's a bit spoilerish for those who may not have read HMC,N yet, but not too badly. Brooke and Frank go out to get Ramon a welcome-home present and Frank gets an unwelcome visitor from his past, a bully he once suffered under in high school. It's also the story of how Frank met Brooke, Sam, and Ramon, and why he started working with them at Plumpy's.

I like how much depth this gives to Frank, who is an interesting side character but mostly a side character in both of the novels. Frank was always oppressed, easily pressured, and a people pleaser. But over the course of this story (and continued in Necromancing the Stone) he grows more confident, more sure of his own capabilities. (And in the novels, Sam, at least, finds him indispensable, though it's not clear if Frank himself realizes that.) And it's fun to see how the friends Frank accidentally met one day have been so instrumental in helping him stand on his own two feet. Recommended.

See my reviews and more at <https://offtheshelfreviews.wordpress....>

Rose says

Initial reaction: Compared to other story compilations on bullying that I've read, this really paled in comparison. I did not like the fact that some of the stories lacked resolution or were truncated on awkward notes in that it seemed to go against the very message it was trying to put across. However, there are some good stories in this collection that I enjoyed, and I'll expound upon those when I post my full review.

Full review:

It's been almost a full year since I've returned to review this particular compilation of stories, but I remember it well enough to say that I was quite overwhelmed by the collection as a whole, offered by Rhoda Belleza.

Quite many of you know how I feel about bullying and I've read quite a few compilations of strong narratives offered on the topic. What bothered me about this was the fact that many of the narratives came across as incomplete or with a lack of direction/distinction.

Chris Clutcher wrote an interesting preface on the collection in terms of highlighting the fact that bullies themselves can be those that are "among the bullied", and tells the story of a kid named Kevin who picked on the weakest girl in the class because he couldn't stand the sight of weakness. Rhoda Belleza also introduced the collection, with thoughtful reflections on her experiences with bullying and what inspired the respective collection - a measure to connect.

I'm going through this collection story by story just so that you guys can have an idea of what I thought were

pros and cons of each story, and that you can have a gauge for what stories may work/not work for you.

1. **Nemesis by Kirsten Miller** This story all too reminded me of what happens when people try to combat bullying by "bullying the bullies." It never goes well and stereotyping by affixing a label to what the "bully" encompasses is destructive to seeing it as a problem and the measures of addressing solutions for stopping it. I don't know what the point of it was - the sense of vengeance and helplessness a person feels when they're bullied? To illustrate that no one deserves to fight alone. That may be true, and I could see that the motivation behind the character's actions was because her former best friend bullied her, but it kind of leaves the idea hanging.

The story tells of a young woman who fronts a secret group called "NEMESIS" - videotaping incidents of bullying and blackmailing the "bullies" as it were - sending links and the footage of recorded incidents to the bullies, their parents, and authorities like the schools. But then she also doxxes the identity of the bullies on her website if the incidents escalate. She operates under an anonymous handle, and makes statements like this in her mantra:

"We'll ruin their careers, friendships, and love lives. We'll have our revenge. And we'll teach them all that payback is hell."

It lends on to the measure that the young woman gets a plea from Olivia, her former bully. She decides to go watch to delight in the fact that Olivia's getting her just deserts, but ends up feeling stricken upon seeing the bullies torment Olivia so she decides to help her "fight." But I still feel like nothing in this story was ever "resolved." It just ended abruptly. I didn't like the story personally because it hits too close to home in a wrong way.

Score: 1.5/5 stars

2. **On Your Own Level by Sheba Karim**

still writing, long review

Claire says

A very American anthology. Only a few short stories I really enjoyed.

***Sandra says**

Some of the stories were 4 stars, but on average, I would give them 3 stars. There were only a couple that I didn't really care for.

Kbryna says

a nice set of short stories around a similar theme; none ever fell into cliches or moralizing. Very much a 21st century collection; internet and media play a huge part in a lot of these stories. Of particular note; Lish

McBride's "We should get jerseys, cause we make a good team," which is a follow-on story featuring characters from the wonderful *Hold me Closer, necromancer* (it's narrated by Frank); Kirsten Miller's "Nemesis," which includes a fantastic premise, well handled by Miller; "On your own level," by Sheba Karim, which handles religious/ethnic/international difference in some really interesting ways; and Brendan Halpin's "How auto-tune saved my life," a fantastic story of the struggle between a student and his teacher (the bully).

I'm a bit sad but not at all surprised at how many of these stories feature homophobia as an aspect of the bullying and social isolation - sad because the "she's a lezzie" and "f*&8*t" are awfully familiar from my own childhood as taunts against the least-liked, or the mildly different. Perhaps these stories are recycling their author's recollections from their childhoods, when saying "ew, are you a lesbo?" led to almost-instant exile from the social herd; I hope, at least in some places, this isn't true anymore.

most, if not all, of these stories avoid being preachy or teachy, and they remind us that bullying looks like an awful lot of different things, and has an awful lot of unpleasant consequences for everyone.

Malia says

This book was great. I read all of the stories in about four hours and the reading went fast. All of the stories handled bullying sensitively and deftly. There were a few common themes like suicidal feelings and people being taunted with the words "fag" and "lesbo" but it never got repetitive. Lots of diversity in this book, in writing style, in characterization, in sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, plot as well as if the story was about the bully or the bullied.

Some stories really stood out. My favorite was *The Truest Story There Is* by Jaime Adoff. Utterly haunting, hopeless but still full of heart. I loved the voice of the story and the impossible life found in the most unlikely of places. I wish there was a whole book about those characters. Also, I wish there was a novel based on *The Ambush* by Matthue Roth. Like Adoff's story, it features a character who is sort of forced into a bleak situation and I need to know more. But I find the whole thing about Russian immigrants really interesting and I wanted to read more of their voices and their story. Another story called *On Your Own Level* by Sheba Karim also stood out to me because it featured a timely issue of growing up seen as being part of that "terrorist" other in America and also because that plot was juxtaposed by the very teenage problem of liking a boy you can't have.

Inside the Inside by Mayra Lazara Dole was a really weird story, very surreal... literally. But I enjoyed it. Most of the other stories stayed pretty contemporary. Like *Kicking a Fence* by Kate Ellison was quietly powerful. There was such violence in that story, more than any other, but at the same time a strong tug of compassion for the bullies who had been bullied before. *Everyone's Nice* by David Yoo used the second person which was oddly surreal but I could still feel the frustrations of the character coming to a head right before the sad ending. *Sweet Sixteen* by Zetta Elliot had a great way of showing two parallel lives that don't look at all similar on first look.

The only clunker in the anthology for me was *We Should Get Jerseys 'Cause We Make a Good Team* by Lish McBride. I just didn't really get it. There was a ghost & stuff happened and I felt like I was dropped into some world that I should already know, like it was a spin-off of some other book. So I didn't really get it. But that was the only one. The rest I really enjoyed.

I find most YA Short Story anthologies to be surprising robust, entertaining and full of great writing. Check this book out today!

Stina Madison says

Full review here: <http://zodiacbookreviews.blogspot.com...>

Bullying has been a HUGE topic the past few years, and no matter how we try to stop it, bullying seems to worsen as time goes by. There always seems to be someone who thinks they are better than someone else, and that they can do whatever they want to those they view beneath them. Though it's near impossible to rid ourselves of bullying forever, and though it may be difficult, there is the hope that those who are being victimized will find the strength to overcome and rise above their bullies.

Cornered: 14 Stories of Bullying and Defiance shows us both sides: the bully and the bullied. We see how some have found strength from being bullied and try to help others in the same position. We see how nationality, sexuality, religion, social standing and other factors can determine which side of the spectrum you're on. Some get stronger, some just can't take anymore, and some become the bully after being bullied themselves. The stories in this anthology are as enlightening as they are disturbing. I definitely think this is a collection of stories every young adult should read.

Shadow Girl says

It does not necessarily take a fist to create a punch in the gut.

"This fourteen-story YA fiction anthology delves into the experience of being bullied—socially, emotionally, physically, psychologically, and sexually."

I originally had this shelved as 'ya-general', but I had to add it to 'ya-horror' as well. Cornered: 14 Stories of Bullying and Defiance is pretty far out of my genre comfort zone, but it horrified me on a different level.

I've read a lot of (IMHO) outstanding fictional books about bullying - (just to name a few...)

THE 8th by Matt Shaw, JEREMY by Matt Hickman, MY BEAUTIFUL SUICIDE by Atty Eve, and most recently Rage by Kimberly A. Bettes. I think Cornered: 14 Stories of Bullying and Defiance hurt a little deeper because the stories lacked the gratifyingly bloody revenge from the victim(s).

* Click here to view full post. (<http://wp.me/p37DRX-1vh>)

** I have the outline prepared, so BOLO for the full review & author info.

*** I came across an article I posted in 2013 when I searched on BBB for keyword word 'bully', and I wanted to share it again now. It's linked from the same post, so please check it out if you have the time.

Cindy says

This and other reviews can be found on my blog @ <http://bookaholicfaggots.blogspot.com>

I think this is the first time I've ever read an anthologies for fun. (Not including English textbooks) I must say, it's not that bad. Anthologies are basically a series of short stories in one book. For example, the English

textbooks for elementary and middle school.

One positive thing about anthologies is that you won't get hanged up before you go to sleep. You won't get any cliffhangers and they would entertain you. You can simply read one short story at a time and ya know, it's real easy to finish the book too.

Since this book has a lot of different characters, authors (as you can see) and plots, I'll tell you what the whole book is about. You can already tell from the title, but I'll go deeper. ;)

Cornered is a series of short stories that tells about bullying someone, being bullied, and how the main characters change because of being bullied by or bullying at. Cornered teaches us about how bullying would effect people and let us see how much different kind of bullying there are out there.

Either way, I can't say this was the best book I've ever read, but it really isn't that bad either.

Kayla says

This book was a difficult read, but also a necessary one. This is a rare kind of book that is capable of sparking crucial conversation in a world where such conversation is taboo and shunned.

Savannah (Books With Bite) says

This is a great collection of stories. Stories that are raw, dealing with bullying every, single day. And stories where people have had enough and are finally standing up for themselves.

Let me begin by saying that I had a love/hate thing with this book. One minutes I'd be angry or sad due to an bullying story and when I got in to the defiance story I was all like, "HELL YEAH!" LOL! This is a great book filled with awesome stories to give you that emotional roller coaster. Even though the stories were short, you were able to get each character, watch them stand up and face their bully and of course others, taking it every day.

My fave defiance story is Nemsis which is the first story and well its about defiance. I really love the chance at getting revenge for bullying.

If you want stories that really make you see things differently, check this book out. It awesome and powerful. Each story different from the next, you are never left bored. Cornered is a great anthology that gets down to the heart of the matter.

Stacy Chrzastowski says

Grade Level/Interest Level: 6th-8th grade

Reading Level: 7th-9th grade

Main Characters: Several

POV: Several

Setting: N/A

Cornered: 14 Stories of Bullying and Defiance is about several young adults experiencing bullying or bullying others. The book goes into great detail with each account telling about their unique experience. I absolutely love this book I could not put it down. I stayed up all night reading it. The book was so well written that I literally felt what the authors were saying. I have never personally been bullied on an extreme level but it is one of the scariest and worst things that can happen to students in the classroom. Other students are not aware of how detrimental bullying can be for another student. I think this book would be very effective in the middle school grades. It is relatable and really makes you feel empathy for the author. I would use this book in literacy and as a SEL lesson. I would also use this book to have students write about a time they felt bullied; this may help students get out feelings that they didn't want to face.

Read for your future! says

Read our review here:

<http://readforyourfuture.blogspot.com...>

Alyssa says

Most of these stories were touching.

But some were vulgar. Disgusting. I failed to understand how anything small as intimidation could turn into a bullying story, and give reason for the protagonist to turn into a monster.

The small amount of backstory in some of the stories made them into less of a story and more of a jumble of words that left me confused.

Others were poignant stories that entertained me greatly.

I guess that's a bit of a mixed review, but it's honestly how I felt.

Cindy Hudson says

the eyes of the bully, from those who are being bullied, and from others who stand on the side and feel powerless to stop what's happening. Edited by Rhoda Belleza, the stories are written by both acclaimed and emerging young adult authors. None of them flinch from the hard truths in the stories they have written.

This honesty makes it hard for readers to look away as they read stories about teens who are beaten up by their tormentors or taunted and emotionally abused in front of classmates and in cyberspace. While it's easy to picture boys as being bullies, girls are often bullies as well. And their victims? They are often the kids who don't fit into the norm in some way. They are gay or lesbian or accused of being so even if they aren't. They often are physically small and have no one to confide in about the abuse. Their home lives may be in turmoil. They hope to fly under the radar long enough to make it out of high school and escape their bullies

forever.

In recent times there has been much said about bullying, how to raise awareness of it and how to stop it. While programs aimed at reducing it are undoubtedly doing some good, there is little chance that bullying will be eradicated. Books such as *Cornered* are important because they bring issues about bullying into the forefront. It looks at the humanity of those who are victims, and, as hard as it may be to believe there is humanity in those who victimize, it looks at that as well.

Some of the stories are difficult to get through. Others have more of a lighthearted feel where victims triumph. All of them will take your breath away. I recommend *Cornered* for mother-daughter book clubs and any reader aged 14 and up.

The publisher provided me with a copy of this book in exchange for my honest review.
