

Where Is the Sun?

Tamar Johnson

AmazonKDP

(30pp)

978-1-5255-9716-9

This timely story revives the advice to be the change that's needed in the world; it communicates that no one is alone in their feelings.

In Tamar Johnson's emotional picture book, a girl notices an absence in her city and searches high and low to answer a puzzling question: *Where Is the Sun?*

Featuring a diverse cast of characters, the story begins with Lea going along with her mother on errands. Seeing the overcast sky and grey mood of the city that was once so colorful and lively, Lea makes it her mission to find the sun.

She looks for the sun as she visits a restaurant that had been a neighborhood favorite, but is now quiet and half empty. Next is the flower shop, where she always looks forward to talking with the shop owner and seeing flower varieties up close. But now customers can only be served at an outdoor stand. Then Lea finds the playground nearly deserted. Yet, at each stop, she manages to locate a version of the sun that helps her community members see the light in themselves and others.

Johnson takes a creative approach to show the far-reaching effects of the pandemic era. The sun becomes a character toward story's end, and has its own nostalgia and loneliness. It wants to warm picnic blankets and shine on soaring kites, going so far as to follow Lea, nipping her heels.

The direct writing and accessible concepts ensure audience engagement, though the placement and layout of the book's dialogue is sometimes an impediment. But contrasting illustrations juxtapose the city's before and after in a poignant manner: rays of light cut through gray scale depictions to acknowledge hard times and sadness, but also hint at hope.

This timely story is a new take on the age-old advice to be the change that's needed in the world and communicates that no one is alone in their feelings. Dedicated to "all children forced to grow in this new world," *Where Is the Sun?* is a picture book reminder that light is out there as a signal of hope, and of a new tomorrow.

TANISHA RULE (February 26, 2022)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book and paid a small fee to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. Foreword Reviews and Clarion Reviews make no guarantee that the publisher will receive a positive review. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.