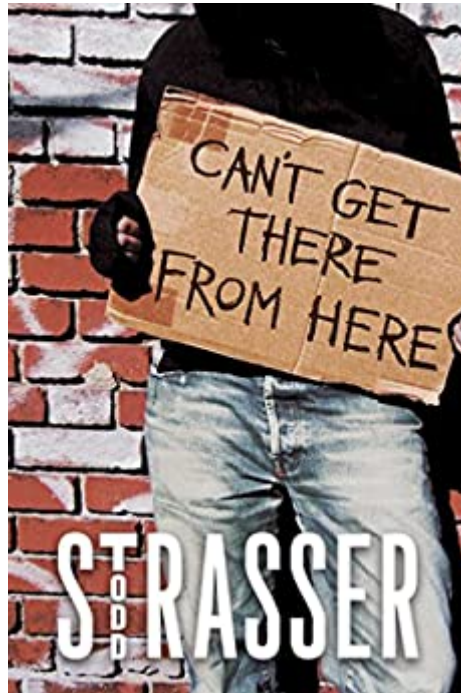




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# Can't Get There From Here



## Synopsis

Her street name is MaybeShe lives with a tribe of homeless teens -- runaways and throwaways, kids who have no place to go other than the cold city streets, and no family except for one another. Abused, abandoned, and forgotten, they struggle against the cold, hunger, and constant danger. With the frigid winds of January comes a new girl: Tears, a twelve-year-old whose mother doesn't believe her stepfather abuses her. As the other kids start to disappear -- victims of violence, addiction, and exposure -- Maybe tries to help Tears get off the streets...if it's not already too late. Todd Strasser, author of the powerful and disturbing Give a Boy a Gun, again focuses on an important social issue as he tells a thought-provoking, heart-wrenching story of young lives lost to the streets, and of a society that has forgotten how to care.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

" 'I'm so gross! I'm disgusting! I can't stand it!' Rainbow laughed crazily as she pulled me down the sidewalk about a block from Canal Street." 'You look beautiful to me,' I said." 'Oh, Maybe, what

would you know? You're even smellier and dirtier than me.'" 'I am?' Even though I knew that all of us street kids were dirty and smelly, it still made me feel bad to hear Rainbow say it. That wasn't the way I wanted her to think of me." 'Aw, look, I hurt your feelings.' Rainbow stuck out her lower lip and pouted. 'I'm sorry, Maybe. But I'm dirty and smelly, too. We're the dirty and smelly twins!' She hooked her arm through mine and started to skip. I tried to keep up with her. It made me happy when she wanted to be with me. Then she let go and did a cartwheel right in the middle of the sidewalk. The regular people looked at her like she was psycho."Each of them has some real or imagined story about how they got there. But here they are: a small tribe of street urchins hostage to the natural and human elements of a winter on the streets in Manhattan. The story is told by Maybe, a girl with a highly visible skin condition, vitiligo, who has been here since last summer.CAN'T GET THERE FROM HERE provides a vivid portrait of being there all the time, on your own, on the street, in the filth of alleys and doorways, with the nightly fear of being preyed on and the daily tasks of survival."Cold wind rippingdown the alley at dawnAnd the morning paper flies,Dead man lyingby the side of the roadWith the daylight in his eyes."--Neil Young "Don't Let It Bring You Down"As you could imagine this is an unforgiving environment where twenty-somethings are perceived as old and worn out and there are plenty of kids who don't make it:Yet every time CAN'T GET THERE FROM HERE threatens to totally veer toward the hopeless and morbid, we are reminded that these are kids. Real kids. Silly kids. Sensitive kids. Stubborn kids. Questioning kids:" 'Are you serious?' the man asked, nodding at Maggot's 'Money for Maryjuana' sign." 'Why not?' Maggot answered. 'If the sign said, "Money for Food," would you believe it? Least I'm honest.'" 'At least you ought to spell it right,' said the woman."Maggot turned the sign around and looked at it. 'I spelled "money" wrong?'"The man smiled. 'He's got a sense of humor.'" 'Not for long if I don't score some pot,' Maggot warned them."A quick online search finds estimates from a few years ago of 12,000-20,000 homeless youth in New York City. Nearly two-thirds are black or Latino. A disproportionate share are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, because adolescents in those groups are routinely jettisoned by their families and are frequently unwelcome in their schools or in foster homes. Many homeless teens are children of the victims of the mid-1980s crack epidemic. A study found one-third of those street kids surveyed engaged in prostitution in order to obtain money. There is a high expectation among street kids that they will contract AIDS.CAN'T GET THERE FROM HERE is one of those books to grab me by the throat and slam me against the wall. Like Spaz from Rodman Philbrick's THE LAST BOOK IN THE UNIVERSE, Maybe's "defect" is her savior. That highly visible skin condition ironically leaves her as a less visible target than 2Moro, Rainbow, Tears, Jewel and so many other kids in her position, thus allowing her to be the perfect observer and narrator for the

story. Homeless teens have no voice, no vote, few choices, and zero power. By melding remnants of childhood joy and innocence with the bitter bleakness of life and death in filthy alleys and dumpsters, Todd Strasser has written a story that will be the root of nightmares, prolonged discussions and, hopefully, change.

This book filled me with a multitude of feelings and thoughts with every chapter being another revelation to each character's tragic background. Although some characters were a bit lackluster to me due to not being properly fleshed out like "2Moro" and "OG" I still felt the impact they left on the other members of the "asphalt tribe". The ever prevalent themes of loneliness, naivete, and family makes you feel connected to this book even if you've never been through the same experiences as the characters. And a bit of a SPOILER but the end of a Todd Strasser novel with a relatively happy ending is pretty darn awesome.

great

This is a great book. This is a good book for high interest low level readers in middle school. My students loved the book. Many of them finished the book weeks before they were supposed to complete it as a class. These are students who "don't like to read".

This book was so real. For the good and bad areas in life. You learn so many lessons and the ending does not disappoint. I loved it!

A story of street kids that is not romanticised but not hard hitting enough to shock. Language is aimed at teens which I suppose is its market.

This was a book my daughter has to read from a school project and she really enjoy Thanks and price was right

The seller sent the book in the condition stated, and the book shipped before the estimated arrival date. Excellent!

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