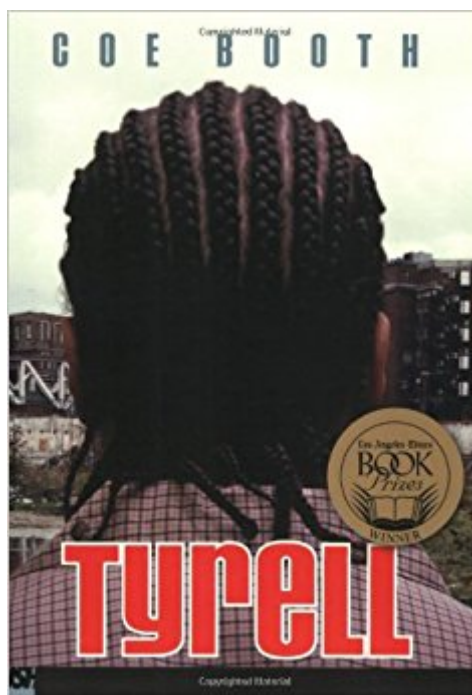


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# Tyrell



## Synopsis

An astonishing new voice in teen literature, writing what is sure to be one of the most talked-about debuts of the year. Tyrell is a young African-American teen who can't get a break. He's living (for now) with his spaced-out mother and little brother in a homeless shelter. His father's in jail. His girlfriend supports him, but he doesn't feel good enough for her -- and seems to be always on the verge of doing the wrong thing around her. There's another girl at the homeless shelter who is also after him, although the desires there are complicated. Tyrell feels he needs to score some money to make things better. Will he end up following in his father's footsteps?

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 63 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #49,421 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #5 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Homelessness & Poverty #85 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Self Esteem & Reliance #102 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Being a Teen

## Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Grade 9 Up "Now that his father is in jail, nothing seems to be going right for 15-year-old Tyrell. His mother's refusal to work and her stint with welfare fraud have forced them into homelessness and life in a roach-infested shelter in Hunts Point. At the shelter, Tyrell soon realizes that his attraction to another resident, Jasmine, could derail his dreams of a future with his girl, Novisha. Torn between the needs of the women in his life and his seven-year-old brother, Tyrell is determined to stay clean as he agonizes over creating a new life for his family. Booth combines the rhythm of raw street lingo with the harsh realities of an inner-city urban life to illuminate the labyrinth of Tyrell's world. As he struggles to escape this circle of poverty, he must also battle dual temptations of sexual frustration and the easy money he could make as a drug dealer. This is a thrilling, fast-paced novel whose strong plot and array of vivid, well-developed characters take

readers on an unforgettable journey through the gritty streets of New York City's South Bronx. At its heart is the painful choice the teen must make as he realizes the effect of his mother's failure to do right by their family.â "Caryl Soriano, New York Public Library Copyright Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

**\*Starred Review\*** "You don't hardly get to have no kinda childhood in the hood." At 15, Tyrell is trying to keep his little brother in school and safe in their roach-infested shelter in the Bronx. He has dropped out of school, and Moms wants him to sell drugs to make money. But Tyrell is too smart. He doesn't want to end up in prison like his dad, so he tries to organize a neighborhood party to raise money. His girlfriend, Novisha, isn't happy that Tyrell has dropped out. She loves him, and they make out, but he respects her wish to remain a virgin. Booth, who was born and raised in the Bronx, is now a social worker there, and her first novel is heartbreakingly realistic. There are some plot contrivances--including Tyrell's stumbling upon Novisha's diary--but the immediate first-person narrative is pitch perfect: fast, funny, and anguished (there's also lots of use of then-word, though the term is employed in the colloquial sense, not as an insult). Unlike many books reflecting the contemporary street scene, this one is more than just a pat situation with a glib resolution; it's filled with surprising twists and turns that continue to the end. Hazel Rochman Copyright Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This book afforded me the opportunity to walk in the shoes of someone so completely different from myself who has lived a life I can't even imagine. I appreciated how poignant and real the writing was in its portrayal of inner-city poverty. Unfortunately, there is SO much foul language that, even though that language fits naturally into the setting of the story, I do not feel comfortable adding this book to my classroom library.

Tyrell is basically a good kid, but at 15 years old has to deal with some adult responsibilities. His father is in jail and his mother is completely worthless, so Tyrell is the only hope his younger brother has for a decent life. When they get evicted, the family is placed in a roach-infested motel until more suitable housing becomes available. Tyrell's mother takes no responsibility for her own children, and even goes so far as to expect Tyrell to deal drugs in order to make enough money to support the family. Tyrell is determined not to end up in jail like his dad, and comes up with his own money

making scheme. Meanwhile, his girlfriend, Novisha, and another homeless teen, Jasmine, send a few more challenges his way. I didn't love this book, but it was extremely popular in my classroom, even with reluctant readers. Drug use, language, and sexual situations make it more appropriate for mature readers.

I'm conflicted with this book. While I think that it is a good way to get students who live in these situations to read and probably a pretty accurate representation of their lifestyles, I am disturbed by the perpetuation of the stereotypical way that women are portrayed in this book. There is no question that the double standards for men and women in relationships is hypocritical. It just seems to be accepted as the way it is. Men can do whatever they want and women are held to higher, monogamist standard. Having said that, the book is an easy read--well written and flows well.

Living in the Bronx, Tyrell is forced into manhood by the re-incarceration of his father and his mother's inability to accept responsibility. Dealing with horrific emergency housing, Tyrell struggles to find a legal means of supporting his family and to make the life decisions about school, relationships and family. The bitter ending, and true to life language and sexual content help to portray genuine hurdles that many economically disadvantaged youth confront daily.

Daughter loves it

Tyrell is the story set over several weeks of a tough high school dropout in the Bronx. He comes from a down and out family...his father is in prison; his mother is someone who really does belong in Mitt Romney's 47% of the population, a woman who does expect the government to support her. Along with his young brother, the family lives in a roach-infested motel, a temporary dwelling for the homeless. One bright spot in Tyrell's life is his girlfriend Novisha, whose life and family are stable. The novel involves Tyrell's battle to keep his own head and his family's above water, as well as that of a girl named Jasmine who lives at the hotel. The novel is told from Tyrell's point of view, and is narrated in his dialect. As a result, it spares no punches. The language is often raw; the book does involve sexual and drug-related situations that Tyrell encounters. Be that as it may, Tyrell's story is intriguing, and certainly will attract high school students who wouldn't classify themselves as "readers."

Wow this book was one that I couldn't set down, the pacing was fantastic and the plot engaging. I would suggest this book for anyone trying to get a better perspective on how the culture of poverty affects the youth and their families both physically and mentally.

Students LOVE this book in the area I work - high crime high needs. It can be harsh and NOT recommended for lower than high school.

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Tyrell

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