



Sirens

Janet Fox

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When Jo Winter's parents send her off to live with her rich cousin on the glittering island of Manhattan, it's to find a husband and forget about her brother Teddy's death. But all that glitters is not gold..

Caught up in the swirl of her cousin's bobbed-hair set—and the men that court them— Jo soon realizes that the talk of marriage never stops, and behind the seemingly boundless gains are illicit business endeavors, gangsters, and their molls. Jo would much rather spend time the handsome but quiet Charles, a waiter at the Algonquin Hotel, than drape herself over a bootlegger. But when she befriends a moll to one of the most powerful men in town, Jo begins to uncover secrets—secrets that threaten an empire and could secure Jo's freedom from her family.

Can her newfound power buy her love? Or will it to ruin Jo, and everyone around her?

Sirens Details

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Author : Janet Fox

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From Reader Review Sirens for online ebook

Valerie Jones says

Unexpectedly fantastic-an electrifying coming of age tale combined with a mesmerizing setting and studded with mystery and romance

With the captivating and beautiful background of New York during the roaring 20's, Janet Fox's new novel, *Sirens*, offers everything readers could want. Women have recently gained the right to vote, and with that independence the desire for more freedoms than they ever had before. Seventeen-year-old Josephine "Jo" Winters is about to graduate high school and has plans to attend college and make a name for herself as a writer. But her father has other plans, and suddenly sends her to live with her aunt and uncle in New York with the objective of finding a husband. Between her father's mob involvement in a bootlegging operation, and her brother Teddy's disappearance, Jo realizes that there is more to this sudden move than fatherly concern for Jo's future.

Unfortunately, Jo's aunt and uncles home may not be as safe as everyone thinks. Jo's cousin Melody also has a secret, one she hides behind a "flapper" lifestyle of drinking and partying. Teddy, a war veteran has been gone for a year, suicide, or so everyone believes. Everyone that is, except Jo. She knows his secret, and when Jo gets ahold of Teddy's journal, as the secrets it holds are revealed, the truth turns dangerous for Jo and everyone she loves.

Louise "Lou" O'Keefe, has fallen in love with mobster Danny Conner. From a life of poverty, as Danny's "moll", Lou suddenly has an upgrade in life. The newest clothes, a mansion to live in, all the money from his "bootlegging" operation a girl could desire, and the man she loves. Lou is determined to keep Danny and insure her lifestyle, even if it means eliminating any threats. When Lou and Jo's path cross, their two lives become tangled in unexpected ways.

Written in alternating chapters from Jo and Lou's perspective, the truth behind Teddy's disappearance, a violent political bombing, and Jo's cousin Melody's secret slowly unfold. Readers will be enchanted by the brilliant 1920's New York lifestyle and setting, captivated by the characters, and addicted to the ever twisting plot. Filled with love, loss, and loyalty and an impressive look into the worlds of "flappers" and "mobsters," Fox weaves a fascinating coming of age tale that speaks to the ever changing role and rights of women during the early 1920's.

Recommended for readers age 12 and up. *Sirens* is scheduled for release November 8, 2012.

[Baseballvalbooks.wordpress.com](http://baseballvalbooks.wordpress.com)

Liwayway says

The 1920's... the age of decadence... forbidden drinks, flappers, eerie yet enticing music, dancing, beads, drop-down waists, sassy speak, and mystery. Janet Fox does a worldly job of telling us about Jo Winters and her transformation from "simple" country girl to "flapper", but, really, that's all surface. She's an engaging, intelligent, sharp, intuitive character who loves her family, her books, and her fight to make her own choices,

something incredibly hard in this era. I loved her voice and her reasoning as she got caught up in the aftermath of her brother's activities and heroic (or questionable) actions. I stayed with her and thought with her as she became entangled in the lives of gangsters and molls, sultry New York City heat, and authors who, like her brother, were her heroes. This book has hit my favorites list.

April says

I am 100% positive that if I was a young adult during the roaring 20s, I'd totally be a flapper. This notion is purely based on the things I've read in YA books. After reading *The Diviners* by Libba Bray, I sort of felt as though I NEEDED to read more 1920s-set books and I had the desperate hope that this would become a new 'thing' in YA. Lucky me, *Sirens* by Janet Fox had EXACTLY what I was looking for and was a nice, non-paranormal book to read after *The Diviners*. *Sirens* has: flappers, strong women, books, speakeasies, gangsters, and THE ALGONQUIN! AHH! This is the sort of read where if you are on your kindle, you rapidly click the next arrow to get to what happens next because there's a lot of unraveling to be done. Read the rest of my review [here](#)

Nicole says

It's really bumming me out how much I loved this book, then ending up not. This is like 'The Vanishing Game' by Kate Kae Meyers all over again! I was ready to give this book a perfect 5/5, but then that ending! I loved the writing. I was simply drawn into everything in this book, believing the pace and plot unfolding at a suspenseful rate that didn't rush or slow down the story (the chapters alternate between one girl's perspective and another)-- but that ending! Ugh, it left me with too many arguments about why it didn't make sense.

I'll continue my thoughts further on my blog.

<http://rawrreader.blogspot.com/2013/0...>

But don't get me wrong, if you're a fan of the 1920s like I am or of murder mysteries, I'd recommend this book to you. Because otherwise, the book is a really nice read with a fantastic main character.

Bianca says

I received 'Sirens' as an ARC from Janet. Thank you!

General opinion: To be honest, "Sirens" isn't the kind of book that I'd pick up in a library. But when Janet offered me the opportunity to read it, I couldn't say 'No', because somehow, I knew that it will be great. And I was right. I am very impressed by this book and I'm very glad I read it. It's an amazing book! Very well written, with a lot of mystery and very well created characters.

What I liked the most: The mystery that keeps you reading. There is always something that keeps you reading, that makes you turn the page and read as fast as you can. "Sirens" is a book that is full of suspense, mystery and secrets. The story hooks you immediately. Loved this!

Other good things: The characters are strong, different and I really liked them. My favorite character, even though he was present in book just from Jo's memories and stories, was Teddy. Just read the book and see

what I'm talking about.

The book was smart written and the story very complex. Everything was revealed at the right time and, as I was reading, more secrets were discovered.

What I disliked: I don't think I disliked something. The book is just amazing and I loved it!

Final Opinion: This book is worth the time you spend reading it. It's a great suspense novel, with great characters and an amazing story that keeps you reading till the last page.

I recommend it to: Everyone, but especially to fans of mystery and thrillers.

Would I read it again: Yes, probably.

Do I want to read the sequel: Though I don't think there is gonna be one, I'd really like to find out what happened with the characters and if that characters is alive or not.

Rate: 5 stars out of 5

Faith Hough says

First of all, this book is a masterful example of world building in historical fictions. Janet Fox started with a lot of tricky subjects--tricky, writing-wise, because they've morphed into many cliches over the years: the nice girl who wants to be a writer, the suave gangster, the simpering girlfriend, and simply the world of 1920's New York. But in *Sirens* I believed every single one of them. The complexity with which the characters were developed was just perfect, and I could really see and smell and hear the world...the next time I visit New York City, I'll be seeing it through different eyes.

The plot, too, was perfectly timed; I know I'll be re-reading this when I need a good example of flow and pacing. I've always been an advocate of subtle endings, so I do wish this one was a little less overt when the mystery was "solved." In any other book I probably would have disliked it, but here I enjoyed everything else so much that it just made me shrug.

Ultimately, though, my favorite thing was the main character, Jo Winters. I've rarely met a fictional character I liked so much... She's a strong-minded and idealistic girl during a time when those traits were rarely valued in women, but never once did it sound like a contemporary author with modern sensibilities was just sticking them into an older time period to make a point. The way Jo struggles to prove herself as a "modern young woman" without losing her morals, her ideals or even her femininity is very well-drawn.

Giselle (Book Nerd Canada) says

Lovely writing capturing the roaring twenties and how women are still "property" of their fathers or husbands. I loved how Josephine wanted to make a mark on her own without the help or dependence of her boyfriend or father. What a brilliant shining example for readers.

I loved the female relationships in this one, and having both Jo and Lou narrate was just genius. The story and the whole mystery surround her brother was tediously slow. You couldn't even gather any clues either because it just kept dragging on and on. I find it rather long and it could have been shortened by about 200 pages so the reader wouldn't grow bored as I was. I did enjoy her writing and I loved how the characters grow up. I did like reading the journal entries, but I grew even more frites red when nothing was revealed. Everything will be shown in the end though.

A great stand-a-lone to pick up if you're in the mood for a 1920s vibe with a murder mystery to solve!

YA Novelties says

Check our review out at our blog!

Set on the Roarin' '20s, *Sirens* is a tale of a girl thrown into the upper class New York City social scene, going from speakeasy to speakeasy while acquiring the company of a notorious gangster and his moll. Everything however, isn't as fine as it seems, and Jo Winters is hiding some dark secrets about her brother Teddy, who committed suicide one year ago. How are her, her brother, and the gangsters all connected? That is the question posed to you, and this book is a journey to discover the truth.

Jo Winters is an aspiring write, not quite out of high school, when she is sent packing to NYC to visit her rich relatives by her father. Her father is involved in the bootlegging business with the notorious gang leader Danny Conner, and something is happening between them that her father wants Jo out of the way, saying she is going to find a husband. Nonetheless, Jo sees through this, and while in NYC she tries to discern the truth and how it involves Teddy. After discovering his journal, Jo tries to figure it out and understand what occurred, all the while beset by Danny who wants something Teddy left behind. She is also sucked into the night life of the 1920's, partying with her cousin Melody, who harbors some dark secrets of her own. Women have just gotten the vote, and are trying out their new freedoms, donning the flapper attire and attitudes, and going to speakeasies and running the risk of getting caught (it's prohibition after all).

Louise "Lou" O'Keefe is Danny Conner's moll, whom previously lived on the streets, and was given a whole new life by Danny. She is supplied with as many dresses and jewels a girl could desire, and a mansion to boot, all thanks to him, the love of her life. She would do anything to keep him, including getting rid of any threats. When Jo and Lou meet, their lives quickly become entangled with some unpredictable twists.

Sirens is written from the view point of both Jo and Lou, while Lou retells the events to a cop, Jo is living it, which may seem confusing but it makes it more intriguing while you try to guess what really happened. My favorite part of this novel was the background. It is so rich and vibrant I could just picture myself there, not to mention the 20's was an exceptional era, the turning over of a new leaf. All of the glitz and glamor of the wealthy upper crust is portrayed splendidly, and so is the darkness and shadows of the underground bootlegging business, and all of the mobsters that are encountered there. My only annoyance with this was that I had a few questions at the end, and this book is meant to stand alone, so that bugs me. The ending is also a tad bit crazy, and a little confusing. Other than that I would definitely recommend this book, even for people who don't necessarily like historical fiction, this is a great book to start, where you will be swept away.

M @YA Novelties

Emily Benoit says

Concept/Ideas: 4.5/5

Storyline/Plot: 4.5/5

Characters: 4/5

Writing Style: 4.5/5

A murder mystery and the 20s all wrapped up into one...

Sirens was a fantastic read filled with suspense, love, mystery, and an amazing feel for the Roaring 20's! Wow. All I can say is wow. I was blown away at how much I loved this book. Typically, I have tried to read so, so many books that revolve around the 20s, 30s, and flapper life-style, and I have never been able to get into one. I've tried the Vixen series, and I've probably tried to read Bright Young Things five times. I was convinced it was the subject matter that turned me away. I guessed wrong...

Right off the bat, this book threw me into an alien world, filled with history and different times. I loved seeing the differences that was the past, and comparing it to today's world. It's pretty amazing when you get down to it, just how much society, and things have changed since the 20s.

This book leaves you begging for more, throughout the whole book, AND during the end. The storyline was extremely fast-paced and interesting. The mystery in this book was amazing, and it was so suspenseful at times, I just couldn't put it down. The characters were likeable, and I found them relatable, and deep. The secrets that are revealed about each one is surprising!

For anybody who usually doesn't feel drawn to historical YA, I would definitely recommend you give this book a shot. Especially if you like mystery and suspense, this will be a favorite. It's not a typical flapper type of novel with drama, drama, drama... Instead, this book is much deeper, and full on packed with action.

Rachael says

It's 1925, and Jo Winters is a modern girl, but not in the same way as all those flappers. No, she wants to finish up high school, maybe go to college, and get a job. But her father has different ideas for her, and she doesn't have much of a choice when he sends her off to Manhattan to find a husband. But as soon as she arrives, Jo starts to suspect that's there's more to the story than her future marriage. Too many people are asking her questions, particularly about her beloved older brother Teddy—questions that she can't or won't answer. Teddy trusted her, and she can't betray that, no matter how alluring a new life as one of Manhattan's elite could be. But, whether she knows it or not, Jo has been ensnared in a grander scheme of the most powerful man in town. Forced into the glamorously dangerous world of New York's gangsters and their molls, will Jo be able to save herself?

I am definitely a huge fan of the flapper era, particularly its danger and decadence, which is why I was drawn to Sirens. Unfortunately, there was something about this world that failed to draw me in; while I certainly got the sense of the magic of New York City in the 20s, at the same time I felt distanced from it, perhaps because Jo is somewhat resistant of some of the attitudes of the time. This is certainly a different type of 20s story, despite having its fair share of the glitz, and that maintained my interest, though only up to a certain point. The plot has a good mixture of mystery, romance, and Jo's more personal quest to find a place in her world, but ultimately, I just wasn't very engaged in what was happening. Part of this had to do with the awkwardly paced release of information regarding Jo's brother Teddy and the fact that some details were just too overwritten, but more than that, Jo's character was just not sufficiently emotionally developed to make me truly care about her story.

Though I failed to really connect with this story, Sirens will still be enjoyed by fans of Bright Young Things

by Anna Godbersen and The Girl Is Murder by Kathryn Miller Haines.

reposted from <http://thebookmuncher.blogspot.com>

Chelsey Wolford says

If I only I could have been a flapper...I would have rocked it! But in all seriousness, in the past year I have become fascinated with historical fiction based in the 1920's. There is just something about this era that amazes me beyond belief. This book did not disappoint! Janet Fox captivated me with talk of gangster, bootleggers, and molls. I wanted to be in the book with Jo Winter and her gang of "bandits," this is only my chosen term for them because I love the mischief that they always seem to land in. This story follows Jo Winter, as I mentioned, and a story that I cannot even begin to put into words. Her life is full of flappers, gangster, romance, and a whole lot of danger.

This book is written in alternating chapters from the perspectives of Jo and her flapper friend, Louise "Lou" O' Keefe, long-time girlfriend of big-time gangster, Danny Conner. I really enjoyed reading the varying chapters from the perspectives of these two women. I have to say that I enjoyed both the same because even though I really liked Jo, I REALLY enjoyed Lou's chapters. Lou's chapters usually left on cliffhangers and they usually alluded to some type of danger that was lurking around the next bend. I did feel sorry for Lou because of her situation with Danny Conner, who I absolutely despised. I think that was the point though because he was the most powerful gangster in all of New York City, so yeah I think I should hate him. But Lou was just so caught up in the life of being a moll that she didn't realize how ridiculous she sounded at times. The chapters slowly unfold more and more secrets the deeper you get into the book. I love that! I love books that keep me hanging on!

Manhattan in the roaring 20's felt so realistic to me while reading this book. I felt like I could just reach out and touch it, and I definitely wanted to be a part of it. Along with the characters and the mystery behind Teddy's (Jo's brother) disappearance I felt like a regular sightseer. I squinted my eyes when Danny Conner was around however, and the tension just flew right off the pages. I have read a lot about flappers, but not really a lot about gangster and I do have to admit that their lives and the lives of their girlfriends intrigue me. I must say that I used to love the bad boys! I thought that Janet Fox did a superb job of capturing this time period and the lifestyles of the flappers and the gangster. And if you are ready for a walk on the wild side, then please do go and pick up a copy of this book!!

A copy of this book was provided to me by Janet's wonderful publicist in exchange for my honest review

Ashley says

This book was decent. There was nothing inherently wrong with it. The characters were well rounded and it is technically well written. There just wasn't any spark for me. I didn't dislike the characters, but I didn't love them either. It just didn't hold my attention. It was supposed to be suspenseful, but I never felt any sense of urgency or danger. The mobsters were not scary enough. Not scary at all actually. I thought Connor was the most interesting character, I would have loved to know more about him and see the story from his

perspective. Honestly I'm pretty sure if the mob was after your family, you would not be safely hanging out in New York city to their full knowledge for very long, let alone falling in love with the guy sent to tail you. The hero worship of Teddy got very tedious. I just didn't buy that he was this perfect, flawless human being that Jo thought he was. I could see her thinking that at 10, but why didn't she realize as she got older that he was only human like the rest of us? I think the main problem I had was that what I was told to feel or what I was told Jo felt toward the other characters did not match how I reacted to them. My other issue was why was Jo there in the first place?? The entire book I was annoyed by this. So a mobster located in NYC is after you. He knows where you live and he knows your family, so you move from White Plains to NYC?? To be safer?? That makes no sense at all. Especially when her parents went all the way out to Montana to keep themselves safe. What the heck? It put Jo in a nice position for the rest of the story to unfold, but there was no logical reason for her to be there. It also irritated me that Teddy and Jo took all the blame for being involved with Connor when their dad (the adult who should know better) was a bootlegger involved with the same guy! And he had the nerve to berate Jo? Really? I really did not like her father or the way she kept convincing herself he had her best interests at heart when all he really had were his own interests at heart. Okay, maybe this book bothered me more than I realized lol! The ending wrapped up very nicely, albeit maybe a little too perfectly.

www.wanderingthepages.tumblr.com

Michelle Ramirez says

During the prohibition and after the women's suffrage took effect, the Golden Age was full of glam and secrets. *Sirens* by Janet Fox is a story set in the Roaring Twenties about a teenager named Josephine Winter. When her father sends her off to live in Manhattan with her wealthy cousins, he suggests it is to find a husband. After helping her brother, Teddy, fake his suicide, Jo keeps his promise by not telling anyone, not even her parents, about the hoax. With the help of Teddy's journal, her cousin Melody the flapper, and the girlfriend of one of the most powerful gangsters in town, Jo uncovers the truth behind that "world of jazz and gangsters and their molls..." and why all that glitters is not gold.

The story is written from alternating points of view making it intriguing, from Jo's point of view to Louise O'Keefe, the girlfriend of the boot-legging gangster Danny Connor. Louise retells the events as being in the past while Jo is narrating them in the present tense.

"The cacophony of the city rose with the hours," New York in 1925 really set the feeling that it was present-day New York, with its chaos and lights and as a city where dreams come true. From captivating places like Central Park and the Algonquin, Janet Fox described each setting as glamorous or as secluded as one could imagine. She also illustrated every setting and character from the speakeasies to Danny Connor's mansion and right down to how the hem of each dress was beaded. I interpreted Jo as the sweet, innocent girl everyone believed she was, even when she knew better all along. Louise, I thought of as the older, love-struck version of Jo, except with amusing charm rather than innocence. Both characters were my favorite because of their conflicted emotions. For example Jo describes Danny Connor as a living nightmare with the piercing stare of a vulture whereas Louise saw him as the love of her life whether his intentions were good or bad, most of which were bad.

The ending I thought was a bit confusing and ended with a lot of my questions unanswered but it is a story I would recommend to anyone, especially those interested in the decade of decadence. Overall, I really enjoyed this book despite the fact that it was described as slightly disappointing for not seeming like a stand-

alone story, my thoughts on that statement are still indecisive.

Sarah Mac says

Eh, this was okay. But that's all it was. Okay. Mediocre. Meh.

While the writing itself was competent (including some very nice descriptive passages), the story lacked any real zip. The secondary narrator, Lou, was enjoyable. She was a saucy flapper, unashamed of things she'd done wrong in the past, & unapologetic for misconceptions generated by those actions. She alternates chapters with the primary narrator, Jo -- which is a shame, because Lou would've made a much more interesting POV.

The problem is that Jo is really *boring*. There's nothing original or interesting about her, IMO. She's the typical blah Mary Sue YA heroine -- goody-two-shoes, doesn't realize how gorgeous she is, reluctant party girl, no experience with boys, refusing to allow the idea of marriage/boyfriends, judgmental of anyone with looser morals, etc. She comes to NYC, then refuses to partake of BOOZE. Or DANCING. Or CIGGIES. Or SPEAKEASIES. Or FLIRTING. Or, y'know, anything related to flapper/Roaring 20s lifestyle. Really? How dull is this? *What's the point of the flapper schtick if the primary heroine is such a wet blanket?* *I* wouldn't have wanted to hang around her boring ass, so why should anyone else? And yet...*eyeroll* The idea that Evul Mega-Rich Bootlegger Danny was interested made me LOL, & her ridiculous Nancy Drew delusions were even more obnoxious than her Cunning Plan(tm) to seduce Danny & save her family -- partly because this stupid girl thinks she's got what it takes to bring down an entire empire on her own, without even consulting an adult...*because it's not safe for them to know*. ARE YOU SERIOUS? (That's not to mention her brother's stupid diary. Yeah, Jo was running around the city piecing together bundles of pages in a diary because it held the secret to Danny's downfall -- which was anti-climactic as hell, since hints were dropped before she even arrived in NY.)

Equally annoying was the insta-love. Villainous bootlegger Danny was a psycho nutball, but at least he was interesting -- which is more than I can say for Jo's twu wuv Charlie. He had no personality. He had no presence on the page. He was flatter than flat, like cold pancakes or rubbery tortillas or cheap potato chips from the gas station; there was absolutely nothing distinctive about his boring-ass Gary Stu routine, & I didn't give a crap whether he lived or died. He was a doormat of a hero who contributed nothing to the page...but it wasn't entirely his fault, I suppose, what with Jo's foot-stomping & rah-rah speeches of feminine empowerment. Her judgmental attitude toward flappers was obnoxious, as was her holier-than-thou preening whenever she met a girl who dared to (shock! horrors!) think about flirting or sex. Sure, it's not like Lou & Danny had a healthy relationship -- but Lou's growth revolves around her realization of Danny's flaws & the rejection of his superficial security. Lou learns a lesson. (A painful one, yes -- but given her background, understandable.)

So what is Jo's supposed growth? What does she take away from her adventures in NYC? Not much. She was right about everything, apparently. Booze is evul! She can totally take care of herself! She also gets a flatline Gary Stu who worships the ground she walks on & whom she's destined to be with after approximately four conversations. I'm not sure which was worse -- her anachronistic yammering about grrlpower, or the sappy twu wuv closure that followed it.

...Speaking of which, the ending was bizarre. Suddenly it shifted from Nancy Drew to Scooby Doo, complete with a vengeful (view spoiler), whereas there was nothing (view spoiler) up until this point. Whut?

Also, there was disappearing parent/adult syndrome. Big time.

2.5 stars, rounded up. The author isn't without some skill in crafting visuals, but Jo & Charlie were boring, most of the secondary characters served no purpose, & the out-of-left-field ending only made things worse.

Liviania says

SIRENS takes us back to 1925, during Prohibition and just five years after women got the vote. The alternating narrators, Jo and Lou, are rather concerned with both of those policies. Lou is the moll of powerful mobster Danny Connor and Jo's father is involved with smuggling moonshine. Their social lives often involve going to speakeasies and risking getting caught in a raid. And as women they're caught between old ideas of femininity and modern. They may have the vote, but they still feel controlled by the men in their lives.

They meet in Manhattan after Jo's father sends her to live with her aunt and uncle's family. Turns out Danny is after something her brother left behind - something she probably has in her possession. Lou feels threatened by Jo, a young, smart, ambitious girl who is perfect to take her place as Danny's girlfriend. The conflict in the way they view events is highlighted by the way Janet Fox structures SIRENS.

Lou and Jo tell alternating chapters, but Jo tells events as they happen and Lou is recounting events for the cops. At first I found this very distracting. But it works, because Lou is reflecting on the choices she made while Jo is growing up and becoming an independent woman. The technique does work much better in later chapters, where there's more overlap between the girls' narratives.

At times it was difficult for me to read SIRENS because of real-world events. Fox brings the Manhattan of the twenties to life, complete with the treasured Algonquin Round Table. While she doesn't stint on the dark side of life - there are gang-related deaths, a loss of bodily autonomy, and other terrible things - this is a glittering, fabled New York. It was tough to read about that town of possibilities while it was being pounded by Hurricane Sandy.

But I still enjoyed SIRENS. It's got adventure and mystery and many of the ethical questions it explores are still relevant today. Winning the vote didn't automatically give women equal rights to men. It didn't automatically give us rights to our own bodies. I don't want to paint SIRENS as all about politics, however. It's got romance, and sibling relationships, and hopes for a better future. It's one jazzy ride.
