

Booklist

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By Pascal Marco.

June 2011. 336p. Oceanview, \$25.95
(9781608090150).

A 12-year-old black youth from the South Side of Chicago testifies against members of a juvenile gang that murdered an old man who happened to be the last living member of the infamous Chicago Black Sox. Cops and attorneys make mistakes in the prosecution. The gang goes free, and the 12-year-old grows up in Phoenix with a different name and an obsessive need to make things right after the botched trial. The intricate and compelling plot offers much more than a précis can suggest. The novel delivers a vivid, gritty portrait of the South Side in the mid-1970s; realistic police-procedural detail; a glimpse of virulent police racism; and lovingly described bits of baseball history that convey both love for the White Sox and shame at their betrayal—"fixing" the World Series. This is a debut

novel, and some of the writing is less than polished, but a story that melds a powerful sense of an impoverished and violent place, cops who are decent and cops who are not, and rich baseball lore will find a large audience. Here's hoping Marco has more such tales to offer. —*Thomas Gaughan*

