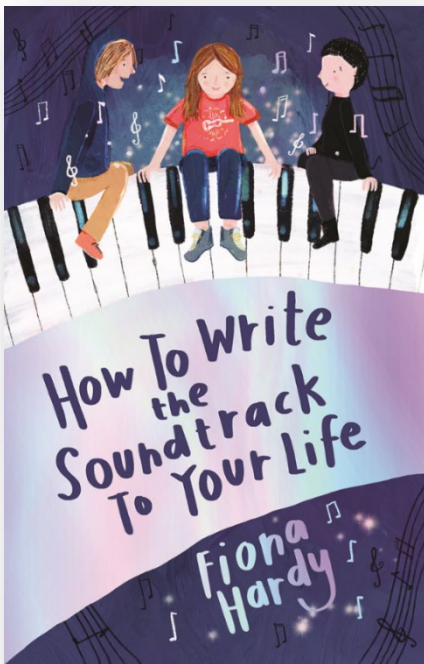


HOW TO WRITE THE SOUNDTRACK TO YOUR LIFE

Fiona Hardy

Fiction | ISBN: 978-1-68464-631-9 | Ages 9-12 | Paperback | 5 x 7 ¾ | 288 pp | \$8.99 | LOC: 2022941514

Shy Murphy's song is heard by everyone in music class ... and they love it. But then she's accused of stealing it! Can she clear her name and reclaim her music? And learn to trust ... anyone?



- Explores shyness, friendship, family, mental illness, self-discovery.
- Humorous, poignant, mysterious, heartfelt.
- Shy but determined heroine and a cast of deftly portrayed and memorable characters.
- Music references to please any enthusiast.
- Companion volume to *How to Make a Movie in 12 Days* (KM 2023).

Track 4

Steal My Sunshine

I floated everywhere that afternoon. I floated right out of class past Jhyll, who'd been telling everybody how she'd always known how good I was and how she'd just wanted to show everyone, y'know? I floated past Marcie telling Willow that she was going to make me a charm so that I'd get a record deal. I floated right by everybody and to the parking lot where Ruth was waiting, and the car floated home. I only eszed back onto the ground when I heard our next-door neighbor and the oldest person I knew, Mrs. Ainsley Oswald, out on her front lawn in her giant recliner with her karaoke machine next to her listening on some 1960s tunes.

"Hi, Mrs. Oswald," Ruth said as we walked by.
"Oh, Ruthie, you know you can call me Ainsley! Off to school pickup, were you? And how are you, Juniper?"
"It's Murphy, Mrs. Oswald. And I'm good. Really good, actually."

"Ainsley, dear. And you say your day was good? Well, I never. When I was at school it was awful, just awful. I had to go to school from eight in the morning until eight in the evening because I had to clean the classroom as well. And I'd get whipped if I forgot to bring an apple. Did you know that?"

"Uh," I said, alarmed.

"And if it was snowing then I had to shovel the whole yard too."

"I thought you grew up nearby, Ainsley?" Ruth said, grinning. "I didn't realize it snowed a lot in the suburbs?"

"That's Mrs. Oswald, thank you," Mrs. Ainsley Oswald said, narrowing her eyes. "And you wouldn't know about the snow days, being that you're so much younger, would you?"

"No, I would not," Ruth said.

"What are you listening to?" I asked her.

"This song is called 'Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow,' by The Shirelles," she said. "What nonsense are you kids listening to at the moment?"

"Nothing, really," I said. "Dad likes playing community radio so sometimes I listen to that and hear some good stuff. Sometimes some weird stuff."

"Community radio! That sounds very lovely. Do they talk about local events for seniors?"

"Sadly, I don't think it's that kind of community radio," Ruth said. "More like gigs and festivals and things like that."

"And who says I don't want to go to a festival?" Mrs. Ainsley Oswald said crossly.

"I can find the channel for you if you like?" I said.

"Please do, dear."

We'd bought the speaker for Mrs. Ainsley Oswald as a Christmas present. She'd always been a good neighbor – if we went away she'd water the plants, or look after Axel's frog, and she even looked after us some days – and she loved to play music very loudly but was frustrated that her giant stereo system wasn't portable so she couldn't take it outside on sunny days.

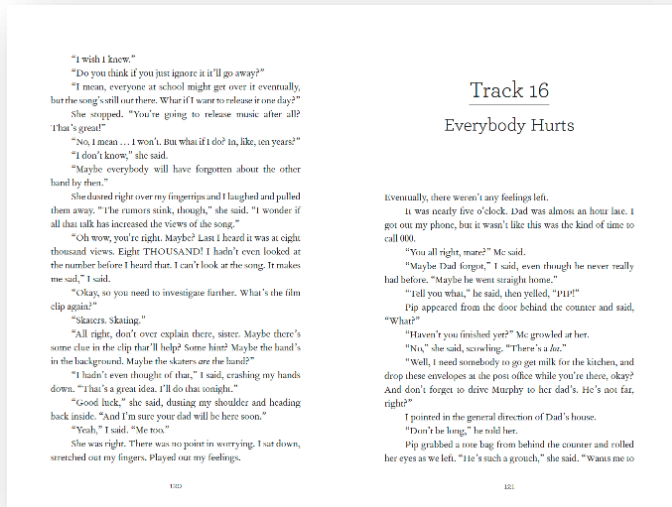


Additional Information

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Portrays shyness with encouragement and without negativity.

Openly addresses mental illness with compassion.

Diversity abounds in characters' ethnicities, personalities, abilities, interests.

Mystery plot heightens appeal for the more reluctant reader.

Emphasizes importance of friendship and family.

Winner, Australia's 2021 Children's Peace Literature Award.

- **Rich with topics for discussion and homeschool/classroom activities:**

- Discuss the significance of music in our lives
- Make a list of your own favorite songs (“the soundtrack to your life”) and discuss/write what meaning each selection has for you
- Consider mental illness—how it may affect a person, their family, their life
- Examine the characters in the book, their differences, similarities, motivations, and your feelings toward them

- **For the customer who likes:**

- *How to Make a Movie in 12 Days*
Fiona Hardy * 64-630-2
- *Ella at Eden series*
Laura Sieveking * 5 titles
- *Butterflies*
Susanne Gervay * 67-043-2
- *I Am Jack*
Susanne Gervay * 67-128-6
- *My Beautiful Voice*
Joseph Coelho * Allison Colpoys * 64-469-8

Review Praise

“Upbeat, light in tone, and both deft and respectful in its exploration of characters and issues.” – *Kirkus Reviews*

“The narrative balances the relationship and mystery elements really well while also giving readers a glimpse into life with a parent diagnosed with depression.” – *The Story Sanctuary*



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