



2006

# Bread and Roses, Too

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### BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Wanlass, Sarah (2006) "Bread and Roses, Too," *Children's Book and Media Review*: Vol. 27 : Iss. 2 , Article 12.  
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol27/iss2/12>

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Paterson, Katherine. *Bread and Roses, Too*. Clarion, 2006. ISBN 0618654798. \$16.00. 275 pp.

Reviewer: Sarah Wanlass

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Historical fiction;

Subject: Labor unions--Juvenile fiction; Strikes and lockouts--Textile workers--Juvenile fiction; Immigrants--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Newberry Award winner, Paterson is up to her usual standard in *Bread and Roses, Too*. This novel centers on a young Italian girl and an American boy who become entangled in the events of the "Bread and Roses" strike of Lawrence, Massachusetts.

Rosa and her immigrant family live in Lawrence. Rosa's mother and older sister work at the wool mill; her father recently killed in a mill accident. Young Jack Beale also works at the mill to support himself and his abusive, alcoholic father. When factory owner, Billy Wood, lowers the already low wages, his workers have had it--they can barely make ends meet as it is! A strike is organized and both Jack and Rosa's family join in.

Soon, the town is in chaos and Rosa is filled with inner turmoil--confused and worried for her family. What if her sister and mother get hurt in the strike? What will happen to her and baby Ricci? Eventually, as the town gets more violent, the strike organizers arrange for children to be sent to homes in outlying cities for safety. Both Rosa and Jack end up on a train to Barre, Vermont, where they learn lessons of love, trust, and kindness.

*Bread and Roses, Too* closely follows the history of the 1912 Lawrence strike and the role the people of Barre, Vermont played in helping the strikers. It is a wonderful addition to any elementary or middle school collection. It works perfectly as a curricular tie-in between social studies and literature. Readers will enjoy experiencing this time period along with the characters.