



The Brothers Torres

By Coert Voorhees

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Frankie Towers has always looked up to his older brother, Steve. And with good reason—Steve is a popular senior gets whatever he wants: girls, a soccer scholarship, and—lately—street cred. Frankie, on the other hand, spends his time shooting off fireworks with his best friend, Zach, working at his parents' restaurant, and obsessing about his longtime crush, Rebecca Sanchez.

Although Frankie has some reservations, he doesn't spend much time thinking about about Steve's crusade to win the respect of the local *cholos*. Then Frankie gets into a fistfight with John Dalton—longtime nemesis of Steve's, and the richest, preppiest kid in their New Mexican high school. After the fight, Steve takes Frankie under his wing, and Frankie's social currency begins to rise. The *cholos* who used to ignore him start to recognize him; he even lands a date to Homecoming with Rebecca.

But after another incident with Dalton, Steve is bent on retaliating. Frankie starts to think that his brother is taking this respect thing too far. Soon he'll have to make a choice between respecting his brother and respecting himself.

In an honest and humorous debut novel, Coert Voorhees examines what it means for a young man to come of age. A compelling look at where loyalty ends and the self begins.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Starred Review. Grade 9 Up—Frankie Torres Towers knows his older brother, Steve, is endangering his college scholarship by staying out all night with the local *cholos* and picking fights with his soccer teammates. Accepting of his sibling's good looks and macho charm, Frankie figures Steve is just looking for respect and covers for him, deflecting his parents' questions and picking up the slack at Los Torres, the family's New Mexican restaurant. Frankie's primary obsession is getting a date with Rebecca Sanchez for the Homecoming dance. When he exhibits some bravado against rich kid and soccer jock John Dalton, he only hopes to win her attention, but he unintentionally incites a series of incidents that forces his brother to defend him. Adding insult to injury, Frankie's working-class parents begin secretly negotiating the sale of Los Torres to the Daltons. Protected by his brother's squad of toughs, Frankie seeks revenge but soon learns what these warring factions of older boys are willing to risk. Frankie is as memorable a character as Sherman Alexie's Junior Spirit in *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (Little, Brown, 2007). He exhibits a resiliency that is hopeful, and his colorful language and humor both confirm and dispel ethnic stereotypes. Flecked with Spanish phrases and authentic street slang and colloquialisms, Frankie's story is as poignant as it is hip and funny and will be a welcome addition to collections serving teens.—*Vicki Reutter, Cazenovia High School, NY*

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Review

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Review

Set in a small New Mexico town along the Rio Grande River, Voorhees's debut novel puts a fresh and often funny spin on a familiar plot line, the awkward teen boy who desires the hot girl. Rebecca Sanchez, says Frankie Torres, is biracial, "a coyote like me, but unlike me, she got the best of both worlds.... Eyes such a deep shade of blue that sometimes you want to lean in close so you can see the bottom. Cheesy as hell? Definitely. But I'm telling you." If only Frankie can find the right words to ask her to the homecoming dance! But not all is light: Frankie worries about his bad-ass older brother Steve's taste for macho violence, especially after Frankie gets beaten up by rich white boy John Dalton--how far will Steve go to get revenge? Strong secondary characters round out this sexually charged story, which is peppered with Spanish words and phrases. Frankie's observations on life, friendships and family loyalties wittily punctuate the narrative,

ensuring that readers will listen closely to this unlikely hero. Ages 14-up. (Apr.)

Users Review

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