

Booklist

Advanced Review – Uncorrected Proof

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★ **Where My Body Ends and the World Begins.**

Romano, Tony (Author)

Nov 2017. 262 p. Allium, paperback, \$17.99. (9780996755870).

In 1958, a fire at Chicago's Our Lady of the Angels School killed 92 children and three nuns. Romano (*If You Eat, You Never Die*, 2008), a lifelong Chicagoan, is too young to remember its immediate aftermath, but the stories he grew up hearing inspired his latest novel. Almost a decade after the fire, 20-year-old Anthony Lazzeri is wracked by survivor's guilt, while many in the community, including members of his own family, still find the tragedy far too painful to talk about. When he discovers that his neighbor, a retired detective, still actively suspects him of starting the fire, Anthony attempts to piece together his fragmented memories with the help of his childhood sweetheart. She is a fellow survivor of the fire and possesses some unsettling knowledge about its strange effects on Anthony's psyche and confused perception of his body and self. By turns a detective story, a psychological thriller, and a meditation on grief and loss, Romano's sensitive tale explores the lasting effects of trauma on individuals, families, and entire communities.

— *Lindsay Harmon*