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Advanced Review – UNCORRECTED PROOF

Where My Body Ends and the World Begins. Romano, Tony. Allium Press of Chicago. Print issue scheduled: November 1, 2017.

Chicago novelist and poet Tony Romano offers a melancholy psychological drama in **Where My Body Ends and the World Begins** (Allium Press of Chicago, \$17.99, ISBN 9780996755870). The story begins in 1967 Chicago, nearly ten years after the deadly fire at Our Lady of Angels elementary school (a real-life event) that left 92 school children dead. Twenty-year-old Anthony Lazzeri survived the blaze, but his sister perished, and he is racked with guilt and trying to find a way to ease the pain. Unfortunately, between his self-destructive behaviors, a retired detective's suspicion that he was involved in the arson, and his fractured family, reconciling his grief is not easily accomplished. **Where My Body Ends and the World Begins** is a compelling and intimate story of surviving loss, but the combined elements of psychological drama and heartfelt grief at times feels disjointed. The novel will surely have regional appeal, as the author's note states that those who remember the tragedy well up with tears at the mere mention of the fire. Though not the same level of suspense, the many twists and reveals here may also appeal to readers who enjoyed **I'm Thinking of Ending Things** by Lain Reid.

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