

**SEVENTH GRADE BEGINS,
AND KAREEM'S ALREADY FUMBLING IT.**

His best friend moved away, he messed up his tryout for the football team, and because of his heritage, he was voluntold to show the new kid—a Syrian refugee with a thick and embarrassing accent—around school. Just when Kareem thinks his middle school life has imploded, the hotshot QB promises to get Kareem another tryout for the squad. There's a catch: to secure that chance, Kareem must do something he knows is wrong.

Then, like a surprise blitz, Kareem's mom returns to Syria to help her family but can't make it back home. If Kareem could throw a penalty flag on the fouls of his school and home life, it would be for unnecessary roughness.

Kareem is stuck between. Between countries. Between friends, between football, between parents—and between right and wrong. It's up to him to step up, find his confidence, and navigate the beauty and hope found somewhere in the middle.

SHIFA SALTAGI SAFADI is the author of *Kareem Between* and several picture books, including *The Gift of Eid*. She has a bachelor's degree in English literature, teaches ELA at a local middle school, and reviews Muslim books on her blog, *Muslim Mommy Blog*. Shifa was born in Syria and immigrated to the US with her parents as a young girl. She lives near Chicago with her husband and four children.

READ BY PETER ROMANO



**Listening
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KAREEM BETWEEN

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