Review: *An Invisible Thread* by Laura Schroff and Alex Tresniowski (Howard Books, 2011, 252 pp.)

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Spiritually, I understand the author and her motives and feelings. I really loved this story, and as they say, I could not put the book down once I had started reading. This is a heartwarming story, full of hope, and full of discovery in many ways. I cannot wait to share this book with friends and family and colleagues.

Technically, the title of the book is brief, and we are given this longer explanation on the cover: “The true story of an 11-year-old panhandler, a busy sales executive, and an unlikely meeting with destiny.” Schroff is the executive who, one day on her way to work, stops to help a young man fighting for his life. He asks for spare change, but what he gets is a new friend, a chance at life, and encouragement he has never known.

*An Invisible Thread* is a wonderful story (and a true one at that!) of Schroff helping to save young Maurice from the streets, and of saving herself in the process. There are many excellent themes here, from self-discovery to embracing differences, and from stepping outside ourselves to learn more about “how the other half lives” to doing what one knows is right despite naysayers.

Kids living on the street are there for a variety of reasons ... and each story is a little different. What do highly-successful, driven, hard-working individuals do when faced with somebody who comes from a completely different world? Readers will enjoy what Schroff learns about a world drastically different from the one in which she lives: corporate America. And very different from the “safe” one in which she grew up, namely suburban Long Island.

Everyone should read this book to come to a better understanding of life on the streets, of poverty, of despair, of differences in neighborhoods and family patterns, and of how some people love to keep up the appearances. Teachers, social workers, and some professionals in similar fields already deal with a lot of the challenges presented and
explained in the story, especially those threatening the well-being, health, and education of the young.

The story takes place within 19 chapters, including flashbacks to the author’s childhood, and continues to impact those involved. The story will wrap you in and make you think about your own childhood. That’s what the story did to the Schroff. She had to think about her own life each day as she came to an understanding of Maurice’s life.

The book includes a reading group guide, an interview with Schroff, and three activities for book clubs to complete. This would indeed be a fantastic choice for use in a book club. I hope to use it in such a setting or in a class soon.