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Bamboo People

By Mitali Perkins



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Narrated by two teenage boys on opposing sides of the conflict between the Burmese government and the Karenni, one of Burma's many ethnic minorities, this coming-of-age novel takes place against the political and military backdrop of modern-day Burma. Chiko isn't a fighter by nature. He's a book-loving Burmese boy whose father, a doctor, is in prison for resisting the government. Tu Reh, on the other hand, wants to fight for freedom after watching Burmese soldiers destroy his Karenni family's home and bamboo fields. Timidity becomes courage and anger becomes compassion when the boys' stories intersect.



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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Starred Review Gr 7-10—With authenticity, insight, and compassion, Perkins delivers another culturally rich coming-of-age novel. Two teens on opposing sides of ethnic conflict in modern-day Burma (Myanmar) tell an intertwined story that poignantly reveals the fear, violence, prejudice, and hardships they both experience. Chiko, a quiet, studious student whose medical doctor father has been arrested as a traitor, is seized by the government and forced into military training. Chiko is groomed for guerrilla warfare against the Karenni, a Burmese minority group living in villages and refugee camps along the Thai-Burma border. After he and his patrol stumble into land mines, Tu Reh, an angry Karenni and rebel fighter, must decide whether or not to save him. Tu Reh's home was destroyed by Burmese soldiers, and he struggles with his conscience and his desire for revenge and independence. Both Chiko and Tu Reh are caught in a conflict that neither fully understands. Family, friendships, and loyalty have shaped their lives. But as young soldiers, they face harrowing situations, profound suffering, and life-and-death decisions. Both boys learn the meaning of courage. Chiko and Tu Reh are dynamic narrators whose adolescent angst and perspectives permeate the trauma of their daily lives. Dialogue and descriptions are vibrant; characters are memorable; cultural characteristics are smoothly incorporated; and the story is well paced. Perkins has infused her narrative with universal themes that will inspire readers to ponder humanitarian issues, reasons for ethnic conflict, and the effects of war. The author's notes provide helpful background information on Burmese history and the ongoing military regime's repression of minorities.—Gerry Larson, Durham School of the Arts, NC α(c) Copyright 2010. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

From [Booklist](#)

When 15-year-old Chiko is pressed into military service by the Burmese government, he finds himself involved in an ongoing war with the Karenni people, one of the many ethnic minorities in modern Burma. A scholar, not a soldier, Chiko soon gets wounded and finds himself at the mercy of Tu Reh, an angry Karenni boy only slightly older than he is. Will these two teens, who should be natural enemies, find a way to friendship? Perkins' latest novel—told in the individual voices of the two boys—explores that possibility while introducing a considerable amount of factual and contextual information about present-day Burma. Though occasionally didactic and a bit preachy, this is nevertheless a story that invites discussion of the realities of warfare rooted in long-standing antagonism and unreasoning hatred of “the other.” A particularly good book for classroom use. Grades 5-8. --Michael Cart

Review

"With authenticity, insight, and compassion, Perkins delivers another culturally rich coming-of-age novel." --★ *School Library Journal Starred Review*

"A graceful exploration of the redemptive power of love, family, and friendship." --★ *Publishers Weekly Starred Review*

"First and foremost, a compelling story." -- *Boston Globe*

"A tender tale of parallel sorrows and dreams." -- *Sacramento Bee*

"Thrilling jungle survival story." --*Stanford Magazine*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Christina Epp:

Spent a free a chance to be fun activity to complete! A lot of people spent their leisure time with their family, or their very own friends. Usually they accomplishing activity like watching television, planning to beach, or picnic from the park. They actually doing same every week. Do you feel it? Do you want to something different to fill your own free time/ holiday? Could possibly be reading a book may be option to fill your no cost time/ holiday. The first thing that you ask may be what kinds of guide that you should read. If you want to test look for book, may be the reserve untitled Bamboo People can be fine book to read. May be it might be best activity to you.

Mary Gillon:

Reading can called imagination hangout, why? Because if you find yourself reading a book mainly book entitled Bamboo People your thoughts will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in every single aspect that maybe unidentified for but surely can become your mind friends. Imaging every single word written in a book then become one application form conclusion and explanation that maybe you never get prior to. The Bamboo People giving you one more experience more than blown away the mind but also giving you useful information for your better life within this era. So now let us present to you the relaxing pattern this is your body and mind will be pleased when you are finished reading it, like winning a game. Do you want to try this extraordinary shelling out spare time activity?

Joanne Starks:

Bamboo People can be one of your beginner books that are good idea. All of us recommend that straight away because this book has good vocabulary that will increase your knowledge in vocab, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nonetheless delivering the information. The copy writer giving his/her effort to place every word into joy arrangement in writing Bamboo People but doesn't forget the main level, giving the reader the hottest and also based confirm resource data that maybe you can be one among it. This great information may drawn you into completely new stage of crucial considering.

Janice Garcia:

As a college student exactly feel bored to be able to reading. If their teacher expected them to go to the library or even make summary for some guide, they are complained. Just small students that has reading's soul or real their leisure activity. They just do what the professor want, like asked to go to the library. They go to there but nothing reading seriously. Any students feel that examining is not important, boring along with can't see colorful images on there. Yeah, it is to get complicated. Book is very important to suit your needs. As we know that on this period, many ways to get whatever we wish. Likewise word says, many ways to reach Chinese's country. Therefore , this Bamboo People can make you really feel more interested to read.

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