



Forgotten Fire

By Adam Bagdasarian

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A National Book Award Finalist.

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Vahan loses his home and family, and is forced to live a life he would never have dreamed of in order to survive. Somehow Vahan's incredible strength and spirit help him endure, even knowing that each day could be his last.

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Forgotten Fire By Adam Bagdasarian Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Forced to watch his father escorted out of their lives by Turkish police, his brothers shot to death in their backyard, his grandmother murdered by a rock-wielding guard, and his sister take poison rather than be raped by soldiers, 12-year-old Vahan Kendarian abruptly begins to learn what his father meant when he used to say, "This is how steel is made. Steel is made strong by fire." Up until 1915, Vahan has lived a cosseted life as the son of a wealthy and respected Armenian man. But overnight his world is destroyed when the triumvirate of Turkish leaders, Enver Pasha, Talaat Bey, and Djemal Pasha, begins the systematic massacre of nearly three-quarters of the Armenian population of Turkey, 1.5 million men, women, and children. Soon Vahan is an orphan on the run, surviving by begging, pretending to be deaf and mute, dressing as a girl, hiding out in basements and outhouses, and even living for a time with the Horseshoer of Baskale, a Turkish governor known for nailing horseshoes to the feet of his Armenian victims. Time and again, the terrified and desperate boy grows close to someone--and loses him or her to an appalling, violent death. Through three years of unspeakable horror, Vahan is made stronger by this fire, and by perseverance, fate, or sheer luck, he survives long enough to escape to the safe haven of Constantinople.

Brutally vivid, Adam Bagdasarian's *Forgotten Fire* is based on the experiences of his great-uncle during the Armenian Holocaust. The absolutely relentless series of vile events is almost unbearable, but the quiet elegance of Bagdasarian's writing makes this a novel of truth and beauty. Parental guidance is strongly suggested for younger readers of this extraordinary, heartbreaking account. (Ages 14 and older) --*Emilie Coulter*

From Publishers Weekly

Drawing on his own great-uncle's experiences, Bagdasarian covers the years 1915-1918 when a boy from a wealthy, well-respected family from Bitlis, Turkey, is stripped of everything simply because he is Armenian. "The prose is often graceful and the events are as gripping as they are horrifying," said PW. Ages 14-up. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

From School Library Journal

Grade 8 Up-It would be misleading to say that readers will enjoy this debut novel, but it is certain that they will be captivated, frightened, and profoundly affected by it. It is based on the true story of a 12-year-old boy who survived the massacre that saw hundreds of thousands of Armenians murdered after the Young Turks came to power. In 1915, Vahan Kenderian lives a pampered life that he has no reason to believe will ever end. But end it does, and in a brutal way. After the disappearance of his father and uncle, Vahan witnesses the murder of his two eldest brothers in the garden of the family home and, after a forced march, loses the other members of his family one by one. He faces hunger, destitution, beatings, and sexual abuse, and is forced to watch as others are killed or raped as he crosses Turkey in an attempt to escape this persecution of his people. Throughout these experiences, he develops, matures, and strengthens his resolve, at the same time--understandably--learning to fear the loss of anyone he becomes close to. When he finally reaches freedom in Constantinople in 1918, it is as though readers have, in some small way, endured these experiences as well, and come away stronger. If you're looking for a new piece of historical fiction to inspire students and ignite discussions, this is it.

Andrew Medlar, Chicago Public Library, IL

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Aline Moran:

The book *Forgotten Fire* can give more knowledge and also the precise product information about everything you want. Exactly why must we leave the best thing like a book *Forgotten Fire*? A number of you have a different opinion about book. But one aim this book can give many data for us. It is absolutely correct. Right now, try to closer using your book. Knowledge or facts that you take for that, it is possible to give for each other; you can share all of these. Book *Forgotten Fire* has simple shape however you know: it has great and big function for you. You can seem the enormous world by available and read a publication. So it is very wonderful.

Bryant Kelly:

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