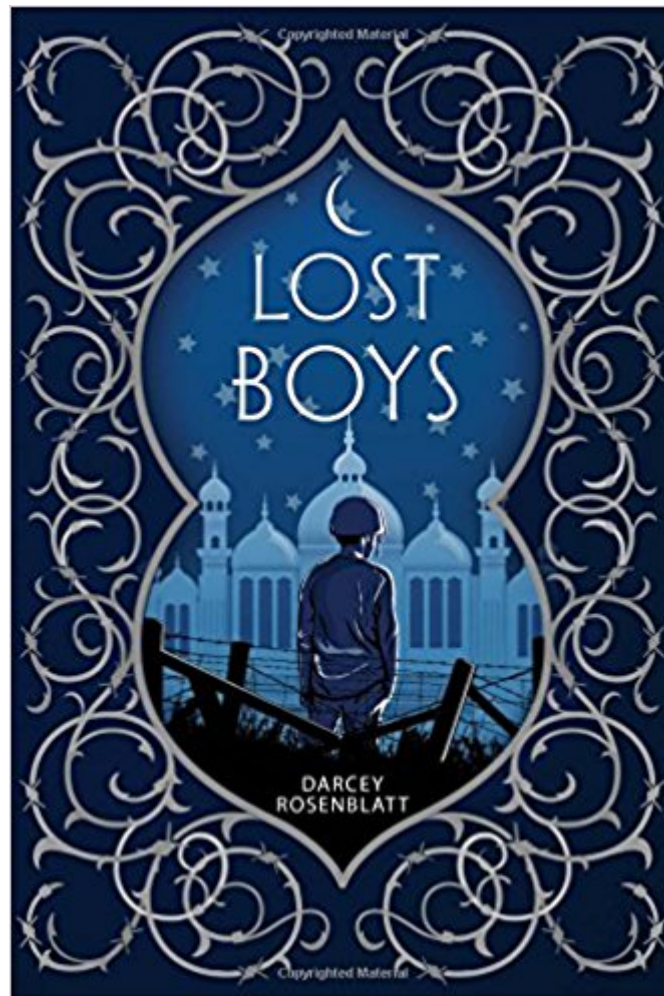




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Lost Boys



Synopsis

Based on historical events, this unforgettable and inspiring tale for middle-grade readers is about a young boy torn from the only life he's ever known and held captive as a prisoner of war. In 1982, twelve-year-old Reza has no interest in joining Iran's war effort against Iraq. But in the wake of a tragedy and at his mother's urging, he decides to enlist, assured by the authorities that he will achieve paradise should he die in service to his country. War does not bring the glory the boys of Iran have been promised, and Reza soon finds himself held in a prisoner-of-war camp in Iraq, where the guards not only threaten violence but they act upon it. Will Reza make it out alive? And if he does, will he even have a home to return to? Friendship, heartbreak, and Reza's very survival are at stake as he finds solace through music and forges his own path wherever that might take him.

Book Information

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Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

Customer Reviews

"Rosenblatt's debut is fiction, but rooted in fact: the plight of 'lost boy soldiers' was all too real. Thanks to careful research and a well-written narrative, Rosenblatt brings their stories to vivid and memorable life. The lost boys, at least here, are found." Booklist "Reza's adolescent rebellion, passion for music, and loyalty to his friends make him an appealing

protagonist, and the constant dangers threatening him create a compelling read. Secondary characters demonstrate the complexity of attitudes and loyalties during the Iran-Iraq conflict A powerful look at a tragic period in history." — School Library Journal

Darcey Rosenblatt is a debut author. She's a cofounder of the Better Books Workshop for middle grade and young adult writers, and she loves dancing and painting. She lives in San Francisco. *Lost Boys* is her first book.

Author Darcey Rosenblatt's clear, simple, and beautiful writing brings the conflicts in 1982 Iran into the light through the experience of Reza, a 12-year-old boy now forbidden by law from playing or singing his beloved music. Rosenblatt deftly weaves the exploits of Reza and his best friend Ebi into a larger cultural story—the conversion of Iran to religious law, and the recruitment of young Iranian teens to fight a holy war against Iraq—while staying firmly in the minds of her young and relatable characters. "See, I knew this would be good," says Ebi to Reza as they head, at twelve, to the battlefield.

"We're real warriors now, my friend. Just like on TV." I learned much from this book that broke my heart, yet Rosenblatt wisely keeps most of the story away from the battlefield and immersed in the true-to-life friendships between Reza and Ebi, the other boys at the prisoner of war camp where Reza lands, an Iraqi guard, and an Irish aid worker who reconnects him with his music and reawakens his dreams. Highly recommended for middle-grade readers, classrooms, and libraries.

This is a story that needed to be told. I've never read about this time and place, and was fascinated and saddened by what the boys upon which this novel is based must have gone through. While an important book on a difficult subject, the writing is so lovely and effortless that you will be whisked away into Reza's world, feeling his joys and experiencing his pain. You'll be turning pages quickly as your heart breaks and grows. I would highly recommend this book for boys and girls, tweens and teens, and adults, too. You'll feel as if you've stepped out of your life and into Reza's, a world away in time, geography and experience. It's the very best kind of read that leaves you with a new friend, and somehow changed.

'Lost Boys' takes place in Iran in 1982. It is a powerful and very engaging story about a 12 year old boy navigating the pressures of adhering to Ayatollah Khomeini's oppressive regime which includes

sending young kids to war against Iraq. Reza, the protagonist faces choices and decisions no one his age should be forced to make. Loyalty, friendship, heartbreak, disappointment, fear along with admirable bravery color his journey evoking strong emotional responses along the way. The historical context is fascinating, the characters captivating and I became immediately immersed from beginning to end. Meant for young adults, it is a great read for all ages.

To be transparent, Darcey Rosenblatt is an author that I know. That being said, *Lost Boys* is wonderful. The characters come alive from page one and make you care deeply about their journey during the time of the Iran-Iraq war. I was privileged to see first-hand the author's thorough attention to detail. Extremely well-researched and tenderly drawn. This book took years, as the author worked hard to capture the era and give authenticity to the character's plights and emotions. It shows in the beautiful writing and in the story itself, which captures your heart. Children will learn much about this lesser-known period of history, and the storytelling is so gripping that my guess is that they will read it more than once.

A much-needed book and look into a piece of history I know little about. Follow twelve-year-old Reza into the Iran/Iraq war. Reza did not want to enlist but is compelled to after tragedy strikes. Survival is uncertain, and when he is sent to Camp Six, an Iraqi POW camp, Reza's true test of resilience begins. A powerful story of courage and friendship. A well-researched, triumphant debut.

Fascinating story about an intriguing time period. The story really made me feel like I came away from it, knowing much more about the time period. You can't help but feel for what Reza goes through during his journey. I couldn't help but think of *The Kite Runner*, as I was reading, although, this was a powerful story in its own right. I highly recommend and look forward to more from this author.

When you get this book - and you should! - you'll want to find yourself a comfortable spot to dive into this heartbreaking and inspiring story. Told in a straightforward and accessible voice, *Lost Boys* tells the tale of a young Iranian boy caught up in the tragic war between Iraq and Iran. The story reveals a time and place that many readers might not otherwise experience - so important in times of intolerance and repression. Themes of religious extremism and senseless loss of young lives through war are implicit but balanced by the protagonist's friendships and love of music. Highly recommended for middle grade readers and classrooms.

Lost Boys is a powerful story of a boy's struggle with adolescence, friendship, and loyalty. It is beautifully written and is guaranteed to appeal to all audiences from middle grade to adult. Well-researched and based on historical events, this is a story with important historical significance. The protagonist, Reza, is an engaging character and Rosenblatt effectively portrays him in a sensitive and captivating way. This is a must read - I couldn't put it down. I'm looking forward to more of Rosenblatt's work!

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