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# A Time Of Miracles



## Synopsis

Political troubles and civil unrest force a woman and young boy to flee their war-torn country in search of a safe haven in this award-winning novel that speaks to issues that are both timely and universal. *À À* Blaise Fortune, also known as KoumaÀfÀ I, loves hearing the story of how he came to live with Gloria in the Republic of Georgia: Gloria ran to the site of a train accident where she found an injured woman who asked Gloria to take her baby. The woman, Gloria says, was French, and the baby was Blaise. *À À* When Blaise turns seven years old, the Soviet Union collapses, and itÀçâ Ñâ„çs then that Gloria decides she and Blaise must flee. They make their way westward on foot, heading toward France, where Gloria says they will find safe haven. During their five-year journey across the Caucasus and Europe as they encounter other refugees searching for a better life, Blaise grows from a boy into an adolescent. However, itÀçâ Ñâ„çs only as a young man can Blaise attempt to untangle his identity. *À À* BondouxÀçâ Ñâ„çs heartbreaking tale of exile, sacrifice, hope, and survival is a story of ultimate love. *À À À À Àçâ ÑÀ*“A beautifully cadenced tribute to maternal love and the power of stories amid contemporary political chaos.Àçâ ÑÀ•Àçâ Ñâ •Kirkus Reviews, Starred Review Àçâ ÑÀ“The two [Blaise and Gloria] make a perilous, five-year journey westward through war-torn territory, encountering a memorable entourage of fellow refugees with poignant stories of their own. Àçâ ÑÀ| Though Blaise narrates this splendidly translated novel, Gloria’s voice will long resonate.Àçâ ÑÀ•Àçâ Ñâ •Publishers Weekly Starred Review Àçâ ÑÀ“An enchanting novel that mixes grand storytelling with an unflinching look at the harsh realities of poverty.Àçâ ÑÀ•Àçâ Ñâ •Junior Library Guild

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: HL700L (What’s this?)

Paperback: 192 pages

Publisher: Ember; Reprint edition (August 14, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0375860363

ISBN-13: 978-0375860362

Product Dimensions: 5.6 x 0.4 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 12 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #277,239 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #35 inÀ À Books > Teens >

Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Family > Alternative Family #224 inÀ À Books >

Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Family > Parents #238 in *Books* >

Teens > Historical Fiction > Europe

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Gr 8 Up *With Gloria, the only mother he's ever known, Blaise Fortune travels across the Caucasus through the civil wars of the 1990s, seeking his French birth mother. Braided into this compelling tale are the experiences of other refugees from the aftermath of the breakup of the Soviet Union.* (c) Copyright 2013. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, seven-year-old Koumaï I and his guardian, Gloria, flee violent unrest and begin an arduous journey across the Caucasus toward France. That's where Koumaï I was born, according to Gloria, who describes how she found Koumaï I in the wreckage of a train accident that killed his French mother. Gloria became the boy's devoted guardian, and Koumaï I recounts their inseparable bond as they risk everything, finding shelter in forests, camps, and gypsy settlements. Bondoux, author of the multi-award-winning *The Killer's Tears* (2006), tells another unusual, wrenching story of a vulnerable child. Koumaï I's first-person voice shifts uneasily between a young person's and an adult's acquired wisdom: "I'm in a rush to grow up. I sense that the world in which we live is hostile to children. That may be a natural combination in an individual who has endured so much so young, though, and in potent details, Bondoux creates indelible scenes of resilient children who, like Koumaï I, find strength in painful memories: "To be less afraid of the darkness and the unknown, I call on my ghosts." Grades 7-10. --Gillian Engberg --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Great plot twists, just an amazing happy and sad story. I highly recommend this book to everyone. This was great

This book is one of those books that catches you out! You believe this and that and then the truth comes out in a different ray of light.Hope.

I loved this book it is so interesting but it is so sad. I would recommend this book to people how like love story's.

There was a woman picking peaches in her father's orchard when a train derailed. This woman, Gloria, heard a woman's cries coming from inside a train. The woman was French and told Gloria to take her baby Blaise Fortune and gave Gloria their passports. Gloria has raised Blaise as her own, and has given him a proper name of Koumaïf'Ä I. When Koumaïf'Ä I turns seven the Caucasus becomes a war filled place and Gloria decides they must flee west to Europe. The traveling spans across five years, with stays here and there. The whole time Koumaïf'Ä I asks Gloria to repeat the story of how he came to be with her, as if her words would help him figure out who he is. This was a very fascinating read. Historical Fiction that pulls at your heartstrings.

Koumaïf'Ä I is a young boy and when him and Gloria must flee he has to leave many things behind. As soon as he gets comfortable in one place they must again move on as the war follows at their heels. I really enjoyed following their journey across the continent. Koumaïf'Ä I was a very interesting character and it was fascinating to hear his account of the trip that he had to make. Seeing everything from a child's point of view makes the whole situation look a whole lot different than if an adult was telling it. A child's perspective though not any lesser of an observation, is often times more naive, a young child simply doesn't know what is going on, often because the adults are trying to shield them from it. This is certainly the case in this novel. Koumaïf'Ä I is much more worried about leaving his friends and hoping that Gloria is okay, than the war itself which they are fleeing. If you really enjoy a short Historical Fiction read make sure you check this one out, Anne-Laure Bondoux is quite a good author. First Lines: "My name is Blaise Fortune and I am a citizen of the French Republic. It's the pure and simple truth." Favorite Line: "Unfortunately, the best of times have to come to an end."

Koumail knows exactly who he is: Blaise Fortune, indisputable and abandoned-through-a-train-accident French boy. Even as the seven-year-old flees the collapsing Soviet Union with Gloria, his beloved mother figure, Koumail knows that there will always be a safe haven for the faux mother-son duo in France. It turns out to be a journey fraught with hard work and starvation, doubt and heartbreak. Through it all, Koumail merely has to recite one sentence - just one - to make sure he still has the strength to continue. "My name is Blaise Fortune and I am a citizen of the French Republic." It's the pure and simple truth. Or is it? Wow, A TIME OF MIRACLES

is a little 200+ page novel that packs quite a punch. Translated from French, this story is told as an extended flashback laced with intricate details and told in flowing prose. Originally, the synopsis failed to impress me, and I started this book with a feeling of dread, often reminding myself of the fact that I could simply write a scathing review to vent my feelings afterward. Well, I apologize profusely to this book. To put it simply: I was blown away. This is just a simple story of a boy and a woman, escaping oppression and searching for freedom. And yet it was also emotional and gripping all at once. Ms. Bondoux definitely succeeded in drawing out this reader's sympathy for the two characters. And Koumail, oh Koumail - funny, sweet, and fiercely protective of Gloria. It isn't possible for someone to not like this little boy. He entertains with his antics, his blind faith, and the three true loves he meets on their short journey. Even while Koumail's begging in front of a random restaurant in the icy coldness, he's still alight with hope. A TIME OF MIRACLES is a surprisingly moving historical novel. It is one of those books you close with a quiet sigh. Reviewed by: Cinnamon

Over all I felt the book was really good. The author made each chapter interesting so you wanted to keep reading it. I was really surprised of how the book ended. It was a major turn of events for me. When I made assumptions about the book, I most of the time was wrong, because she would have the last thing that you thought of be what actually happened in the book. I also really enjoy a book when the author puts a little bit of who they are into the books they write; I can confidently say that she did that. This book is so good, and I recommend it to everyone.

This was a really interesting book. I wasn't really aware of what life in the Caucasus was like in the 1980's and '90's, and when I read about it, it seemed like something from the past, and made me realize I sometimes take life in the US, away from war, for granted. Though I kind of predicted the ending, as the main character also suspected, I still thoroughly enjoyed this book. It was really well-written and really gives you a heart for refugees from all places.

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