



On Two Feet and Wings

Abbas Kazerooni

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This is an updated cover edition of B008N4HWTC.

This amazing true story of a boy fleeing Tehran on his own during the Iran-Iraq War provides a powerful child's-eye view of political tumult, separation, survival, dreams and triumphs in a moving memoir that chronicles extraordinary times in an ordinary boy's life.

Close to his tenth birthday, Abbas has to leave his parents and friends to escape Tehran. The Iran-Iraq War is at its bloodiest. The ayatollahs, the rulers of Iran, have reduced the age of recruitment into the army. If Abbas doesn't leave soon, he will have to go to war.

In the strange and often frightening city of Istanbul, Abbas has to grow up fast. Living alone for twelve weeks in a rundown hotel, he has to learn to live by his wits, and watch his back. Will he ever get his dream visa to England?

On Two Feet and Wings Details

Date : Published September 2014 by Allen & Unwin (first published November 1st 2005)

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Author : Abbas Kazerooni

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Genre : Nonfiction, Autobiography, Memoir, Audiobook, Biography, Adventure, Survival, Biography
Memoir, Childrens, Middle Grade, Cultural, Iran, History

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From Reader Review On Two Feet and Wings for online ebook

Silanur says

I had won this in a giveaway like a year and a half ago, but I never got around to reading it until this year for a summer assignment. I'm not really super interested in historical fiction, and there were somethings I weren't crazy about, but all in all this was a good read. :)

B.A. Wilson says

This is an interesting true story about a 9-year old who fled from Tehran during the Iran-Iraq war. The writing isn't brilliant, but the story has its own kind of value.

Book 217 read in 2018

Pages: 256

Lora Desrosier says

This was such a touching account of human desperation & courage! This dear, sweet, courageous child, and his parents who blindly sent him off... I was moved to tears, yet so inspired by the honesty & bravery of this beautiful little soul! Thank you for sharing your story, Mr. Kazerooni, and for telling it so beautifully.

Peggy Tibbetts says

Abbas Kazerooni is only 9 years old when he is forced to flee his home and family in Iran to avoid being drafted into the military as a child soldier. Alone, he boards a plane for Istanbul, Turkey, where a family friend is supposed to meet him and help him obtain a passport so he can travel to Great Britain to live with his cousin. But the "friend" cruelly abandons him at the airport and he is forced to make his own way in a foreign land. Armed with a list of Iranian-friendly hotels, detailed instructions from his father, and a wad of American dollars, he manages to navigate the maze of language barriers and red tape to gain access to the British Consulate. Any adult under the same circumstances would be intimidated and terrified and Abbas most definitely has his moments of anxiety and fear. Yet somehow he is able to tap into an inner strength and intellect he never knew he possessed. From the hotel owner to shopkeepers to fellow Iranians to the grim agent at the Consulate, everyone he meets is shocked at such a young boy alone without his parents. But at the same time they are impressed with his grit and resourcefulness because Abbas doesn't merely survive, he thrives with such panache that people are instantly drawn to him and want to help him. "On Two Feet and Wings" is the compelling true story of a young boy's journey to freedom and manhood.

Piyali says

An incredible story of courage, resilience and sacrifice. Abbas Kazerooni is 9 years old when his parents send him to Istanbul to avoid recruitment in the Iranian army. Iran is ruled by Ayatollah Khomeini and Abbas's father, a Shah supporter, has fallen out of favor. The only chance Abbas has to succeed in life and escape from forced recruitment is a visa to UK. 9 years old and alone, Abbas Kazerooni has to navigate Istanbul and British bureaucracy to seek a brighter and different future.

Sue Holmes says

This was a captivating story, but the extent of the nine-year old's recall is so likely that I found this undermined my enjoyment of the book.

Marj says

Abbas leaves his family when he is 9 years old to escape being drafted into the army. He's alone on the streets of Istanbul, trying to survive. His journey is aided by the kindness of strangers and his innate uncanny sense of who is trustworthy and who is not.

On Two Feet and Wings is the author's autobiography. It's highly accessible, harrowing enough but not too graphic, making it highly suitable for upper primary - lower secondary students. In the most graphic scenes, Abbas is beaten up, has a knife held to his throat and fears for his life. But what shines through is not the danger or the destitution, but Abbas' strength of character and his will to survive. The author's tone is never condescending, never preaching, but the story holds many lessons for today's young readers.

This story forms a wonderful adjunct to recent titles dealing with displacement, such as "In the Sea There are Crocodiles" by Fabio Geda, "No Safe Place" by Deborah Ellis and "Mountain Wolf" by Rosanne Hawke (in my view, the latter two books are suitable only for teens and above).

Dotty says

Could I give this 8 stars and 4 tissues?!!! I had to keep reminding myself that this book is a memoir. First, the writing, the story, the emotions, the people were compellingly communicated. What courage on the part of the writer and I would love to hear more of his life story.

BOOK TALK: You are nine years old (fourth grade). They are drafting nine year olds into the army. Your parents want to save you from military service so they put you on a plane to another country with most of their money, in hopes of keeping you safe. You will have to navigate a strange country where you don't speak the language and you know no one. This is not science fiction. It's not historical fiction. It's the true story of an Iranian boy fleeing Tehran for Istanbul, hoping to make it to England.

Anna Davidson says

I couldn't put this book down. What an incredibly resilient young person Abbas was! Can't wait to read the second book.

Tiffany Wacaser says

As a 9-year old, Abbas Kazerooni, is sent from Iran to Turkey to try and obtain a visa to move to Britain. Staying in Iran is dangerous, with children being drafted into the war. Abbas' parents literally sacrifice everything they have to get Abbas to Turkey. From there, he has to rely on his own ingenuity and the kindness of strangers to get his visa.

I was on the edge of my seat the entire time I read this memoir. I couldn't help but think of my own daughter, who is about to turn 10 and how I doubt she would have the skills to survive on her own in a foreign country.

What astounds me is how much courage and cleverness Abbas demonstrates. His story continued on with more challenges that were not related in this book, but he seems to look back on his past with gratitude and strength rather than bitterness and despair.

I think everyone should read this book, particularly in light of the staggering refugee crisis that is happening right now. I hope that by reading this book, people will walk away feeling more compassion and understanding for the desperate measures refugees go to escape horrific violence, war, and unbelievable danger.

Sandy says

Free from Audio Book Sync Summer 2018

Carol says

10 word summary: With savvy courage, Abbas conquers challenges no child should face.
#Iwanttohughim #hispoormother #kindnessofstrangers

????? If you don't rave about this book, I shall to look at you with concern and suspicion.

Chinook says

This is an important story to tell, a child trying to escape a bad situation in his home country and stuck in Turkey by himself trying to get a visa to the UK. Unfortunately it's not terribly well written - I think it would

go better with the target audience, because the sentences are short and simple. It was hard to feel like I was in Abbas's shoes because it doesn't examine his emotions except in very basic ways.

Sofia says

A masterpiece. One of the books that made me think all the time how grateful I am I know how to read and literature exists.

Robyn says

Wow, can one little boy have all the luck?

First Line:

It was a typical spring day in Tehran - hot, dusty, nothing special - when my life turned upside down, p.1.

In order to escape an encroaching war, that began recruiting children to fight, Abbas Kazerooni was sent, alone to Turkey by his parents. From there, Abbas had to quickly learn how to find lodging, exchange money, navigate the British consulate, all while trying not to get kidnapped, mugged, or killed. On top of all that, he was nine years old.

What Dazzled: I feel like the story itself is quite dazzling. A nine year old in the US school system is probably in the third grade. I never taught third grade, but I did teach 4th grade. I would be dazzled by any one of my students having the critical thinking and analytical skills of Kazerooni at the same age.

What Fizzled: The writing style felt like a narrated timeline. *I did this, and then I said this, and then this happened, and then I did this.* Looking at the 4.19 average starred review, this writing style probably won't bother you. It's probably just me. Maybe this won't bother anyone else either, but the way women were treated by men was frustrating. Particularly because it's only vaguely and poorly addressed by the author (is there ever a good reason for this behavior? No). For example, Kazerooni's mother was denied many times, by her husband, to speak to her son on the phone. According to the father, it would just upset her. *eyeroll. Another moment takes place in the hotel bar, where a woman gently speaks with Kazerooni only to her male companion yelled at her to stop bothering the boy.

Jots and Thoughts: If you're looking for a refugee experience that inspires hope, kindness, and resilience I recommend *How Dare the Sun Rise: Memoirs of a War Child* by Sandra Uwiringiyimana who was ten when her refugee camp was attacked by gunmen. Lastly, I'll leave you with a line from a beloved song that came to my mind after reading the first line of *On Two Feet with Wings*.

"...and I'd like to a minute / just sit right there / I'll tell you how I become the prince of a town called Bel-Air" - DJ Jazzy Jeff & The Fresh Prince Lyrics
