



2018

A Game for Swallows: To Die, to leave, to return

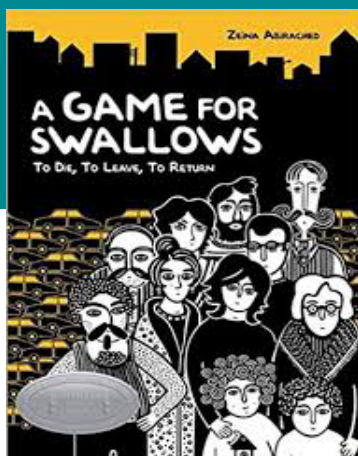
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Book Review

A Game for Swallows: To Die, to leave, to return

Author

Zeina Abirached

Illustrator

Reviewer

Jared Leighton

Rating

Excellent

Level

Primary

Pages

192

Year

2007

Publisher

Graphic Universe

ISBN

9780761385684

Zeina is an energetic young girl caught, quite literally, in the firing line of the Lebanese Civil war. Zeina's home city of Beirut is partitioned into two parts, the West side being Muslim and the East side being Christian. Crossing into either side follows a deadly risk of sniper fire. One day, Zeina's parents take longer than usual to come home. Zeina grows very worried. To cheer Zeina up, her Grandmother tells of different stories of the family, neighbors, and friends. The reader is taken on a journey of life in Lebanon along with its culture and everyday activities. After a terrifying bomb raid, Zeina's parents return home safely the next morning.

Abirached retains the darkness of war through her black and white imagery while still providing the vibrance of her culture that can't be destroyed by shells or snipers. She spares blood and violence for an intimate look into her life under bombing raids. The artwork is unique and leaves the reader appreciating individual characters and events. The way that Abirached shows her story is too good for children not to read about her life growing up. This book is recommended for sixth graders learning about conflicts in the Middle East. Interpreting the artwork would be a fantastic way to help children understand the reality of war for other children not as fortunate as them.

*Contains mild violence