



The Last Girl: My Story of Captivity, and My Fight Against the Islamic State

Nadia Murad

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New York Times Editors' Choice

In this intimate memoir of survival, a former captive of the Islamic State tells her harrowing and ultimately inspiring story.

Nadia Murad was born and raised in Kocho, a small village of farmers and shepherds in northern Iraq. A member of the Yazidi community, she and her brothers and sisters lived a quiet life. Nadia had dreams of becoming a history teacher or opening her own beauty salon.

On August 15th, 2014, when Nadia was just twenty-one years old, this life ended. Islamic State militants massacred the people of her village, executing men who refused to convert to Islam and women too old to become sex slaves. Six of Nadia's brothers were killed, and her mother soon after, their bodies swept into mass graves. Nadia was taken to Mosul and forced, along with thousands of other Yazidi girls, into the ISIS slave trade.

Nadia would be held captive by several militants and repeatedly raped and beaten. Finally, she managed a narrow escape through the streets of Mosul, finding shelter in the home of a Sunni Muslim family whose eldest son risked his life to smuggle her to safety.

Today, Nadia's story—as a witness to the Islamic State's brutality, a survivor of rape, a refugee, a Yazidi—has forced the world to pay attention to the ongoing genocide in Iraq. It is a call to action, a testament to the human will to survive, and a love letter to a lost country, a fragile community, and a family torn apart by war.

The Last Girl: My Story of Captivity, and My Fight Against the Islamic State Details

Date : Published November 7th 2017 by Tim Duggan Books (first published October 31st 2017)

ISBN :

Author : Nadia Murad

Format : Kindle Edition 329 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Autobiography, Memoir, History, Biography, War

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From Reader Review The Last Girl: My Story of Captivity, and My Fight Against the Islamic State for online ebook

Jeanette says

She is a good writer. And she has a thorough and horrific story to tell.

I find it endlessly ironic that there are so many books written and discussed about past genocides of 50, 70, 80 years ago- and so little for the ones of the recent past or the exact present. Like this record by Nadia of the Yazidi, her people and what ISIS has done to them.

And that refugees from situations like this one (or like the ones against the Kurds) or against Christians in Egypt and other locations Mideast, or Syrian minorities are treated as "like" and "alike" to those masses of refugees who merely are transporting for economic and other personal choice reasons. Because it is quite different. And why don't the countries (like Saudi Arabia) which have immense wealth and all kinds of uninhabited structures- allow them shelter until their lands are freed from the insane dictates? Mosul has been already.

But that's the state of the larger world now. Only there to save the instantly condemned and annihilated to hastily dug mass graves after the fact (mostly way after the fact) with crocodile tears of empathy. Always much later in measure of decades with lots of pretty fiction words surrounding the reality of their cultural ordeals.

The photographs in this one are 5 star- so brave for the survivors to expose themselves in such a manner. Not all will do that.

This Nadia tells it like it is. And felt. I can't imagine that the mental was any less torturous than the physical was. For all those girls, but for their entire extended families who didn't survive, as well. Can you imagine how Nadia's mother felt in her last hours!

Mikey B. says

This is a most powerful narrative of a young Yazidi woman in Iraq whose family was forced out of their home by ISIS. Her brothers were murdered in a ditch. The younger women were forced into sexual slavery – older women, like her mother, were killed.

So as can be imagined this is a very visceral and sad book. But the writing is straight-forward, succinct, and beautiful. The reader is taken into Nadia's family, her home, and then her forlorn tragedy. At the end we get a better understanding of what it is like to be a survivor – and guilt when family, relatives, and friends do not make it. She has a rage and hate of ISIS, and also of the individual men who used their power to sexually subjugate her. Some of these men were "upstanding" members of the religious community who occupied nice homes that they took over from those who were forced to leave – and then brought in their sex slaves.

This book did remind me of Holocaust books that I have read in the past. Groups are selected for extermination by a very organized and armed group of people who believe that they are pre-ordained by their beliefs (Nazis, ISIS, Hutus...) to rid their world of inferiors. Genocides keep happening again and again – in

our lifetime Rwanda, Cambodia, the former Yugoslavia – and now ISIS. It is also remarkable to me how religious fanatics use and believe their ancient texts to persuade “their people” to round-up and kill. They refer to ancient texts that justify misogyny, slavery, and other abhorrent practices.

Nadia was helped and rescued by Sunni Muslims who were not in ISIS. They came to her aid because of a shared view of a helpful and benevolent humanity. They felt and knew that Nadia’s abduction and sexual slavery was wrong.

Nadia has given us an impassioned story. We see first-hand what ISIS is doing in Iraq. Her life is now scarred, but we also feel her resiliency. She has become a major spokesperson for the human rights of the Yazidi people, in fact all those who have been oppressed and enslaved by ISIS. This personal history is heart-rending. The Yazidi people, who are neither Muslim or Christian, were marked for death in a part of the world undergoing vicious upheavals.

Trena says

This book did a great job educating me in things I had no knowledge of. I had no idea how divided the entire country of Iraq is and how the Yazidi people in particular have been murdered, abducted, sold and abused. The Islamic State is trying to completely erase their culture and religion.

Nadia writes very comprehensively about Yazidi way of life, her family, her village of Kocho, the geography of Iraq, the Kurds and the different peshmerga, and of course the story of being held captive by Islamic State Militants and her escape from it.

I am constantly appalled at the viscous disregard for human life that some humans can exhibit. I'm always heartbroken at stories of women being treated as invisible property. The injustice of it all is overwhelming. I can see that Nadia poured her heart into writing this book as honest and clear as she could so that others can understand what she and her people have been fighting.

Zoe's Human says

You should read this book. Not because you'll enjoy it, it's not a book meant for enjoying. In fact, parts of it, you most certainly will not enjoy. You will be upset. You will be horrified. You may need to take a minute to emotionally recoup.

But this is important, y'all. It's important because, in places like where I live, we tend to act as though genocide and slavery are things of the past. We blithely go through life as though those sorts of atrocities are part of a distant and shameful past not the harsh reality of people alive today. It's important because, here in America, a lot of folks perceive Iraq as being ISIS, as being the enemy, as being a country of terrorists. We fail to understand that many Iraqis are victims trapped by and subjected to the cruelty of ISIS, living daily in fear for their lives and their families lives. It's important because Ms. Murad is willing to bare herself before

all of us, to relive her personal nightmare again and again, in the hope that we will act to give her and her people justice.

We're fortunate here. We have a voice. We have the ability to speak up and out to our leadership. Please read this. Please speak up about it. Please do what you can to aid the Yazidi. You can take a look at the Yazda website for more information: <https://www.yazda.org/about-us/>. (Many thanks to Jaidee for introducing me to this website.)

I received a complimentary copy of this book via a Goodreads giveaway. Many thanks to all involved in providing me with this opportunity.

Anne Goldschrift says

Bitte lest dieses Buch! Es ist so wichtig, den Opfern des IS nicht nur eine Stimme zu geben, sondern ihnen auch zuzuhören. Das Buch ist wirklich schrecklich und grausam, aber so so bedeutsam und lehrreich.

Petra X says

This is a 10-star book definitely - review to come. I wanted to share this about illegal immigrants into Europe pretending to be refugees when they are really economic migrants. I didn't realise the system was so simple from the illegal immigrant side and how easily duped the European Immigration services were. There is no thought whatsoever to try to emigrate legally, it doesn't even occur to them apparently.

"Other than Jilan [*the girl he loved*], he felt like there was nothing for him at home, and since he couldn't have her, he didn't see the point of staying. When a few other men in the village decided they would try to make their way to Germany, where a small number of Yazidis already lived, Hezni decided to join them. We all cried while he packed his bag. I felt terrible about him leaving; I couldn't imagine home without any of my brothers.

Before he left, Hezni invited Jilan to a wedding outside Kocho, where they could talk without the locals whispering. She arrived and separated herself from the crowd, finding him. He still remembers that she wore white. "I'll be back in two or three years," he told her. "We'll have enough money to start a life." Then, a few days before we were to start one of our two yearly fasts, Hezni and the other men left Kocho.

First, they crossed the northern Iraqi border on foot into Turkey, where they slowly made their way to Istanbul. Once there, they paid a smuggler to take them in the back of a tractor trailer into Greece. The smuggler told them to tell the border guards that they were Palestinian. "If they know you're Iraqi, they will arrest you," he said, and then he closed the doors to the truck and drove across the border."

Easy eh?

I don't understand how ISIS can use Yazidi women they capture as sex slaves when although their ISIS interpretation of the Q'uran says that unbeliever (kuffar) women can be used as such, but not Muslim ones, and they forcibly convert them first. If they are converted to Islam, how can they be called 'sabiya' (sex

slaves) and raped and sold by many men, sometimes repeatedly in a day?

ISIS idea of 'morality' stinks, not just this sex slave thing, but the Christian and Yazidi thing too. I cannot understand why anyone would support such a corrupt and murderous regime, especially women.

"After ISIS arrived, many Christians said that soon there would not be a single one of them left in all Iraq. When ISIS came to Kocho, though, I felt envy for the Christians. In their villages, they had been warned that ISIS was coming. Because, according to ISIS, they were "people of the book" and not kuffar like us, they had been able to take their children, their daughters, to safety in Kurdistan, and, in Syria, some had been able to pay a fine rather than convert. Even those who had been expelled from Mosul without anything at least had been spared enslavement. Yazidis had not been given the same chance."

Janel says

Thanks for the free book, @CrownPublishing; it's my pleasure to be a part of your monthly book send programme and provide honest reviews for the titles chosen

In Northern Iraq, there lies the small village of Kocho; a small community of mostly farmers and shepherds. The Yazidi community live a quiet and humbling life; the people may not have much but it's home. Until, the Islamic State militants invaded and tore this small city to pieces, and this small community realised no one was coming to help them.

The Last Girl is both a harrowing and humbling read, and without a doubt, an important one. I can't even begin to imagine living in a warzone and I won't pretend to compare/like it to anything I've experienced in my life because, one – I can't, and two – the focus here needs to be on Nadia, on her story, and the millions of people with similar experiences as her and others who have been affected by this conflict. No, conflict is too weak a word, the United Nations has recognised it as a genocide and I will too because we cannot shy away from what is happening in the world we live in.

I won't recount Nadia's experiences one by one, you can read them for yourself, but I will say, read the blurb carefully before you pick this book up because it contains things that may be triggers for people and some parts make for "heavy" reading. In particular, there is one part of this book that will stay with me forever, it was so powerful, so devastating, and had such an impact on me. In said paragraph, Nadia talks about rape being used as a weapon of war, that when she was growing up, she had never heard of the country Rwanda, in Africa, but she is linked to the women there forever as they have both been victims of war crimes. I had to pause my read, and reflect back on what I had just read – this is not a fictional account, this is a true story and even now, writing this review, I can't put into words how reading that made me feel, let's just say, it physically hurt my heart.

What was amazing about this book was Nadia's will to survive, one thing that really stood out for me was when Nadia spoke about the perpetrators of these war crimes, she spoke of seeing them put on trial, losing their power and freedom as a consequence of what they had done. Now, doesn't that embody humanity, I don't know about you, but I wouldn't blame anyone who wanted these men to suffer as Nadia and these women have suffered.

This is more than a book of atrocities, I learned about the culture, religion and community spirit of the Yazidi people. I read about people from other communities helping these woman by 'smuggling' slaves to safety,

about people gaining hope after all hope was lost. I will end this review by quoting the last section of the blurb because I think it is the perfect description of this book and I urge you all to read it.

“Today, Nadia’s story—as a witness to the Islamic State’s brutality, a survivor of rape, a refugee, a Yazidi—has forced the world to pay attention to the ongoing genocide in Iraq. It is a call to action, a testament to the human will to survive, and a love letter to a lost country, a fragile community, and a family torn apart by war.”

aPriL does feral sometimes says

‘The Last Girl’ is a well-written testimony as well as an autobiography. Nadia Murad is someone to be admired and praised for her courage and intelligence. What she endured, survived and overcame is almost more than one can bear to read. However, if any understanding of her ordeal and justice for her is to be obtained, we all must open our eyes and hearts and make the effort to take in her story. It is the only way we can give Murad the honor and love she deserves.

The publisher’s description is spot on (surprise!), so instead of my usual confused and outside-the-box ramble, I am including the publisher's ad copy:

"Nadia Murad was born and raised in Kocho, a small village of farmers and shepherds in Iraq. A member of the Yazidi community, she and her eleven brothers and sisters lived a quiet life. Nadia was in high school and had dreams of becoming a history teacher and opening her own beauty salon.

On August 15th, 2014, when Nadia was just twenty-one years old, this life ended. ISIS militants massacred the people of her village, executing men old enough to fight and women too old to become sex slaves. Six of Nadia's brothers were killed, and her mother soon after, their bodies swept into mass graves. Nadia and her two sisters were taken to Mosul, where they joined thousands of Yazidi girls in the ISIS slave trade.

Nadia would be sold three times, raped, beaten, and forced to convert to Islam in order to marry one of her captors. Finally, she managed a narrow escape through the streets of Mosul, finding shelter in the home of a Sunni Muslim family whose eldest son risked his life to smuggle her to the safety of a refugee camp. There, surrounded by bereaved and broken Yazidi families, Nadia decided to devote her life to bringing ISIS to justice.

As a farm girl in rural Iraq, Nadia could not have imagined she would one day address the United Nations or be nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. She had never been to Baghdad, or even seen an airplane. As a slave, she was told by her captors that Yazidis would be erased from the face of the earth, and there were times when she believed them.

Today, Nadia's story--as a witness to ISIS, a survivor of rape, a refugee, a Yazidi--has forced the world to pay attention to the ongoing genocide in Iraq. It is a call to action, a testament to the human will to survive, and a love letter to a lost country, a fragile community, and a family torn apart by war."

I recommend reading this book. Gentle reader, please please please pay attention. Politics threatens to drown out this important story. Do not let that happen. Get this book and talk about it. Those supporting the #metoo campaign in particular need to read 'The Last Girl'.

Quote from page 306:

"More than anything else, I said, I want to be the last girl in the world with a story like mine."

Assisting Murad in telling her story is Jenna Krajeski, a journalist. She is a 2016 Knight-Wallace Fellow at the University of Michigan.

Video of Nadia Murad's return to her destroyed village:

<https://youtu.be/JcPqUCJk1eA>

The stories of other Yazidi women:

<https://youtu.be/Te6HOtiBcf8>

<https://youtu.be/rC7u2QMmfXg>

Dave says

Powerful, poignant, guaranteed to bring tears to your eyes no matter how tough you think you are, and surprisingly well-written. The Last Girl is an extraordinary first-hand account of a brutal genocide of a small religious minority who had no one to protect them from the barbaric horrors of the Islamic State which grew in power and territory for several long years while moral leadership was absent in this world and this cancer grew unabated.

The story - and sadly it is not a story - begins with the Yazidis, a small religious and ethnic group in Western Iraq who lived in small villages in the shadow of Mount Sinjar. Persecuted by Saddam for years, they had hope when Iraq was liberated only to see it fall into chaos several years later. When Isis grew, no one stepped in to protect them and, even their neighbors turned on them, viciously. When Isis finally attacked, thousands fled on foot to the mountain where the terrain was so rough not even food could successfully be airdropped. Those who didn't flee were surrounded and either killed in mass graves or enslaved in slave markets and sold and traded again and again.

And, meanwhile, the entire civilized world could not muster the courage to do something about this evil.

It is a very personal tale of a survivor who lost all hope and journeyed through hell, escaping wounded in spirit, her family broken, and little to back to. You might think the world would become more civilized with each passing year, but barbarism, cruelty, and viciousness still exists wherever it's allowed to spring up.

Jim says

Well, I won't put this in the military non-fiction category because Daesh are a murdering bag of bastards, only good for killing unarmed opposition, and the Yazidi didn't put up a fight. I'd call this situation a comedy of errors but there is really nothing funny about this tragic situation. It's a disaster that everyone contributed to, all the way down the line. Ms Murad starts her book with a little family background and fills us in a bit on Yazidism, a religion of which I was previously ignorant and now I find I am merely mystified (they pray to a peacock angel). Yazidism has no book and is passed on by word of mouth, but it has one great advantage over other religions: they don't want you. You cannot convert to Yazidism, apparently, so they don't want you. No evangelism. They are perfectly happy to live in harmony with their neighbours and produce children to help in the field but now we have too many mouths to feed so we need to grow more so we need more children to work the field...you get the picture.

Anyway, the head wizards over at the ISIS think tank decide that, since the Yazidi have no holy book, they are fair game for killing, raping, basically anything you want to do to them, so they surround the village with what amounts to lightly motorized infantry. This is where it could have got interesting, because the Yazidi are armed. It seems every Yazidi household has at least one firearm and they love to shoot them, just like every other place in the Middle East. I've heard them; they shoot at funerals, they shoot at weddings, they shoot when their soccer team wins a game. Totally ignorant of the laws of gravity, they shoot all the time. So what do the fierce Yazidi do with this armament? Some of it they turn over to ISIS, and the rest they bury! Then, in a scene eerily reminiscent of that other holocaust, they take their belongings to a collection point for selection. Women of ravishing age are put on transport. Any boy with armpit hair is sent off with the men to be machinegunned.

This is where Nadia's story begins, really. Obviously she survives, because she is pictured on the cover, but I won't tell you more than that. You will have to read it yourself, and really, you should read it. I wish the liberal fancy-boy Prime Minister of my country would read it, because maybe then he wouldn't be letting ISIS fighters back into Canada instead of putting a bounty on them like he should.

This book made me mad! At the United Nations for imposing sanctions that hurt only the people at the bottom of societal strata. At the USA for destabilising the region and then taking off at the high port, leaving weapons to the Iraqis which were then dropped and picked up by Daesh (Murad says ISIS had American weapons). I was angry at the Yazidi polygamous ways that enabled her father to take another wife to produce more kids and then house his first wife in a shed. And let's not forget a system that makes it practically impossible for a poor woman to get birth control. Or the other Muslim people who, while they maybe didn't exactly condone Daesh, didn't speak out against them. And I was especially angry at the Yazidi men who, having weapons, did not use them on those murdering black-clad monsters who had them surrounded. They might not be less dead, but they would have died fighting. They made it easy.

People in the Middle East, in general, have a tendency to be theatrically dramatic while we in the west tend to prefer a type of stoic approach to hardship. This is the only problem I had with the book: Murad seems to be either screaming, fainting or puking on every other page. Even considering that some very painful and wicked things were happening to her, it seemed a bit over the top. It certainly didn't ruin the book, which I endorse whole-heartedly.

Maria Sol says

Terrible, terrible, terrible...

Tal vez para nosotros tan alejados, cultural y espacialmente, todo esto nos resulte increíble, mas una ficción que la realidad, sin embargo y lamentablemente para muchas personas esta es su terrible realidad. Es indignante, es indescriptible y genera tanta violencia mientras lo estas leyendo, que se hace necesario que nos paremos a pensar para no terminar siendo (aunque sea con el pensamiento) parecido a eso que nos esta causando tanto asco y horror. Todo lo que se cuenta en este libro es terrible.

Admiro a estas mujeres, niñas, adolescente, niños y hombres que pasaron por semejante violación a todos los derechos que puedan existir y sobrevivieron para seguir luchando y plantándole cara a todo el dolor generado.

Mientras leía pensaba que uno cree que nunca mas estas atrocidades se van a repetir pero de una forma u otra vuelven y vuelven y siguen presente en una época que se supone evolucionada, como siempre estos grupos llenos de....no se como llamarlos porque no merecen el termino seres humanos, personas.... estas basuras, intentan oprimir y suprimir pueblos y someterlos a sus deseos, despojándolos de educación, comunicación, religión, familia y por último de la sensación de ser alguien, es devastador, por eso vuelvo a repetir mi admiración especialmente a todas estas mujeres que siguen luchando y no se dan por vencidas.

Un libro muy duro pero creo que es necesario para acercarnos, informarnos y conocer aquellas realidades que realmente existen mas allá de las propias.

Nora|KnyguDama says

Skaityti tikras istorijas, sukre?ian?ias gyvenimiškas patirtis - nuostabu. Nuostabu, o kartu ir skaudu. Ypa? kai tos istorijos n?ra apie laim?, s?km? ar meil?. Kai tos istorijos pasakoja apie ne?manom? skausm?, pažeminim?, baim?. Esu tikrai jautri, ir skaitydama kiekvienoje knygoje palieku dalel? sav?s, o knyga, savo ruožtu, apsigyvena manyje. Jau Knyg? mug?je gavau "Paskutin? mergin?", iškart ?iupau j? skaityti. Perskai?iau greitai, ta?iau apžvalgos s?du rašyti tik šiandien. Kaip ir neseniai skelbta "Pragaro virtuv?s vaik?z?" apžvalga - kai kurios knygos tiesiog reikalauja laiko. Turi "susigul?ti", kad parink?iau tinkamus žodžius nepasiduodama grauduliui.

Ko?o - mažas jazid? kaimelis, esantis šiaur?s Irake. Kurd? religij? jazidizm? išpaž?stantys jazidai turi savit? pasaulio suvokim?. Tai klajokliai, piemenys tikintys, kad pasaul? suk?r? Dievas, ta?iau dabar j? valdo septyni angelai. Šie žmon?s labai religingi ir atsidav? savo tik?jimui, papro?iams ir tradicijoms. Ne vienus metus jazidai buvo d?l to persekiojami ir engiami. B?tent Ko?o kaimelyje ir gyveno Nadia Murad, apie kurios istorij? ir kalb?sime. Nadia - eilin? mergina tur?jusi? mergaitišk?, naivi? svajoni?, be galo myl?jusi savo brolius bei atsidavusi? mam?. Nadia svajojo tapti vizažiste - kaup? makiaž? nuotraukas, plakatus, kartu su drauge puošdavo Ko?o nuotakas ir troško tur?ti savo grožio salon?. Ta?iau visos svajon?s dužo, kuomet ? Ko?o ?siveržia "Islamo valstyb?". Ne?tik?tinai žiauri? žudik? ir kankintoj? armija. Jie užima kaimel? ir moter? akivaizdoje nužudo visus iki vieno vyrus. Nadia ir jos motina savo akimis priverstos ži?r?ti, kaip j? brolius, s?nus nuspiria nuo uolos ir sušaudo. Atrodo jau vien šis vaizdas ir išgyvenimas vienam žmogui yra per daug, ta?iau Nadios kan?ios dar tik prasid?jo. Visas Ko?o merginas ir moteris ISIS išsiveža. Ilg? laik? jos keliauja autobusu nežinodamos kur, o pro šon? vaikštantys kareiviai nepadoriai visas lie?ia ir šaiposi. Be maisto, vandens, ilgos kelion?s išsekintos merginos parduodamas "vergi? turguje" ir tampa ISIS sekso verg?mis. Nekaltos, tyros ir tikin?ios merginos - didžiausia pramoga iškryp?liams. Jie ty?iojasi iš j? tik?jimo,

vadina "purvinomis" ir be atvangos prievartauja. Taip Nadia ?jo "iš rank? ? rankas", buvo mušama, kankinama, marinama badu. Ta?iau rado savyje stipryb?s ir padar? ne?manoma - pab?go, tapo Nobelio taikos premijos nominante ir iki šiandien dalijasi savo sukre?ian?ia istorija.

Knygos ?žang? paraš? kone garsiausia žmogaus teisi? advokat? Amal Clooney, kuri dirba kartu su Nadia ir padeda jai kovoti. Jau vien perskai?ius tikrai puikiai parašyt? ?žang? gaudinausi. Skaitydama nuolat naršiau internete, ieškojau daugiau interviu, nuotrauk?, vieš? kalb?, kurios dar labiau pad?jo ?sis?moninti Irako tragedij?. Buvo labai sunku suvokti, jog tiek išbandym? teko vienam žmogui. O baisiausia, kad tai tik viena istorija iš begal?s... Tai k? patyr? Nadia, mano galva, nesugeb?t? net penki žmon?s išverti, o ši mergina atleik? visas jai mestas gyvenimo tagedijas ir iki šiandien be baim?s priešinasi savo skriaud?jams galingu ginklu - viešu žodžiu. Šalia savo istorijos mergina su didele meile kalba apie gimtin? Ko?o. Pasakoja apie gražius papro?ius, tradicijas, kult?r?. Nors knyga yra apie neteisyb? ir skausm?, joje yra ir daug šviesos, Nados skleidžiamo poži?rio ? gyvenim?. Ir Nadia kalba ne tik apie save. Ji pasakoja apie vis? kaim?, net vis? Irak? ištikusias b?das. Apie didžiul? susiskaldym?, bej?giškum? priešintis, kaustan?i? baim?, kuri? kiekvien? dien? patiria šimtai t?kstan?i? nekalt? žmoni?. Kai skai?iau ši? knyg?, kažkur tinklaraštyje kažkas pakomentavo "nu kam tokias knygas skaityti? kam tas negatyvas?". Ogi tam, kad žinotume ir, kad visi bais?s dalykai vykstantys pasaulyje neatrodyt? nereal?s. Kad žino?iau, jog jie visai šalia, kad išgyven?iau ir ašar? nubrauk?iau. Kad neatbuk?iau, o su kiekviena nauja pasaul? ištikusia b?da man vis labiau r?p?t?. Kad nuolat suk?iau galv?, kaip galima tai pakeisti ar bent palengvinti. Taip, man labai skaudu ir li?dna skaityti tokia knygas, ži?r?ti filmus ar klausytis žini?. Bet b?t? dar li?dniau, jei visa tai žinodama išvis nieko nejaus?iau.

"Paskutin? mergin?" rekomenduoju visiems m?gstantiems sukre?ian?ias autobiografijas, tikras istorijas, besidomiantiems n?dienos aktualijomis karo zonoje. Ir taip - tokias knygas skaityti reikia. Reikia žinoti, jausti ir galvoti.

Roxanne Russell says

This book will gut you. What were you doing in the fall of 2014 while ISIS killed and enslaved thousands of Yazidi people while their neighbors watched? What useless quibbles were we having on social media while allowing this to happen? What is our astronomical military budget for if not to stop gangs of men from killing and raping an entire population? In Iraq. On our watch. A book like this leaves me feeling complicit, powerless and pointless. But that's lazy. We can help Nadia Murad with her crusade to bring ISIS to justice: <http://www.nadiamurad.org/>. She wants to look her rapists in the face as they are prosecuted, and I want that for her. For all of us. But more than that I want a world where preventing this kind of violence, across the global, is our #1 priority. To educate people beyond the ability to dehumanize others.

Valerity (Val) says

This wasn't an easy read for many reasons. It took a while to get all of the players straight in my head. First of all, the author comes from a very large family, plus her father married a 2nd wife and had more children. Then, there's the complication of her growing up in Kocho, Iraq and being part of the Yazidi religion. In an area with several different main religions, languages, and cultures all trying to live side by side.

It was a lot to absorb, but the things that go on are so compelling and utterly soul-shaking that it is worth the time taken. This is a book about genocide and having your family torn apart by ISIS, and being taken

captive. Pure terror, and mind-numbing fear. Grief. This is an intense story, but I feel it's also an important one that needs badly to be told so that these people and their religion are not forgotten. Thanks for reading. A copy was provided by Blogging for Books for my review.

Jaidee says

4.5 "harrowing, dignified, unfathomable" stars !!

Nadia Murad's story is not unusual and in many parts of the world is quite common. Most of us here in the West and much of Europe are currently cocooned from the ATROCITIES that occur daily in our world. We complain about the price of hydro, extramarital affairs, ADHD treatments and poor service in the restaurant. In fact, in a funny way, this helps us survive and live life day to day. However, it does not help much of the world that is not only being oppressed but assaulted, tortured, killed, raped, maimed. Most of us have not experienced seeing most of our family shot dead, our homes purposefully burned, our bodies being violated frequently and violently. Being treated like a slave, dehumanized, mocked, our souls stomped on.

Nadia Murad was raised in a village in Northern Iraq near Mount Sinjar. She had a very poor but happy childhood with many siblings and half-siblings and a fierce and loving mother that did her best to provide for her children after her husband favored another wife and spent most of his attention and love on that family. Nadia is a Yazidi, a small nation of people that follow a faith that originated in the 12th century. For many centuries they have lived an uneasy peace with their Zoroastrian, Christian and Muslim neighbours. The Kurdish people have been mostly protective of them and in fact have tried to help them to a great degree by this recent genocide by the ISIS group that is fighting in Northern Iraq, Syria and Kurdistan.

Nadia Murad describes in the first part of the book what it means to be Yazidi. She describes the social structure, normative rules, the deep faith and living in harmony with the land and each other. Although a very patriarchal system, the women are treated with respect and love although holding much less power than the men. Nadia loves make-up, hair, her mother, her brothers. She is simple and caring but also fiery and protective. She is intensely likable and you want to teach her how to jump rope and laugh at her silly jokes.

Nadia Murad and her family lived in false hope that ISIS would leave their poor little village alone. They were not prepared for the extermination of all the men, the kidnapping of the boys trained to be human shields in the fundamentalist war. The girls and women are passed around and treated like sex slaves and assaulted physically, emotionally and sexually over and over and over again. Nadia Murad goes into detail about her time in captivity and her escape and finally into her life's work as a human rights activist and raising awareness of the recent genocide of the Yazidi people.

Nadia Murad survived but just barely. Most of her large family was killed, maimed or brainwashed. I am immensely impressed how Nadia Murad deeply knows her worth as a woman, as a human and as a devout Yazidi. She is able to express her feelings as they occur and feels no shame for her rage and does not feel heroic or martyrlike despite her horrendous suffering.

This is an incredibly difficult read even for me who for a number of years worked intensely with a small group of individuals who were victims of torture in a number of totalitarian regimes throughout the world.

We need to be more aware of not just of the Yazidis but other groups of people that are being tortured and annihilated throughout our world. I am loath to say this but we are the most destructive and cruel species in God's beautiful world.

Ms. Murad -thank you for sharing your pain, your narrative and letting the rest of the world know what is happening to your nation and faith.

For more information on the Yazidi situation please visit the organization Ms. Murad currently works for <https://www.yazda.org>
