



Finding Zasha

By Randi Barrow

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Randi Barrow is back with another gripping heroic World War II story about a boy and his best friend, a German shepherd!

In 1941, the Germans began the long, bloody siege on Leningrad. During the chaos, twelve-year-old Ivan is sent to live with relatives when his mother's job is moved to the mountains. But it is a long and dangerous journey to get out of Leningrad. After settling into a new town it falls under Nazi occupation and Ivan is picked by Axel Recht, an especially heinous soldier, to come work for the Nazis. One of Ivan's more pleasant tasks is to train Axel's dogs. Yet Ivan is determined to use his position to undermine the Nazis and rescue the dogs. But Ivan underestimates Axel's attachment to Zasha and Thor, and soon finds himself being hunted by a ruthless soldier who will stop at nothing to get his dogs back. As World War II rages around them, Ivan must find a way to hide from Axel, protect Zasha and Thor, avoid the constant barrage of deadly bombings, and survive in the devastating conditions of a city cut off from the world.

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Finding Zasha By Randi Barrow Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 5-8-In this prequel to *Saving Zasha* (Scholastic, 2011), 12-year-old Ivan must escape from Leningrad after the Nazi invasion and his mother's forced factory-work assignment. He travels with his wise and resourceful neighbor, Auntie, across a frozen lake in dangerously arctic temperatures to the mountains, but he is soon entrapped by Nazi soldiers and forced to live with villainous Major Axel Recht as a dog trainer. Ivan is aware that the brutal purpose of these trained bloodhounds is to track down escaping Russians. Working as a spy for the partisans, he is determined to run with the two puppies, Thor and Zasha, but underestimates Recht's cruel determination to retrieve both his prisoner and his dogs. Barrow creates a suspenseful, engaging boy-loves-dog story within the historical context of the Russian World War II landscape, amid the harrowing environment of daily bombings and a vicious enemy. A climactic fight scene will keep readers enthralled to the concluding cliff-hanger ending in which Ivan is left with Thor, wondering how his mother fared during the occupation and if he will ever see Zasha again.-Rita Soltan, Youth Services Consultant, West Bloomfield, MI(c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

From [Booklist](#)

Fleeing the German bombing of his Leningrad home in 1941, Ivan, 12, joins the partisans and finds himself digging tunnels and training in self-defense. Then he is captured, and the brutal Nazi commander Axel, so tender with his dog Zasha, tries to lure the boy to be a collaborator. Set before *Saving Zasha* (2011), the focus in this action-packed prequel is as much about the boy in wartime as it is about his relationship with the beautiful dog, but the detailed scenes of pet bonding and training may be what grab readers most. Grades 4-7. --Hazel Rochman

Review

Praise for *SAVING ZASHA*

"Barrow's novel is quick reading yet weighty, and captures the prejudices and aftereffects of war."
--PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

"Mikhail's first person account will grab readers with the physical details of training and protecting his beloved pet as well as the history of the devastating war and its aftermath." --BOOKLIST

"A highly engaging and ultimately hopeful animal story with a strong sense of time and place." --KIRKUS

"[T]his story captures the love of a boy for his dog and reflects the dark effects of war on both humans and animals..." --SCHOOL LIBRARY JOURNAL

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Allison Devore:

Do you have favorite book? In case you have, what is your favorite's book? Guide is very important thing for us to find out everything in the world. Each reserve has different aim or goal; it means that reserve has

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Jack McCurdy:

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Richard Osteen:

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