



Red Midnight

By Ben Mikaelson

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Red Midnight By Ben Mikaelson

When guerrilla soldiers strike Santiago's village, they shoot at everyone in their path. Dos Vías is on fire, and the night glows red. "Take the *cayuco* and sail to the United States of America. Now go!" Santiago's uncle Ramos tells him, and Santiago, twelve, and his four-year-old sister, Angelina, flee.

With a map, a machete, and very little food, Santiago and Angelina set sail in their uncle Ramos's sea kayak, built for just such an escape, but not for a sailor who is only a boy. Santiago heads for the United States on a voyage that will take them through narrow channels guarded by soldiers, shark, infested waters, and days of painful heat and raging storms. Santiago knows that he and Angelina probably will die trying to make the voyage, but they certainly will die at the hands of rebels or government soldiers if they do not try.

In this tale of courage, survival, and triumph, Ben Mikaelson introduces readers to a danger and fear that is far too real for many children, and he reminds us of the responsibility and power that the world's richest nation bears to help end it.

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Red Midnight By Ben Mikaelson Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 5-9-When soldiers burn his Guatemalan village and kill his family, 12-year-old Santiago escapes with his 4-year-old sister, Angelina. Following the instructions of his dying uncle, he makes his way to Lake Izabal, where he takes his uncle's small sailing canoe and begins a terrifying journey north and across the Gulf of Mexico to Florida. The siblings face starvation and dehydration; lack of sleep; strong sun, wind, and waves; and their own fears and sorrows to win their game of Staying Alive. The present-tense narrative suggests the speech of someone whose first language is not English, and Santiago's first-person account makes the adventure even more immediate. The opening scene is memorable, as the burning of the village turns the night sky red. However, the necessary flashback to explain how a mountain boy learned rudimentary sailing and the almost unbelievable details of the children's trip between their village and their uncle's home give readers pause, rather than pulling them into the suspense of the story. At times, the anger in the author's message almost overwhelms the action. "The rich have no conscience," their uncle's friend says. The first Americans they encounter call them "stinking boat people" and tell them to go away from their private beach club. In an afterword, the author explains that the soldiers who massacred villagers were armed by the U.S. government as part of our fight against communism. Thus, we share the blame for such atrocities. In spite of the heavy-handed message, readers who persevere through the first third of the book will be rewarded with a terrific survival story.

Kathleen Isaacs, Edmund Burke School, Washington, DC

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Review

"Fans who expect a gripping tale of overcoming dangers, will not be disappointed." (Kirkus Reviews)

"A terrific survival story." (School Library Journal)

About the Author

Ben Mikaelson is the winner of the International Reading Association Award and the Western Writers of America Spur Award. His novels have been nominated for and won many state reader's choice awards. These novels include *Red Midnight*, *Rescue Josh McGuire*, *Sparrow Hawk Red*, *Stranded*, *Countdown*, *Petey*, and *Tree Girl*. Ben's articles and photos appear in numerous magazines around the world. Ben lives near Bozeman, Montana, with his 700-pound black bear, Buffy.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Michelle Mills:

What do you think of book? It is just for students since they're still students or it for all people in the world, the particular best subject for that? Just simply you can be answered for that question above. Every person has distinct personality and hobby for each other. Don't to be forced someone or something that they don't need do that. You must know how great and also important the book Red Midnight. All type of book would you see on many solutions. You can look for the internet solutions or other social media.

Joseph Alderete:

Your reading sixth sense will not betray an individual, why because this Red Midnight guide written by well-known writer whose to say well how to make book which can be understand by anyone who all read the book. Written in good manner for you, leaking every ideas and creating skill only for eliminate your own hunger then you still question Red Midnight as good book not simply by the cover but also with the content. This is one publication that can break don't assess book by its cover, so do you still needing another sixth sense to pick this kind of!? Oh come on your reading through sixth sense already alerted you so why you have to listening to one more sixth sense.

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