



# Dream Land

Books Reviewed:

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Reviewer:

[Val Randall](#) [3]

~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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Lily Hyde has written about cultural and social issues in the Soviet Union for several years and has brought all her journalistic experience to bear on this story of the eviction of the Crimean Tartars from their homeland in 1944 and their return from exile almost 50 years later.

Safinar and her extended family have left their friends and their comfortable home in Uzbekistan to return to their homeland and rebuild their lives and communities there. The title of the book is both a description and a warning ? the Crimea is, indeed, so beautiful that it inspires longing and fierce loyalty but the Tartars? vision of their land is an idealised one and they are not prepared for the squalor of their living conditions and fierce opposition from the Russian and Ukrainian settlers who see them as an inferior and unwelcome people.

The story is told through the eyes of Safinar, thus allowing a child?s indignation and incredulity at the treatment of her family to emerge more poignantly. The Tartar communities endure insults, hostility, suspicion and threats but it is not until Safinar?s family?s painstakingly constructed house is demolished and family members are wrongfully arrested that a more concerted protest begins.

With a riot on their hands and Safinar the unwitting heroine of the hour, the local council relents and reluctantly releases the prisoners, allowing some occupation of land and rebuilding of Tartar communities.

Hyde makes a powerful case for the Crimean Tartars and uses the vehicle of the story to bring legends and customs to life. A helpful glossary allows her to educate readers in the basic words of Crimean everyday life and these devices help readers to become familiar with these persecuted people and take their cause to heart.

Running Order:

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