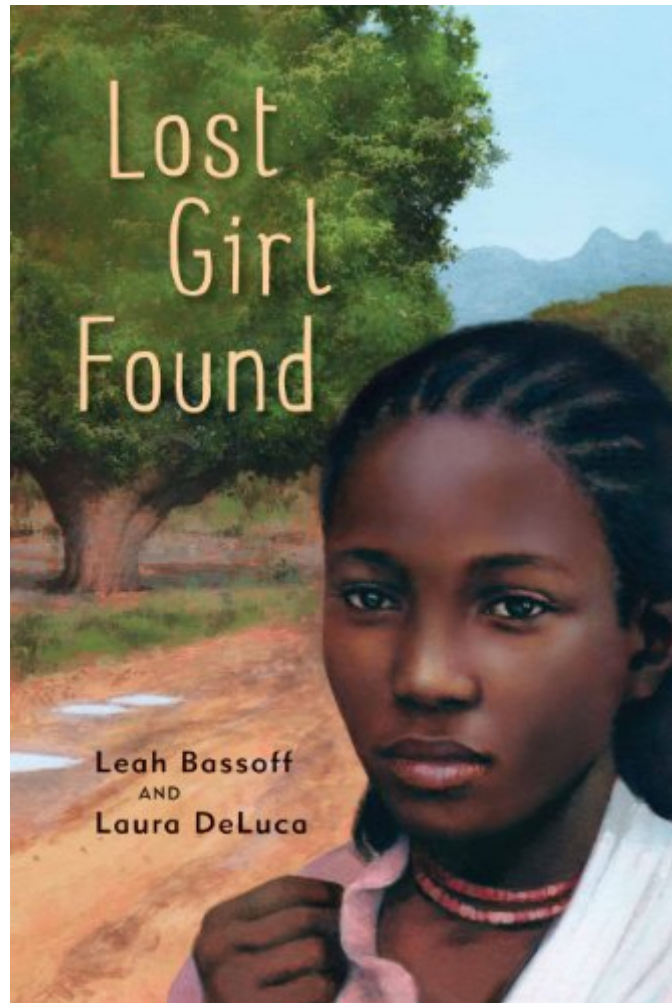




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Lost Girl Found



Synopsis

For Poni, life in her small village in southern Sudan is simple and complicated at the same time. Stay in school. Beat up any boy who tries to show attention. Watch out for the dangers in the river. But then the war comes. And when soldiers arrive in her village, and bombs begin to rain from the sky, there is only one thing for Poni to do. Run. Run for her life. Poni does run from the bombs, and though many of the villagers do not escape, she does. An unknown man carries her across the river in the dark, and then she is walking a long, dusty trek across the east African countryside with thousands of refugees. Along the way, many die from starvation, land mines, wild animals and despair, but Poni does not, driven by the sheer will to survive and the hope that she can somehow make it to the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya, and one day be reunited with her family. She does make it to Kakuma, where she is almost overwhelmed by misery that surrounds her. Only Lokure, a boy from her village, can give her the emotional and intellectual sustenance that she craves as much as food. But when her foster mother makes plans to exchange her in marriage for a meager dowry, Poni realizes that she must leave the camp at any cost. Her destination is a compound in Nairobi run by the strict Sister Hannah. There, if she is lucky, she will be able to continue her education and even, one day, convince authorities that she is worthy to go to the land of opportunity called America. Even more than the dramatic events of the story, it is Poni's frank and single-minded personality that carries this novel. She is willing to do whatever it takes to live, but she certainly doesn't escape survivor's guilt. In a heartbreaking final twist, she finds her mother just as she is about to leave for the US, and must make the hardest decision of all.

Book Information

File Size: 1238 KB

Print Length: 192 pages

Publisher: Groundwood Books (January 24, 2014)

Publication Date: February 7, 2014

Language: English

ASIN: B00IMHD32K

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #453,697 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #15

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Customer Reviews

Wonderful book that is thoughtfully written and exposes the plight of one young girl in the Sudan. If we want to raise young Americans who care about the world around them, this book is a good starting point. It is very age-appropriate for middle-school students. The violence and sexual content are treated with great sensitivity. More than anything, it's a great read.

Just because this is a novel, don't assume it's fiction. Sadly, the vivid experiences endured by the girl in this are every real for too many girls and young women, not only in Sudan but also, throughout other parts of the world where women are demeaned and undervalued. Very well-written and researched. A troubling story for troubling times.

This was well written, well researched and a beautiful perspective on these brave, courageous girls. Thank you for writing this book. It seems important for schools to implement this book into curriculum.

What a well written book with a compelling, important story to tell. I couldn't put it down. Highly recommend!

My daughter thoroughly enjoyed the book.

This book draws you in instantly. You experience the conflict unfold through the eyes of a young girl in South Sudan. Her story is heartbreaking.

Beautiful story! Nice to hear the story of a lost girl. Well written and interesting story. I'd highly recommend this book.

Leah Bassoff and Laura DeLuca deserve much praise for bringing the story of the girls who suffered and survived the genocide in Sudan to western readers. For some reason, westerners became enamored of the survival stories of the lost boys, but stories of the girls were nonexistent. Through Poni, a whip-smart farm girl from South Sudan, Bassoff and DeLuca share the fear, faith and determination of the few girls who were able to live and escape the horror. None of the girls escaped unharmed. They had to survive starvation, dehydration, enemy soldiers and roaming bandits looking for females to rape and then sell into prostitution and slavery. Poni knows she has to survive to carry on her family's legacy and her clan's history. Her dreams of a better life in a refugee camp are dashed when after months of walking across the desert, she finds an overcrowded camp filled with crime, disease and death. The camp residents teach her important survival skills. She runs away again. This time to an orphanage for girls in Nairobi. Throughout her ordeal, Poni never abandons her dream of going to college and returning to her homeland to help other girls. All proceeds from sales go to <https://www.africare.org>

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