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Reviewer username: Anonymous

School: Troy High

Grade: Sophomore

Book Title: *The Cat I Never Named* **Author:** Amra Sabic-El-Rayess

Rate: 4.5

The novel *The Cat I Never Named*, by Amra Sabic-El-Rayess, follows Sabic-El-Rayess's childhood, teenage years, and young adulthood as a survivor of the Bosnian genocide during the Serbian siege on her village. As a Muslim living in Serb territory during the revolution, she's living on the edge- every single second of her existence increases the likelihood of a terrible death. Amra's bravery for both herself and her family is evidently displayed in this memoir and evokes a deep sense of empathy from the reader.

As a stranger reading Amra's memoir, it almost feels a little wrong to be so invested in her story. However, it made me think about historical fiction books I've read before as well as how fortunate I was to not be living amidst a war zone where friends could be enemies. My favorite character was probably Maci (which means "cat" in Bosnian), the cat mentioned in the title. Despite not being human, Sabic-El-Rayess really describes her in a way that makes her seem almost tangible. I really enjoyed reading this novel because of the way it was written; the author almost seems like a fictional character due to how she grows through the almost fictional circumstances.

Anyone who enjoys historical fiction will definitely love this book, as it reminded me of other novels I've read such as *All the Light We Cannot See* and the *The War That Saved My Life* trilogy. Those who are avid fiction readers would not regret this story as a first nonfiction book in an attempt to increase diversity of books read as well. Overall, this is an amazing book in which the reader will likely become fully immersed in.