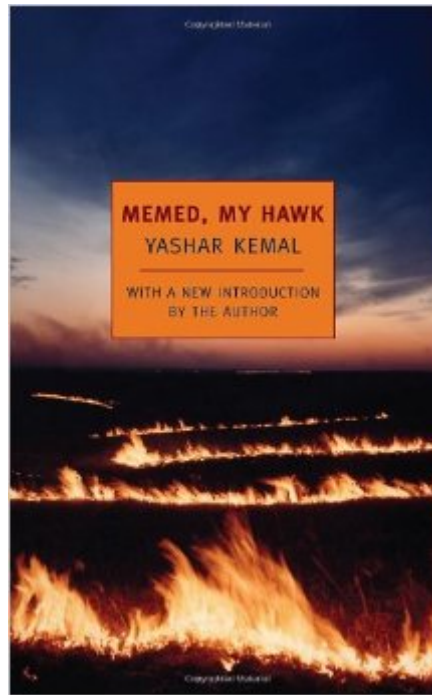


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Memed, My Hawk



Synopsis

A tale of high adventure and lyrical celebration, tenderness and violence, generosity and ruthlessness, *Memed, My Hawk* is the defining achievement of one of the greatest and most beloved of living writers, Yashar Kemal. It is reissued here with a new introduction by the author on the fiftieth anniversary of its first publication. Memed, a high-spirited, kindhearted boy, grows up in a desperately poor mountain village whose inhabitants are kept in virtual slavery by the local landlord. Determined to escape from the life of toil and humiliation to which he has been born, he flees but is caught, tortured, and nearly killed. When at last he does get away, it is to set up as a roving brigand, celebrated in song, who could be a liberator to his people—unless, like the thistles that cover the mountain slopes of his native region, his character has taken an irremediably harsh and unforgiving form.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Down in that fertile part of southern Anatolia called the Chukurova, where crops yielded forty-fold and deer, birds, and beetles thrived, the feudal landlords, who owned entire villages, oppressed the peasants mightily. They took whatever share of the crops they desired and could beat the villagers on any whim, or even drive them from their homes. Justice was an undreamt-of luxury. For rebels, or for those who had incurred the landlords' wrath, the only alternative—besides joining the Army—was to become a bandit in the mountains. The life of a bandit, though, however free, was usually short. Yashar Kemal, who grew up in this area, wrote this novel back in the 1950s; his first major work, which by now has been translated into nearly every major language and has become a

modern classic. Kemal introduces the life and traditions of the inhabitants of the Chukurova, a region unknown in most parts of the world. At least, he gives us a picture of the life they had in the 1920s or '30s. The novel describes the social conditions then existing there, introduces dozens of interesting, colorful characters, and also focusses on the natural environment, which by our times, has mostly disappeared. All this is done through the medium of a fast-moving, action-packed story which could be the script of a film (and may well have been, though I never saw it anywhere).

Memed, a slim young man, wishes to marry Hatche, a beautiful village girl. The nasty landlord has other ideas---he wants her to marry his ugly nephew. The young lovers elope into the forest, but are surrounded by the landlord's minions. Memed draws his pistol and shoots the nephew dead, wounding the landlord. Memed winds up as a bandit, Hatche winds up in jail, and the rotten landlord has Memed's mother beaten to death.

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