

Forge (Seeds of America Book 2)

By Laurie Halse Anderson

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For many readers, *Forge* "will be one of the best novels they have ever read" (starred review from *Kirkus Reviews*)!

Blistering winds. Bitter cold. And the hope of a new future. In this compelling sequel to *Chains*, a National Book Award Finalist and winner of the Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction, acclaimed author Laurie Halse Anderson shifts perspective from Isabel to Curzon and brings to the page the tale of what it takes for runaway slaves to forge their own paths in a world of obstacles—and in the midst of the American Revolution.

The Patriot Army was shaped and strengthened by the desperate circumstances of the Valley Forge winter. This is where Curzon the boy becomes Curzon the young man. In addition to the hardships of soldiering, he lives with the fear of discovery, for he is an escaped slave passing for free. And then there is Isabel, who is also at Valley Forge—against her will. She and Curzon have to sort out the tangled threads of their friendship while figuring out what stands between the two of them and true freedom.

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Forge (Seeds of America Book 2) By Laurie Halse Anderson Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal
Gr 6-10–This sequel to Chains (S & S, 2008) opens with Curzon, an enslaved teen who was freed from prison by Isabel, recalling his escape and anticipating the future. After an argument with Isabel about where they should go next, the 15-year-old battles the British at Saratoga and winters in Valley Forge with the Patriots. He reveals many details of the conditions endured by the soldiers during the winter of 1777-1778, including the limited food supply, lack of adequate shelter, and tattered clothing. When Curzon and Isabel meet again, they have both been captured and must devise a plan of escape once again. While the Patriots are fighting for the freedom of a country, these young people must fight for their personal freedom. This sequel can be read alone but readers will benefit from reading the first book, which develops the characters and reveals events leading up to the winter at Valley Forge. An appendix clarifies historical facts and real-life characters. A list of colloquial terms used throughout the novel is appended.*Denise Moore, O'Gorman Junior High School, Sioux Falls, SD*
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From Booklist
Anderson follows her searing, multi-award-winning novel Chains (2008) with this well-researched sequel, also set during the Revolutionary War and narrated by a young African American. This time, though, her central character is male, and the heartbreaking drama shifts from Chains' domestic town houses to graphically described bloody battlefields. After a narrowly successful escape from Manhattan, former slaves Isabel and Curzon separate, and Curzon is once again on the run. He finds necessary food and shelter as a private with the Continental army, and through Curzon's eyes, Anderson re-creates pivotal historical scenes, including the desperate conditions at Valley Forge. Curzon isn't as fully realized here as Isabel was in Chains, resulting in a less-cohesive and -compelling whole. Once again, though, Anderson's detailed story creates a cinematic sense of history while raising crucial questions about racism, the ethics of war, and the hypocrisies that underlie our country's founding definitions of freedom. Chapter heads excerpted from historical documents and a long appendix that offers research suggestions and separates fact and fiction add further curricular appeal. Grades 5-8. --Gillian Engberg

Review

Forge.

Anderson, Laurie Halse (Author)

Oct 2010. 304 p. Atheneum, hardcover, $16.99. (9781416961444).

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[STAR] Forge [Seeds of America]

by Laurie Halse Anderson

Intermediate, Middle School Atheneum 297 pp.

10/10 978-1-4169-6144-4 $16.99

Chains (rev. 11/08) ended with slave girl Isabel escaping from 1776 New York with fellow slave Curzon, who takes over the narration in this sequel. Only fifteen, he enlists in the Continental Army in late 1777. His experiences as a young runaway slave during the American Revolution differ greatly from Isabel's; though he lives in fear of discovery, he befriends a white soldier boy named Eben and even gains a sense of patriotism and camaraderie serving alongside other soldiers encamped for the winter at Valley Forge. Unfortunate circumstances bring Curzon and Isabel back together, and it is the struggle to mend their friendship and continue their quest for freedom that drives the latter half of the novel. Anderson seamlessly weaves her fictitious characters into history in a cohesive, well-researched narrative about the Revolutionar

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friendship and continue their quest for freedom that drives the latter half of the novel. Anderson seamlessly weaves her fictitious characters into history in a cohesive, well-researched narrative about the Revolutionary War that still focuses foremost on developing characters and their interpersonal relationships. Relevant historical quotes at the beginning of each chapter add authenticity, as does Curzon's firsthand account of daily life at Valley Forge; his detailed narration of privations, inequalities, and hard work compellingly conveys the plight of the common soldier. As one man in Curzon's regiment explains, Valley Forge "is a forge for the army; it's testing our qualities. Instead of heat and hammer, our trials are cold and hunger. Question is, what are we made of?" With this riveting sequel, Anderson certainly passes the test. C"ynthia K. Ritter

--The Horn Book", Nov/Dec 2010 Issue, *STAR

Forge.

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-- Gillian Engberg

"

At the end of Chains (2008), Isabel rescues her friend Curzon from Bridewell Prison and rows away from Manhattan in their escape from slavery. Now, in the second of the planned trilogy, Isabel goes her own way, and 15-year-old Curzon takes over as narrator. Passing as free, he joins the Continental Army at Valley Forge during the winter of 1777-78, where, against the most desperate of circumstances, he forges a friendship with fellow soldiers. When he is enslaved again and meets up with Isabel, he and she must once again take liberty into their own hands and find a way to escape. Weaving a huge amount of historical detail seamlessly into the story, Anderson creates a vivid setting, believable characters both good and despicable and a clear portrayal of the moral ambiguity of the Revolutionary age. Not only can this sequel stand alone, for many readers it will be one of the best novels they have ever read. A good match with Russell Freedman's Washington at Valley Forge (2008). - "KIRKUS, "September 1, 2010, *STAR

Second in the Seeds of America trilogy, this sequel to the National Book Award finalist Chains is narrated by Curzon, the slave Isabel freed from prison while escaping her own enslavement in 1777 New York City. Curzon immediately explains how he and Isabel lived in New Jersey for a few months, before she ran away with their meager funds in hopes of finding her sister, a quest Curzon refused to support. Months later, Curzon is doing his best to forget Isabel, though the depth of his feelings is made evident in flashbacks of their time together. After Curzon saves the life of Eben, a young rebel soldier, he joins the army and suffers through the winter at Valley Forge; tension mounts when Curzon's former owner arrives. Anderson includes meticulous details about the lives of soldiers and, with just a few words, brings readers deep inside Curzon's experience ("My belly voted louder than my wits"). Her masterful storytelling weaves themes of friendship, politics, love, and liberty into a deeply satisfying tale that will leave readers hungry for the final volume. - "PW, "September 13, 2010, *STAR

Forge

by Laurie Halse Anderson, *STAR

"Forge" is the sequel to "Chains" (2008), but it can be read independently. Anderson has done her research and accurately portrays the horrors of serving in the first Continental Army at Valley Forge. The story within is of slavery in a fledgling nation; the freedom that the founding fathers were fighting for did not extend to their slaves. The hero of the story, Curzon, has already served in the army, but in trying to get away from a cruel master, he is re-enlisted. When his former master reappears, his friends from his squad help him escape, along with Isabel, the heroine of "Chains". The book contains an appendix with glossary, further readings, and Q&A about the historical background and primary sources used. Each chapter begins with a quote pertaining to the war or slavery. While the details are accurate, the book is not gratuitously violent. Curzon is an empathetic character to whom most young people will relate. At the end, when Curzon and Isabel escape, the reader can only hope that all will end well in the next book. Laurie Halse Anderson has again written historical fiction at its finest.

--"Library Media Connection", Jan/Feb 2011, *STAR

Kidsreads.com

FORGE

by Laurie Halse Anderson

Atheneum Books for Young Readers

ISBN: 9781416961444

Ages 10-up

304 pages

About the BookRead an ExcerptAuthor Interview -- Month YYYY

When Laurie Halse Anderson's novel CHAINS was published in 2008, it became a finalist for the National Book Award and won the Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction. The book introduced young people to an important --- and often overlooked --- chapter in American history, as Anderson told the story of the dawn

of the American Revolution through the eyes of a young slave girl.

Anderson now continues this work in FORGE, the second book of what will eventually be a trilogy. Here the narrative shifts gears from Isabel to her friend Curzon, a fellow runaway who becomes separated from Isabel but finds safety --- of a sort --- when he enlists as a soldier fighting on the American side during the Revolutionary War. As one of the few black soldiers, he is disrespected --- and worse --- by some of his peers and his officers. With his customary courage, hard work and loyalty, however, Curzon gains the respect and even the friendship of many of his fellow soldiers.

All the young men's fortitude is brutally tested, however, when they are told to report to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, during the winter of 1777 and 1778. As Curzon and his comrades struggle just to survive, Anderson vividly brings to life the horrifying details of life in Valley Forge, unflinchingly documenting the hardships that most high school history books just gloss over. From surviving days without food to digging trenches in frozen ground to trudging through snowdrifts in just a pair of wet, stinking socks, Curzon's story, and that of all the men, will both repulse readers and remind them of the soldiers' remarkable fortitude and bravery.

Besides being a compelling, unfailingly realistic account of the winter at Valley Forge, though, FORGE's story also serves as a powerful metaphor:

Anderson, Laurie Halse Forge.

Atheneum, 2010 [304p] (Seeds of America) ISBN 978-1-4169-6144-4 $16.99 Reviewed from galleys R Gr. 7-10

Curzon and Isabel, runaway slaves in Anderson's Chains (BCCB 11/08), have parted company--she is headed south to find her sister Ruth, and he finds work driving a cart for Patriot soldiers. An impulsive act of battlefield bravery leads to Curzon's enlistment as a freeman with the 16th Massachusetts Regiment, and he's now a tentmate with Eban Woodruff, the young man whose life he saved, and John Burns, a sly bigot who waits for an opportunity to drum Curzon out of the army. Personal animosity simmers as the soldiers encamp at Valley Forge for the winter of 1777-8, but Curzon and his comrades cooperate to make the best of dire circumstances. When Burns rises to the rank of sergeant, though, and Curzon's legal owner, James Bellingham, reclaims his service, Curzon begins to plot yet another escape. His situation is immediately complicated by the appearance of Isabel, who has been recaptured and sold to Bellingham. Bellingham knows Curzon will withhold his labor, so he threatens to punish Isabel, who already wears a locked metal cuff around her neck, for each infraction he may cause. Desperate but unable to plan a foolproof escape, Curzon and Isabel are blessed by chance and the unexpected aid of Curzon's old comrades at arms with some slim hope of freedom as the novel ends and they march out of Valley Forge, protectively surrounded by decamping troops. The saga that began as Isabel's tale loses none of its tension as it switches to Curzon's plight, and the pair's situation at the novel's conclusion is precarious enough to suggest--even demand--another volume. Again Anderson crafts her source notes into a reader-friendly Q&A discussion and appends a glossary of eighteenth-century terms. As one of Curzon's mates observes, "This camp is a forge for the army; it's testing our qualities. . . . Question is, what are we made of?" Fork

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Vanesa Thomas:

With other case, little folks like to read book Forge (Seeds of America Book 2). You can choose the best

book if you love reading a book. Provided that we know about how is important a new book Forge (Seeds of America Book 2). You can add knowledge and of course you can around the world by the book. Absolutely right, mainly because from book you can learn everything! From your country until eventually foreign or abroad you can be known. About simple factor until wonderful thing you can know that. In this era, you can open a book or maybe searching by internet device. It is called e-book. You may use it when you feel uninterested to go to the library. Let's learn.

Leonard Dail:

Reading a book to become new life style in this 12 months; every people loves to go through a book. When you learn a book you can get a wide range of benefit. When you read publications, you can improve your knowledge, due to the fact book has a lot of information on it. The information that you will get depend on what sorts of book that you have read. If you would like get information about your research, you can read education books, but if you want to entertain yourself read a fiction books, this sort of us novel, comics, in addition to soon. The Forge (Seeds of America Book 2) provide you with a new experience in studying a book.

Ernest Maguire:

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William Leininger:

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