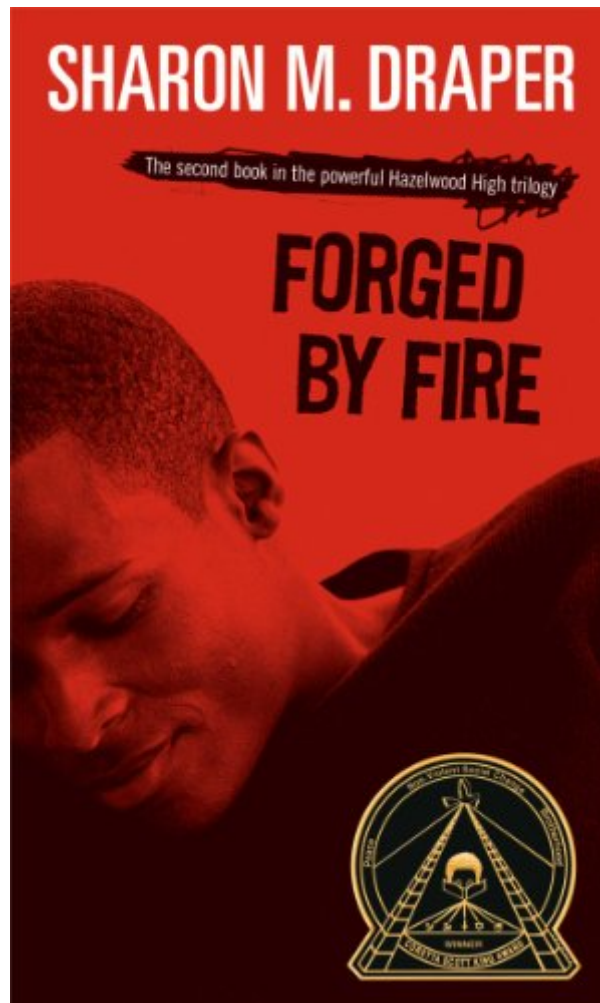


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Forged By Fire (Hazelwood High Trilogy Book 2)



Synopsis

When Gerald was a child he was fascinated by fire. But fire is dangerous and powerful, and tragedy strikes. His substance-addicted mother is taken from him. Then he loses the loving generosity of a favorite aunt. A brutal stepfather with a flaming temper and an evil secret makes his life miserable. The one bright light in Gerald's life is his little half sister, Angel, whom he struggles to protect from her father, Jordan Sparks, who abuses her, and from their mother, whose irresponsible behavior forces Gerald to work hard to keep the family together. As a teenager, Gerald finds success as a member of the Hazelwood Tigers basketball team, while Angel develops her talents as a dancer. Trouble still haunts them, however, and Gerald learns, painfully, that young friends can die and old enemies must be faced. In the end he must stand up to his stepfather alone in a blazing confrontation. Sharon M. Draper has interwoven characters and events from her previous novel, *Tears of a Tiger*, in this unflinchingly realistic portrayal of poverty and child abuse. It is an inspiring story of a young man who rises above the tragic circumstances of his life by drawing on the love and strength of family and friends.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Forged by Fire" is the second novel in the Hazelwood High trilogy by Sharon Draper, but one does not have to be familiar with the first novel to enjoy this one. Draper centers on Gerald Nickelby, a minor character in "Tears of a Tiger", and follows his progress from a neglected three-year-old to his junior year in high school. The story is powerful, straightforward, and honest. It is sure to resonate with a wide audience. As a three-year-old, Gerald is used to abuse and neglect. His mother is a drug addict who abandons him from time to time when she is strung out. However, one time while she is absent, Gerald accidentally sets fire to their apartment. By some miracle, he survives, and he is sent to live with his Aunt Queen while his mother serves time in jail. Gerald finally learns love at Aunt Queen's, but his newfound, sheltered and safe world cannot last forever. On his ninth birthday, Gerald receives the shock of his life - his mother is out of jail, has remarried the father of her second child, and wants Gerald to come live with them. Gerald desperately wants to stay with Aunt Queen, but her untimely death propels Gerald into a world of pain. For his mother's new husband, Jordan Sparks, is a mean, abusive man who has his sights set on Gerald's younger sister, Angel. Gerald finds himself abandoned again, but fights to survive if only to save Angel, the only living person he loves. Draper's writing has an immediacy that will have readers rushing to learn what happens to Gerald and Angel. Into Gerald's unhappy life, she weaves the tragic events that were the focus of "Tears of a Tiger", combining them with the final confrontation between Gerald and his vicious stepfather.

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