

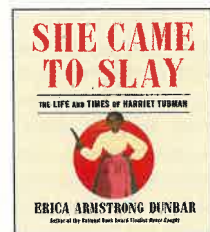
dreaming of wandering along romantic riverbanks. —*Kathleen McBroom*

★ **She Came to Slay: The Life and Times of Harriet Tubman.**

By Erica Armstrong Dunbar.

Nov. 2019. 176p. illus. Simon & Schuster, \$23.99 (9781982139599). 973.7.

Dunbar's (*Never Caught*, 2017) treatment of Harriet Tubman's life conveys the tremendous power of Tubman's accomplishments with illuminating details about how she evaded slave catchers and masterminded a surprise attack



on a Confederate camp during the Civil War. Tubman escaped from a Maryland plantation in 1849, but went back for her niece once she heard she was about to be sold. With a poorly healed broken skull that caused "sleeping spells" and a body made strong by labor, she rescued her parents and 60 to 70 more. Despite her great achievements, Tubman faced unnecessary obstacles: she was never paid for her services as a spy in the Civil War, and, though Tubman was involved early on in women's suffrage, Dunbar is frank about the back seat Tubman and other Black women were asked to take in the movement. Dunbar employs an uplifting, accessible, thoroughly modern tone throughout, with sections like "She Ain't Sorry" and "Bawss Lady," and graphic text sections about friends ("Harriet's Homies") and quotes ("Let me rap to you real quick"), resulting in an engaging biography that will leave even the least historically inclined readers in awe. —*Susan Maguire*

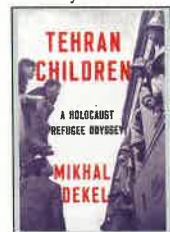
**YA:** *Dunbar's style makes the story of Tubman's difficult life accessible and will engage Tubman-savvy teens and novices alike. SM.*

★ **Tehran Children: A Holocaust Refugee Odyssey.**

By Mikhal Dekel.

Oct. 2019. 384p. Norton, \$27.95 (9781324001034). 940.5.

Retracing the path her Polish-born father and aunt took as Jewish children fleeing the Nazis in 1941 brought Dekel (*The Universal Jew*, 2011) closer to understanding her father, who by the time she knew him was a quintessential Israeli. Thrust into refugee life at age 12, Dekel's father and aunt first traversed Soviet states, then were part of a youth-rescue caravan heading to Tehran, where a burgeoning Polish community (not everyone was Jewish) lived in difficult conditions, but far from the horrors of Nazi-controlled Europe. Using historical documents, interviews, and contemporaneous testimonies collected from her father and other refugee children, Dekel retells sto-



ries about the plight of WWII European refugees. Ultimately, as part of a wave of over 1,000 Jewish-Polish youths known as the Tehran Children, they immigrated to Palestine, where they were transformed; no longer persecuted, they were pioneers in what would become Israel six years later. The backstory about how Dekel, now a professor of comparative literature in the U.S., began researching this project with an Iranian colleague, adds an interesting personal aspect to this work of excellent scholarship and a harrowing history illuminating both the specifics of the past and the universal aspects of the refugee experience. —*Dan Kaplan*

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★ **This Land Is Their Land: The Wampanoag Indians, Plymouth Colony, and the Troubled History of Thanksgiving.**

By David J. Silverman.

Nov. 2019. 528p. Bloomsbury, \$30 (9781632869241). 973.

Much of how non-Native Americans imagine the first Thanksgiving is wrong. Most importantly, the alliance between Wampanoags and pilgrims was not forged in a political and historical vacuum, as portrayed by generations of pageants. Focusing on the Wampanoag and their Native American neighbors in New England, historian Silverman (*Thundersticks*, 2016) repositions the Wampanoag-pilgrim relationship within the region's history and brings its complex-



ity to life. New England had already been disrupted by European visitors when the pilgrims arrived, and the Wampanoag, devastated by a mysterious plague, allied themselves with the newcomers to survive in the region's complex political and economic ecosystem. This relationship persisted for half a century, even as the immigrants became rapacious colonizers. Instead of the first Thanksgiving, which Silverman presents as a minor event, the pivotal moment was Metacom's War (1675-76), an attempt by a desperate coalition of Native peoples to push the English out of New England. They failed, but so, too, did later English (and American) attempts to erase the Wampanoag from the region. Linking this history to a present in which New England Indians observe a Day of Mourning on the third Thursday in November, Silverman's highly recommended work enlightens as it calls into question persistent myths about the origins of Thanksgiving. —*Sara Jorgensen*

★ **The Warriors of Anbar: The Marines Who Defeated Al Qaeda—the Greatest Untold Story of the Iraq War.**

By Ed Darack.

Nov. 2019. 256p. Da Capo, \$28 (9780306922657); e-book, \$14.99 (9780306922664). 956.7044.

The 2nd Battalion of the 3rd Marine Regiment deployed to an area of Al Anbar

province called the Haditha Triad in September 2006 amid a surge in violence by the terrorist group Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). Their mission was to defeat the terrorists and rebuild civil government with a functioning native police force capable of defending the population so normal life and commerce could resume. Darack (*The Final Mission of Extortion 17*, 2017) is a longtime embedded journalist with firsthand knowledge of the counterinsurgency campaign (COIN) in Haditha at this time, who also interviewed dozens of the battalion's officers and enlisted members. He has nothing but the highest praise for these Marines and their professionalism, humanity, empathy, efficiency, and willingness to sacrifice for the civilians of Haditha to achieve what he describes as a decisive victory over AQI. His account is a well-written, keenly detailed success story and a significant tribute to the Marines who risked their lives, including the 23 fallen and the hundreds who were wounded in action, to bring peace and stability to the Haditha Triad. —*James Pekkoll*

★ **Wild Life: Dispatches from a Childhood of Baboons and Button-Downs.**

By Keena Roberts.

Nov. 2019. 352p. illus. Grand Central, \$28 (9781538745151); e-book, \$14.99 (9781538745144). 974.8.

Imagine growing up in Kenya, in the bush, where your parents study monkeys, until, at age six, you're thrust into the totally different environment of an elite private school in Philadelphia. After a disastrous dance recital, where Roberts was ridiculed for dancing to a Kenyan pop song, the family moved to the Okavango delta in Botswana and Roberts decided she had to start acting like a grownup. Tales of being homeschooled in

camp while her parents did field work, guarding frozen chickens from baboons, reading science fiction, doing laundry, and shooting a black mamba alternate with excerpts from Roberts' journal. When she returns to school halfway through the sixth grade, with social groups already set, her previous best friend is now the queen of the sixth grade, and Roberts knows she won't fit in. The contrast between life in the bush and life in the city, and of how Roberts learns to balance her two selves—the girl in the delta who can do everything adults do and the weirdo who doesn't feel safe in America—is a terrific coming-of-age story. Full of details about field research and bar mitzvahs, what to do when you meet dangerous wildlife or dangerous mean girls, and how reading was her salvation, Roberts' fish-out-of-water story is impossible to put down.

—*Nancy Bent*

**YA:** *Keena's story will resonate with all teens who feel like outcasts. NB.*