



BOOK RESUME: EXIT WEST

BOOK SYNOPSIS

In a country teetering on the brink of civil war, two young people meet—sensual, fiercely independent Nadia and gentle, restrained Saeed. They embark on a furtive love affair and are soon cloistered in a premature intimacy by the unrest roiling their city. When it explodes, turning familiar streets into a patchwork of checkpoints and bomb blasts, they begin to hear whispers about doors—doors that can whisk people far away, if perilously and for a price. As the violence escalates, Nadia and Saeed decide that they no longer have a choice. Leaving their homeland and their old lives behind, they find a door and step through. . . .

Exit West follows these remarkable characters as they emerge into an alien and uncertain future, struggling to hold on to each other, to their past, to the very sense of who they are. Profoundly intimate and powerfully inventive, it tells an unforgettable story of love, loyalty, and courage that is both completely of our time and for all time.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

“Hamid exploits fiction’s capacity to elicit empathy and identification to imagine a better world. It is also a possible world. *Exit West* does not lead to utopia, but to a near future and the dim shapes of strangers that we can see through a distant doorway. All we have to do is step through it and meet them.” —Viet Thanh Nguyen, *The New York Times Book Review*

“This is the best writing of Hamid’s career . . . Readers will find themselves going back and savoring each paragraph several times before moving on. He’s that good. . . . Breathtaking.” —NPR

“Hamid rewrites the world as a place thoroughly, gorgeously, and permanently overrun by refugees and migrants. . . . But, still, he depicts the world as resolutely beautiful and, at its core, unchanged. The novel feels immediately canonical, so firm and unerring is Hamid’s understanding of our time and its most pressing questions.” —*The New Yorker*

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- Winner of the 2018 *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize for Fiction
- Winner of the 2018 Aspen Words Literary Prize
- Finalist for the 2017 Man Booker Prize
- Finalist for the 2017 National Book Critics Circle Awards
- Finalist for the 2017 Kirkus Award

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Penguin Random House

Contact BannedBooks@penguinrandomhouse.com

*Publisher suggested age range covers the wide range of readers publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate range for their diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book’s intended use.

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- [Educator's Guide](#)
- [Lesson Plan](#)
- [Discussion Questions](#)

RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

- [Hamid's *Exit West* will open doors for first-year students](#) (2018)
- [Reflections on *Exit West*](#) (2018–2019)
- [Mohsin Hamid Visits Parkrose and Wilson High Schools for Everybody Reads](#) (2018)

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