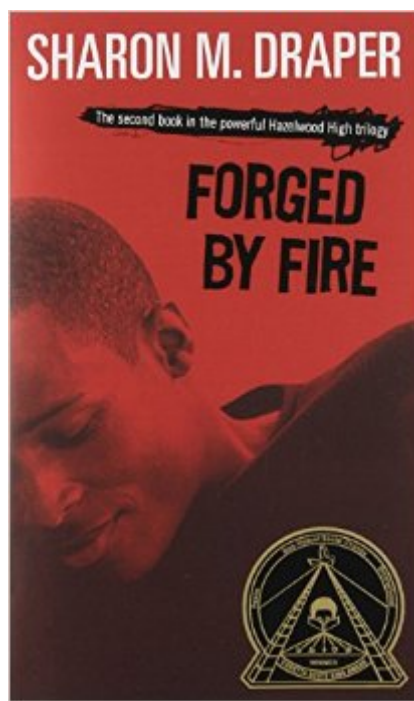


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# Forged By Fire



## 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

Lexile Measure: 780L (What's this?)

Series: Hazelwood High Trilogy (Book 2)

Mass Market Paperback: 160 pages

Publisher: Simon Pulse (January 1, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0689818513

ISBN-13: 978-0689818516

Product Dimensions: 4.2 x 0.6 x 7 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.9 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (237 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #18,184 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #6 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Drugs](#) #6 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Sports > Basketball](#) #7 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Dysfunctional Relationships](#)

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Hi and in advance, thanks for checking out my review. I being a little older than the targeted audience (I'm a 17 y/o male in 11th grade who usually doesn't like to read unless it's for school) recently picked up this book at my local library. The book was not used for a school project but, I got it because I thought it would be interesting. I will say that I would promote the book for classroom use for probably 6-9th graders. The book deals with very strong issues plaguing the present time in a clear, contemporary style. The book is very fast paced.. (lightning fast, actually) which I think kids will like better than reading a full novel (I would) and with this fast-paced movement, it does get a tad confusing at times while dealing with multiple conflicts. The main problem is that there are so many problems that are thrown out to the main character Gerald, (Who the book deals with through age 3-17) that not one is completely resolved before another occurs. (I still have a few questions myself after reading) The characters are very believable but the problems that happen and mostly when they do happen are the things that bring the book down. I would recommend the book to any teen wishing for some good, heartfelt, fast paced reading. I've seen a review that says the book deals with bulimia along with other issues... actually, it does not. It states that the character Angel throws up a lot but, that's mostly because she's so nervous around her father. Oh, and if the Author is out there... Hear me out... Ever since reading the end, I would like to see a sequel. I don't know about the rest of you but, I'd pick it up. (No, I haven't had a chance to read "Tears of a Tiger" yet, but I will be soon.) Thanks for hearing me out.

This book is about Gerald, at 3 yrs old, was abused himself by his mother. His mother will hit him and leave him in his diapers all day if he poops in them, to teach him a lesson. His mother was on drugs and often left him in the apartment alone. Well, one day, his mother left to buy some drugs from Leroy, some man that smell sweet. And Gerald decide to play with his GI Joe and a lighter. Suddenly, the apartment is on fire. He goes and hide behind the couch. The neighbor decide to check up on him, if it wasn't for the neighbor, Gerald would of die from smoke inhalation. His mother goes to prison for child endangerment. And also she goes to drug rehab. Aunt Queen comes to the rescue and Gerald went to live with her for six years. Then his world comes crashing down on his ninth birthday. Aunt Queen dies and he have go to live with his mother. His mother is married to Jordan, who claim to be Angel's father, but isn't. Jordan is violent and will hit Gerald, his mother, and his sister, Angel, whenever he gets drunk. Also, Jordan will sexually molest Angel, which disgusts me. When Gerald went to move in with his mother, he couldn't bring himself to call her mama anymore, so he call her by her first name, Monique. Well, from the day Gerald moves in, he vows to protect his sister. His sister like to dance like any typical 7-yr-old. Well, Gerald turns in

Jordan for sexually abuse, and he finally gets out of prison when Gerald is 17 and Angel is 13. Ok, when Gerald is 17, his best friend, Robert Washington, dies in a car crash because Andy was driving drunk and crash into a wall. This, indeed, is a real sad book that I read and I couldn't put it down. I have to order "Tears of a Tiger" and "Dawn by Darkness" one of these days. I read this book back when I was in the 10th grade. This book will made you angry against abuse of kids, and make you want to do something..

"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. "Forged by Fire" is a book that honestly captures the trials of a poor urban African-American family, but in the midst of all the tears, Draper instills her story with warmth, faith, and hope. Draper is a gifted writer who has been able to tap into the true inner workings of complicated teenage lives.

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