

★ **Hakim's Odyssey: Book 2: From Turkey to Greece****Fabien Toulmé****Hannah Chute, Translator**

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A Syrian refugee experiences financial difficulties, family separation and loss, and a dangerous sea crossing in this second volume of *Hakim's Odyssey*.

Forced to flee Syria, Hakim now lives in Turkey with his wife, Najmeh, and his in-laws. He has a son, Hadi. But the employment situation is bleak, and Najmeh's father decides to buy a fake passport and go to France. Once he's settled, he sends for his wife and daughter; Hakim remains in Turkey with Hadi. The separation is meant to be short, but unexpected problems stymie Hakim and Hadi's hopes for a reunion with their family. They're forced to make a frightening, illegal boat crossing into Greece.

Hakim's arrival in Turkey is summarized in three pages of expert, condensed storytelling. The succinct writing also conveys the details of Hakim's plight in Turkey: caring for his young son alone, learning about the death of his father, and the hazards of dealing with smugglers. The book captures Hakim's emotional turmoil and doubts through visuals that are both dynamic and subtle, as when, in successive panels, he pounds his mattress in frustration before curling up on the bed in despair.

Hakim is an everyman, but he also cuts a heroic figure, displaying intelligence and resilience. This second volume of *Hakim's Odyssey* is an incredible story about maintaining hope despite facing overwhelming odds.

PETER DABBENE (March / April 2022)

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