

★ **Hakim's Odyssey: Book 3: From Macedonia to France****Fabien Toulme**

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In *Hakim's Odyssey Book 3: From Macedonia to France*, Fabien Toulme completes the story of Hakim, a refugee who reunites with his family after a long and arduous journey.

After some background and a brief recap of preceding events, delivered in the context of a classroom visit, Hakim's story resumes with his bus trip from Athens. The bus never arrives at Macedonia, its intended destination, and the migrants on board are left to decide how to proceed.

Hakim's goal is to reach France, where his wife, Najmeh, and her family await. Caring for his young son Hadi along the way, Hakim's efforts are complicated by the need for diapers and formula, along with what he calls the "business of distress," the markup of essential items by storeowners and entrepreneurs. But unexpected help comes too, in the form of a woman in Serbia who offers them shelter, a former migrant from the Ivory Coast who helps secure transport in Hungary, and others who share crucial information on how to cross borders and avoid detention.

With Hakim's money limited, the questions of whom to trust and which choices to make lead to a constant, compelling tension. Each chapter is given greater immediacy through the use of title pages that feature single panels and selected quotations from the text.

It's an exciting tale by any standard, even if it's not representative of the typical migrant's experience: Hakim is an average man who manages to be heroic when necessary, with luck, instinct, intelligence, and daring all playing key roles in his success. The art's appealing, uncomplicated style portrays a wide variety of emotions and settings while maintaining storytelling clarity.

Hakim's Odyssey Book 3: From Macedonia to France is a satisfying conclusion to an authentic, epic modern quest adventure.

PETER DABBENE (November / December 2022)

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