



★ **Katusha: Girl Soldier of the Great Patriotic War**

Wayne Vasant

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Wayne Vasant combines thorough military and historical detail with unforgettable characters in his epic masterwork *Katusha*.

Vasant has long specialized in telling stories of war, from Marvel's comic series *The 'Nam* to his many graphic novel histories. *Katusha* differs from these others, first in its length—originally published in parts, this edition collects the entire story, including the never-before-published last third, under one cover—and second, in its expert use of fictional characters to elevate dramatic tension while informing the reader about events in Ukraine and its surroundings during World War II.

Katusha is the nickname of the book's central character, a young Ukrainian girl who sees her life irreparably transformed by the war. She's drawn into the fighting, and in a long, continual battle for survival, she eventually becomes a tank operator for the Russian army, bearing witness to the war's most significant battles.

Katusha grows in many ways throughout the book: from a naïve young telephone operator to a seasoned warrior and from a child to a full-grown woman, hardened but capable of love. Vasant develops Katusha, her family, and her friends well, resulting in multiple viewpoints as characters are separated by the war's events.

Vasant's art is outstanding, demonstrating a great commitment to getting it right with uniforms, landscapes, and armaments, while also showing a knack for facial details that keeps every character in his large cast easily identifiable. Vasant captures the massive scale and significance of the war, but the strength of this book is that it is seen from a personal viewpoint. First, last, and always, this is Katusha's story.

PETER DABBENE (March/April 2019)

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