



From That Flame: A Novelized Account of the Life, Death, and Legacy of Ahmed Shah Massoud

By MaryAnn T. Beverly



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FROM THAT FLAME follows journalist Michelle Garrett as she interviews the legendary Commander Ahmed Shah Massoud – the “Lion of Panjshir” – in Afghanistan’s rugged Hindu Kush Mountains. Without warning, an attack by Taliban and al-Qaeda troops propels Michelle into a wartime adventure with Commander Massoud and his Mujahidin, one in which a friendship between the journalist and Massoud grows, giving her a unique perspective into the man the Wall Street Journal credited as being “the Afghan who ended the Cold War.”

“The kind of story that people need to know about ... It stimulates the body, the mind, and most importantly the soul.” —Edward James Olmos, actor and activist

“Massoud grieves in the novel, and then we, who have come to know him in this thoughtful and well researched book, grieve for him and for his dreams — and our own. Ms. Beverly has given us much to ponder.” [The book says] Pay attention.” —Mary Sheeran, author Who Have the Power “The amount of in-depth research it contains is extraordinary and is evident within the story. MaryAnn brings back to life for the reader a man who is truly worthy of the appellation ‘Hero’.” —Katherine Swan, artist/artist representative (Duncan Regehr, RCA) “History wears two faces. One is built of facts and timelines, names and places. But the other face, whose marks are far more indelible, less vulnerable to manipulation, is the image its impresses on those who lived it. This book is about the second: the image of one man that has marked his nation, his people forever. Set against a quick moving and suspense-filled background, the author has given us not only a powerful portrait of a modern hero, but posed some of the most burning questions of human life today, and answers them exquisitely. Read with caution: it might change your life.” —Helene Walker, independent reviewer “Ms. Beverly has captured the heart and essence of the man the world knows as the Lion of Panjshir. Her book flows well, and even the most up-to-date history buff who knows the ‘ending’ will want to keep reading — possibly hoping for a miracle.” —Marsha de Garcia, independent reviewer

It is Massoud who always has a plan. It is Massoud who always has a vision. It is Massoud who always has a strategy. He didn’t ask for any of this, but when it was laid on his shoulders, he accepted the responsibility and has never shrugged it off,” Abdullah explains to Michelle in MaryAnn T. Beverly’s novel, *From That Flame*. At three hundred and thirty-four pages, this engaging historical fiction reads more like a true story about Commander Ahmed Shah Massoud, known as

the “Lion of Panjshir” of Afghanistan. Targeted toward readers who want to learn about the Taliban and al-Qaeda fighting against this leader and the mujahidin in the Hindu Kush Mountains, it has biographical connections to “the Afghan who ended the Cold War” that Osama bin Laden assassinated two days before he attacked America. As the story evolves, one sees the obvious intense love Michelle develops for the Commander as he tries relentlessly to keep Afghan free from the Taliban as he explains his ultimate mission to her. As each day countdowns to the bombing of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, both man and woman find their purpose in life as they deal with regret, guilt, and acceptance during wartime tragedies. With much description of the territory and history of the land along with the political aspect of war and its participating and non-participating players, Beverly sets the scene of dissention, disillusion and death during this pivotal time in world history. —by Conny Crisalli at BookPleasures.com

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Editorial Review

Review

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About the Author

MaryAnn T. Beverly is an Ohio native who has made her home in Columbia, SC for the past 25 years. A former high school English teacher, and married mother of two, she left teaching to write and direct a documentary movie, "The Arts in Education," in Cali, Colombia, South America. After 9/11, and the invasion of Afghanistan she learned about freedom fighter Ahmed Shah Massoud who was assassinated by Osama bin Laden only two days before the tragic suicide bombings took place. As Beverly began to conduct extensive research on the man whom Afghan people call the "Lion of Panjshir", she discovered a fascinating 30-year history of our two countries, beginning with the Russian invasion of Afghanistan's in 1979, up through the mistakes and blunders made by the CIA and six U.S. presidents. In *From That Flame*, the author has laced a historically accurate account (enhanced with a fictionalized back story) of the late Ahmed Shah Massoud and his 20 year fight for the Afghan people. During research and development, Beverly became acquainted with and friend to Zahir Sajanie, a mujahidin who spent over 20 years with Massoud. The freedom fighter opened many doors for her, including an introduction to Ambassador Haroun Amin, whose history in Afghanistan dates back to 1979 when he led protests against Russia after their invasion (he and his family fled the country the following year and settled in California, where in 1995 he earned a Bachelor's Degree in political science at UC Riverside). In 1988 Amin returned to Afghanistan to join Massoud in their fruitless quest to promote democracy and end the killing by the Taliban and Osama bin Laden. Amin fought side-by-side with the Lion of Panjshir until Massoud's assassination on Sept. 9, 2001. Following the establishment of the transitional Afghan government (under Hamid Karzai) in 2002, Mr. Amin was appointed charge d' affaires/deputy chief of mission at the Afghan embassy in Washington, D.C. In December 2003, he was appointed to the post of Afghanistan's Ambassador to Japan. As she neared completion of her book, Beverly received a call from Ahmed Wali Massoud, Ahmed Shah's brother, and brother to the current Vice President of Afghanistan, Ahmed Zia Massoud. From that point on she began to gather even more detailed information, that hopefully will give America insight to the importance of rebuilding, and then maintaining a stronger and certainly more supportive relationship with this forgotten ally.

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