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# Firestorm!



## Synopsis

Twelve-year-old Poppy is an orphan living in a bad neighborhood in Chicago, pick pocketing so that she has a place to sleep at night. Justin's world couldn't be more different his father owns a jewelry store but when he and Poppy meet, they become fast friends, thanks in part to Justin's sweet pet goat. Through their friendship, Poppy realizes that she doesn't want to be a thief anymore and she begins to feel like she may have a place with Justin's family. But when Justin makes an expensive mistake at his father's store, Poppy is immediately blamed. In response, she flees . . . right into the Great Chicago Fire. Poppy and Justin must rely on their instincts if they are going to survive the catastrophe. Will anything be left when the fire finally burns out?

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 660 (What's this?)

Paperback: 336 pages

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Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars See all reviews (13 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #550,556 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #603 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1800s #6762 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Friendship

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

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Read aloud: age 8 and older.  
Read yourself: age 11 - 12 and older.  
Twelve-year-old Poppy is an orphan living in a rough Chicago neighborhood in 1871. Her unofficial "guardian" is Ma Brennan, who forces Poppy to steal and turn over all of her spoils to Ma Brennan. If Poppy doesn't do as Ma Brennan says, she won't have anywhere to sleep, nothing to eat, and will be severely beaten or worse.  
On Saturday morning, September 30, Poppy accidentally knocks into Justin as she is trying to escape notice after picking

a woman's pocket. Thirteen-year-old Justin is different from Poppy in a lot of ways; he has a loving family, an adorable pet goat that Poppy loves, and Justin's father owns the most prestigious jewelry store in the city. Despite their differences, the two strike up an unlikely friendship that is soon to be tested. Although Poppy spends time at Justin's house, it is clear his father doesn't trust Poppy and is convinced she will surely steal from them. When Justin makes a mistake in his father's store and it appears that a valuable chain has been stolen, Justin's father blames Poppy. While Poppy is innocent, there doesn't seem to be any way to prove that. Just then, the Great Chicago Fire begins to swallow the city and its residents in its inferno. Like everyone else in Chicago, Justin and his family are trying to make their way to safety. So, too, is Poppy, and it is then that she sees an opportunity to clear her name, but she must risk everything, including, perhaps, her life, to do so. Riveting from start to finish, this work of historical fiction excels in every regard.

I read and loved *Firestorm*. Joan never disappoints her readers. Again she has created very real characters that you find yourself wishing you knew personally. The Chicago fire was a great historical event to center this heartwarming tale of an orphan who finds love in an unlikely place. It is exciting from start to finish and makes you long to know more about the great fire and the city of Chicago. It also has a very unique feature in that this story is told from 2 view points both that of the orphan Poppy and her friend Justin. Which is an exciting detail in the story. Read it you won't be disappointed!!

*Firestorm* is a great story that taught the importance of friendship. Poppy, a young thief meets a boy named Justin. Throughout the book, their friendship is tested. When Poppy flees into the Chicago fire, Justin must save her. Along the way, she steals something that earns her a spot with Justin's family. This book was really good to read, and I recommend it to everyone.

This book is wonderful, beautiful, it incorporates strong emotions for young ones, sadness, insecurity, isolation, goals, joy and questions about life.....it is a beautiful testimony of faith, love and strength of character! Also a very real and well researched book about the Chicago Fire.....the history is amazing, and so true.....I would highly recommend this book it is truly a great book not only for young adults, as it is marketed for, but also for adults! I read it and loved it totally. Was surprised about what I learned about Chicago during that era.....also Poppy and other characters, come to life. Joan Hiatt Harlow has such a miraculous gift.....she brings the characters to life, and we learn valuable lessons that stay with us, and we can learn from! Truly a

book to read, enjoy and share, especially with young ones, or grand children.....a gift! Thank you Joan Hiatt Harlow.....love all of your books!

This book of historical fiction had me and my daughter on the edge of our seats from beginning to end. Another wonderful work by Joan Hiatt Harlow, that blends historical facts into real life fictional scenes, this book will make you want to stay awake all night to see what is going to happen next. As always, Joan Hiatt Harlow has done an outstanding job in her research and presentation of the historical Chicago Fire of the late 1800s, and has magically intertwined these facts with a perfect blend of excitement, love and a heart rendering plot of conscience, family and survival. A definite must for your family library!

I give this book 5 stars! It is the perfect book! It has little emotional parts and its based on history. I can't just say I like this book...I loved it! And I bet you will too.

This was one of the best books I have ever read. I really love how the author makes it seem like she was actually in the fire. I can't wait to read another book from Joan Hiatt Harlow.

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