

A TRUMPET IN THE WADI

By Sami Michael

Translated by Yael Lotan

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Study guide by Ilana Kurshan

ABOUT THE BOOK:

This novel is the story of two Christian Arab sisters who live in the Arab quarter of Haifa with their widowed Christian mother and irascible Egyptian grandfather. Huda, the narrator, falls in love with Alex, the Russian Jewish immigrant who plays his trumpet on the roof of their building. Her younger sister Mary rejects the advances of Zuhair, the son of their difficult Muslim landlord, and chooses instead her uninteresting but dependable cousin Wahid. The story of the two sisters' coming-of-age is narrated against the backdrop of escalating Arab-Israeli tensions in the months leading up to the 1982 war between Israel and Lebanon, which ultimately brings Huda's romance to a tragic end.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Sami Michael was born in Baghdad, Iraq in 1926. He served as an advocate against the oppressive national regime during World War II, before fleeing to Iran and then to Israel in 1948. Michael studied Arabic Literature and Psychology at Haifa University. For 25 years, he worked as a hydrologist, mainly on the Syrian border, and wrote about his experiences. He published his first novel in 1973. Michael is the author of eight novels. He has received many literary awards, including the WIZO Prize, the ACUM Prize, the Brenner Prize, the Ze'ev Prize for children's literature, an IBBY Award, the Israel Prize for Literature and the President's Prize for Lifetime Achievement (2005). The film adaptation of *A Trumpet in the Wadi* won the 2001 Israel Academy Film Award for Best Drama. For his work for peace, he has been honored by the UN-supported Society for International Development, and the Association for Promotion of Peace in the Middle East (Italy), and has been awarded honorary doctorates by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1995), Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (2000), Tel Aviv University (2002) for his literary work and contribution to inter-communal reconciliation. He lives in Haifa, Israel.

