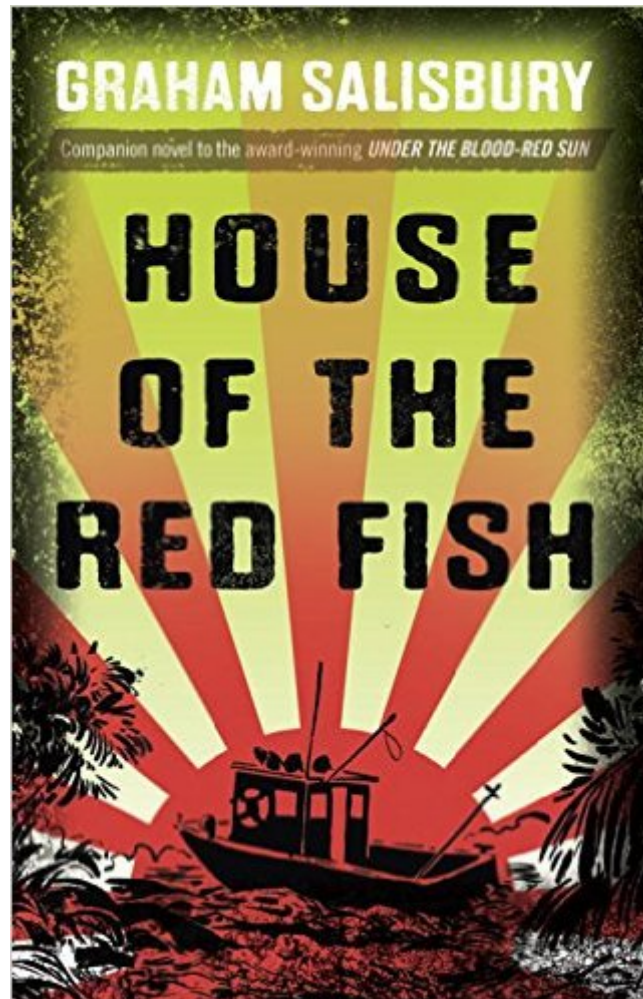


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# House Of The Red Fish (Prisoners Of The Empire)



## Synopsis

1943, one year after the end of *Under the Blood-Red Sun*, Tomi's Papa and Grandpa are still under arrest, and the paradise of Hawaii now lives in fear—waiting for another attack, while trying to recover from Pearl Harbor. As a Japanese American, Tomi and his family have new enemies everywhere, vigilantes who suspect all Japanese. Tomi finds hope in his goal of raising Papa's fishing boat, sunk in the canal by the Army on the day of the attack. To Tomi, raising Papa's boat is a sign of faith that Papa and Grandpa will return. It's an impossible task, but Tomi is determined. For just as he now has new enemies, his struggle to raise the boat brings unexpected allies and friends.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (8 customer reviews)

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Sequels are tricky beasties and any author that attempts one is going to have to wrangle with a variety of problems. On the one hand, they have to satisfy their core fan base. The people who adored the earlier book and presumably clamored for a sequel in the first place. Then you have the new crop of readers. This is especially true with children's fiction. Kids grow up and often abandon the authors they loved when they were young (at least through adolescence). In 1994 Graham

Salisbury wrote the award winning "Under the Blood-Red Sun". Now, twelve years later, he has come out with a long-awaited sequel, "House of the Red Fish". Fortunately, Salisbury's earlier title is so well-known that the requisite fan-base is already in place and ready. However, there's yet another problem with writing sequels. They have to be able to stand on their own. If you absolutely have to have read the previous book, then your sequel, nice as it is, is going to collapse under its own weight. And weighty books of this nature don't win awards. I, personally, had never read "Under the Blood-Red Sun", so I felt that I was in a pretty good position to determine how well "House of the Red Fish" stood on its own two feet. The advantage to having never read a work by an author like Graham Salisbury is that his talents have a tendency whop you upside the head and leave you wanting more. "House of the Red Fish" is everything an author would want out of a title. Consider this puppy a contender. Tomi is still dealing with the fact that his father and grampa are interned far from home merely because they are of Japanese ancestry. It's 1943 and America is at war with Japan, many of its white citizens terrified of their Asian neighbors.

Salisbury's newest book, House of the Red Fish, is a masterful exploration of the nuances of prejudice, touching on many of the issues (honor, courage, friendship, and the bond between fathers and sons) that Salisbury has probed in his earlier work. The attack on Pearl Harbor didn't only steal Tomi's father and grandfather from his life (they were arrested after the attack). It stole his dream of fishing with his father on his father's boat, the Taiyo Maru, which is sitting now underwater, sunk by the Navy under suspicion that it and its owner might aid invading Japanese forces. Tomi wants to bring the boat back to the surface and dry it out so that it's ready to sail out to sea when his father returns home from prison. Tomi also wants to make his absent father proud... to carry on the Japanese tradition of sons honoring their fathers. To succeed, Tomi must persevere in the face of trouble just like the koi-the fish that symbolizes masculinity and strength because it can swim upstream against strong currents. But it's not easy for Tomi to remain loyal to his family's Japanese heritage or his father's admonitions not to fight, not to shame the family, especially when the red paper koi that his mother raises on a bamboo pole above the roof to celebrate Tango-no-Sekku (Boy's Festival) is destroyed. Tomi's relationships with his friends, a mix of haole (white), Portugese, Hawaiian, and Japanese boys, ring true to life as they fend off attacks by a white-only gang, and work together to raise Tomi's father's boat from the canal. In the end, House of the Red Fish is a book about the joy and bonds of friendship, as well as what it truly means to look beneath a person's skin color and speech patterns to understand what he's truly made of.

Here it is, HOUSE OF THE RED FISH, the eagerly awaited sequel to Graham Salisbury's UNDER THE BLOOD-RED SUN. Readers already acquainted with Tomi and Billy (and their neighbor but "enemy" Keet Wilson) will delight in renewing friendships and going on more adventures in Salisbury's newest novel. HOUSE OF THE RED FISH opens with a brief flashback to September 1941, but the next chapter takes us to March 1943. Tomi Nakaji and Billy Davis, still best friends, are now ninth graders at Roosevelt High. Salisbury makes readers very aware of the ravages of the attack on Pearl Harbor and the way life in Hawaii has changed in the interim for everyone, but especially for Japanese Americans like narrator Tomi and his family. The setting details subtly include many aspects of life in Hawaii during World War II: the boys get stopped, asked for their ID's, and warned that they should also have their gas masks with them; barbed wire fences stretch across the beaches; cardboard must cover the windows of their home each night; curfew is imposed on all residents. The World War II years in Hawaii were rife with prejudice against Japanese Americans--often suspected to be "enemy aliens" (43). However, Salisbury shows how Billy's haole family accept his friendship with Tomi and how Billy himself, paradoxically wise beyond his years yet still charmingly naïve, explains to Tomi why Keet is no longer his friend. Tomi tells us: "It took me a week to force it out of him [Billy]. Keet Wilson turned on me because I was Japanese, and he had been told by his friends at school that white guys weren't supposed to like Japanese guys" (17). Early in the novel, the boys amble down to the nearby Ala Wai Canal where Papa's sampan, sunk by the U.S.

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