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"Crews' account (the title refers to lighting brush on fire to clear out snakes) is **as well-paced and stirring as a novel**. In her **fluid narrative** (she's also a storyteller on the side, a gig that helped her develop this book), **Crews neither wallows in self-pity nor plays for cheap black-comedic yuks**.

Instead, **this book stands out for what matters most: Crews' story, bluntly told.**"

—*ELLE* magazine

# BURN DOWN THE GROUND

*A Memoir By*  
**Kambri Crews**

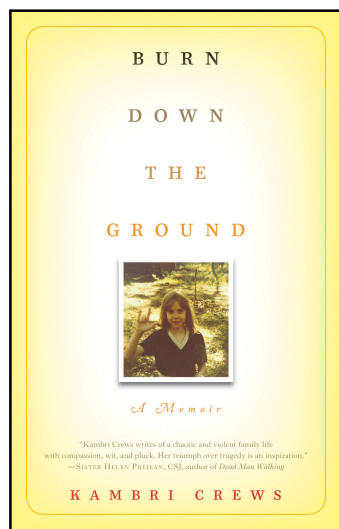
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## **More Advance Praise for Kambri Crews and BURN DOWN THE GROUND**

"[An] unsparing yet compassionate account of her dysfunctional childhood and the father who both charmed and victimized her family . . . Poignant and unsettling." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"Harrowing . . . A remarkable odyssey of scorched earth, collateral damage, and survival." —*Publishers Weekly*

"Kambri Crews writes of a chaotic and violent family life with compassion, wit and pluck. Her triumph over tragedy is an inspiration . . ." —**Sister Helen Prejean**, CSJ, author of *Dead Man Walking*



"The world she writes about is portrayed so vividly and the characters drawn so fearlessly that I feel like I knew what it was like to grow up in Kambri's world – one most of us could not fathom." —**Lisa Lampanelli**

"A compelling testament to the strength of the human spirit." —*Booklist*

"Addictive and heartbreaking . . . A fascinating story, beautifully told, that will leave you gobsmacked." —**Julie Klausner**, author of *I Don't Care About Your Band*

"While there's plenty of memoir fodder in the hearing-child-of-two-deaf-parents subject, Crews's story has heartbreaking depth and complexity. With insight into her father's feelings about deafness, his über-Christian family's response to his violence against the women in his life, and the culture of the deaf community, this is a rich read." —*Library Journal*

" . . . Her voice is fresh, fearless and singular—with an ability to craft a story you'll never be able to forget, but also not be able to stop talking about."

—**Mandy Stadtmiller**, *New York Post*

"A testament to her gift as a storyteller and her own incredible humanity."

—**Hillary Carlip**, Author of *Queen of the Oddballs: And Other True Stories from a Life Unaccording to Plan*

"Surprisingly funny and uplifting, this touching account of a deaf family living on the edge is raw and candid."

—**Paula Froelich**, Author of the *New York Times* bestseller *Mercury in Retrograde*

**BURN DOWN THE GROUND: A MEMOIR** By Kambri Crews

A Random House / Villard Hardcover

February 28, 2012 | 978-0-345-51602-2 | \$25.00

## **ABOUT THE BOOK**

Kambri Crews always knew that her childhood was unusual—she spent most of it in a tin shack deep in the dense woods of rural Texas with her deaf parents, wishing she, too, had been born deaf. Now, Crews shares her unflinching, emotional memoir **BURN DOWN THE GROUND**. In the vein of Jeannette Walls and Augusten Burroughs, it is a riveting account that deftly turns personal tragedy and deprivation into an extraordinary American tale of true grit, humor, and adventure.

In **BURN DOWN THE GROUND**, Crews, now a successful producer, publicist, and performer in New York City, recounts the rampant dysfunction of her childhood against the backdrop of a tight-knit deaf community that embraced her parents—her beautiful mother, saint like, and her handsome father, who was more of a sinner. However, strong, gregarious, and hardworking, her father managed to turn a wild plot of land into a family homestead complete with running water and electricity. To his daughter, he was Daniel Boone, Frank Lloyd Wright, Ben Franklin, and Elvis all rolled into one. But the isolation that accompanied her father's deafness unlocked a fierce temper—a rage that teenaged Crews witnessed the first time he attacked her mother.

**BURN DOWN THE GROUND** is a smart mix of brutal honesty and blunt humor as Crews confronts the searing violence that has her father now serving a twenty-year sentence in a maximum security prison, their complicated bond as she tries to forge a new connection between them, and the long road she took to her current life.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Kambri Crews owns and operates Ballyhoo Promotions, a PR and production company specializing in stand up comedy, and is the comedy booker for the 92YTribeca. A renowned storyteller and public speaker, she has recently appeared at Ohioana Book Festival, The Moth, UCB Theatre, Gotham Comedy Club and SXSW Comedy Festival. She lives in Queens with her husband, comedian Christian Finnegan. Visit [www.kambricrews.com](http://www.kambricrews.com) for videos and photos that supplement her memoir.



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