



# BOOK CLUB KIT

*a spark will ignite her...*

# FURIA

*a novel*



YAMILE SAIED MÉNDEZ



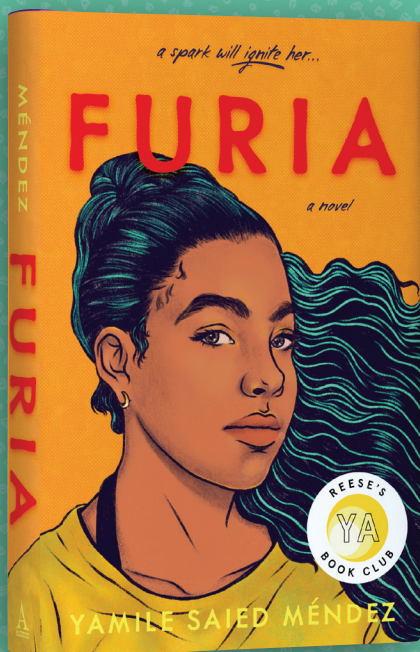


Dear Reader,  
Thank you for reading *Furia*! When I was growing up, I wanted to be a professional fútbol player and a writer. I never got my first wish. But writing *Furia* was the chance to express my love for the beautiful game, my hometown of Rosario, and all las futboleras and incorregibles who won't give up on their dreams—especially that of being free to live and love. I hope you enjoy it and share it widely!

Warmly,

*Yamile*

Yamile Saied Méndez



## The Music of *Furia*

This collection of songs inspired Yamile Saied Méndez as she wrote *Furia*, capturing the mood and emotion of her story. Head over to Spotify (<https://spoti.fi/329NMMq>) to listen!

**"Notte di febbraio,"** Nek

**"Amárrame,"** Mon Laferte & Juanes

**"En la Ciudad de la Furia,"** Soda Stereo

**"Adiós,"** Gustavo Cerati

**"En el Muelle de San Blas,"** Maná

**"Maligno,"** Aterciopelados, feat. León Larregui

**"Cuéntame al Oído,"** La Oreja de Van Gogh

**"Mojada,"** Vilma Palma e Vampiros

**"Hurts Like Hell,"** Fleurie

**"Paren de Matarnos,"** Miss Bolivia

**"No Quiero,"** Yami Safdie, feat. Amorina

**"Somos Nosotros la Hinchada,"** Damas Gratis

**"Soy Sabalero (Versión Cancha),"** Los Palmeras

**"El Pibe de los Astilleros,"** Patricio Rey y sus Redonditos de Ricota

**"Arde la Ciudad,"** Mancha de Rolando

**"Amor A Primera Vista,"** Los Ángeles Azules, Belinda, Lalo Ebratt, feat. Horacio Palencia

**"Tema de Piluso,"** Fito Páez

Need some more tunes? Also check out Camila's Pregame Playlist, featuring the songs *Furia*'s heroine would play before a big game: <https://spoti.fi/2R69J8T>

## Would You Like to Host YAMILE SAIED MÉNDEZ at Your Book Club or Classroom?

Yamile is offering free Skype or Zoom author events for groups of 8 or more who read her novel before May 2021. To arrange a Skype or Zoom session with your book club, bookstore, library, or classroom, please visit <https://yamilesmendez.com>.

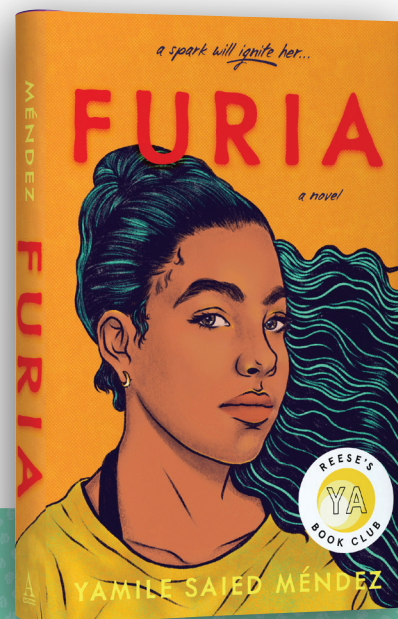




# FURIA

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why is Camila given the nickname “la Furia,” and how does she embody “fury” both on and off the field?
2. The book opens with the line “Lies have short legs.” In the novel, what lies does Camila tell herself and others, and what lies is she told? What are the effects of those lies?
3. Ni Una Menos, which means “Not Even One More,” is a feminist movement that began in Argentina that condemns violence against women. What role does the Ni Una Menos movement play in Camila’s life? How do the general attitudes toward women and violence in her community affect Camila’s decisions?
4. Camila has a complicated relationship with her brother, Pablo. How does Pablo’s fútbol career affect Camila’s family life? In what ways does Pablo help Camila, and in what ways does he fall short of being the big brother she wants him to be?
5. When a green flag signifying the pro-choice movement is waved at Camila’s first fútbol match, someone complains, “Don’t bring politics into the game!” How are politics central to Camila’s life as an athlete? How does this relate to other debates about the role of politics in sports?
6. Camila looks to la Difunta Correa, a saint who died trying to save her husband, for protection throughout the novel. What does the story of la Difunta Correa say about expectations for women in Camila’s community? In what ways does Camila struggle with these expectations, in her family and her romantic relationship?
7. What scares Camila about seeing Luciano in his La Valeria uniform on the bus? How does the risk of injury haunt an athlete’s career? How does seeing Luciano affect how Camila reacts to her own injury?
8. How does the relationship between Camila’s parents weigh on their family? Why do they stay together even though they both seem unhappy? How does Camila’s relationship with each parent affect the decisions she makes and the secrets she keeps?
9. While tutoring at El Buen Pastor, Camila thinks: “Karen and I were on different paths headed to the same destination: Freedom, a place as mythical as heaven.” What is the freedom both girls seek? How might Karen’s love of literature inspire her to live a life similar to or different from Camila’s?
10. What changes in Camila that finally causes her to tell her mother the truth about her love of fútbol and to stand up to her father?
11. Throughout the story, Camila calls on the strength and memory of her female ancestors. How have those women contributed to where Camila finds herself at the end? In what ways is Camila paving the way for the women who come after her?
12. In the last line of the book, Camila’s reply to Diego is “the one and only.” What does this say about her personal growth? What do you think this means for her future with fútbol, Diego, and her family?





# EXPLORING ROSARIO

## The City That Shaped *Furia*



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**ROSARIO, ARGENTINA**, is situated in the province of Santa Fe by the shores of the Paraná River, one of the main rivers of South America, bringing with it access to the Atlantic Ocean. Rosario is known for its exports: grains, cattle, and fútbol players.

I love the river. The scent of it. The way the sun glints and shimmers on it. The river is the lifeblood of the city, and everything revolves around it. It was only natural that Diego would miss it so much.

Also by the river is one of Rosario's icons: the **MONUMENTO NACIONAL A LA BANDERA**. Argentina's blue-and-white flag was created and flown on the shores of the Paraná. In that location today stands a marble ship to commemorate the occasion. At its heart burns the fire of eternal Argentine-ness that honors unnamed fallen Argentine soldiers.



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**PARQUE ESPAÑA** hosts recreational and cultural events. Camila and Diego race to the top of these stairs, and they are also special to me. I had my first kiss on them, a long, long time ago.





And the tour of the river wouldn't be complete without the **WORLD CUP STADIUM OF ROSARIO CENTRAL, EL GIGANTE DE ARROYITO**. The fervor of the Rosario Central fans (Canallas/Scoundrels) is out of this world. As Fito Páez sings, "I'm not from here, and I'm not from there. And I'm a scoundrel from the tenderest age . . ."

## WOMEN AND SOCCER

The Argentine Association Football League was founded in 1893 in Buenos Aires by Alexander Watson Hutton, who is considered the father of Argentine football. Although women played football from the very beginning, they were not able to professionalize until 2018, and in 2019 Argentine women finally had a professional football team in the World Cup. None of this would have been possible without the work of early feminists who fought for equality of opportunities for women and girls on and off the pitch.

Here is my brother already waving his Central banner. I am on the far left, and the baby in the middle is our sister.



We take our colors to the grave.





Although Father Hugo is fictional, **EL BUEN PASTOR** is a real institution founded in the late 1800s. It has been recently reclaimed and renovated by the neighborhood to function as a refuge and rehabilitation center for people experiencing homelessness and addiction. Community leaders also offer workshops in sewing, woodworking, gardening, and more. Although this property's current standing and function in barrio Tablada is similar to the fictional one in the novel, when I started writing *Furia*, the church and the home that had served as an asylum and jail had been abandoned for more than 13 years.

Every time I go back home, I visit my barrio, 7 de Septiembre, although my family doesn't live there anymore. It's also known as **BARRIO METALÚRGICO** because it was created for the families of the metal workers from the area. My family was one of the first ones to receive an apartment in January 1983, and when we first moved in, the trees that tower over the buildings today were mere seedlings. There were three schools, a plaza, and a medical clinic, which still stand to this day, serving more than 25,000 people.



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## NI UNA MENOS

The Argentine people don't ask for miracles from only the saints when they need help. They also take to the streets to demand change and justice. The Ni Una Menos movement (translated as "Not Even One More") started in 2015 after the murder of fourteen-year-old Chiara Páez by her boyfriend and father of their unborn child. Chiara wasn't the first and, sadly, hasn't been the last victim of the widespread violence perpetrated against girls and women, both cis and trans, in South America. The movement has grown to include other topics such as wage equality and access to legal abortion.

In the '80s, the white handkerchiefs of the mothers and grandmothers clamoring for their children and grandchildren who disappeared during the military dictatorship became a symbol of justice and hope. Now, the green handkerchief of Ni Una Menos has come to represent the feminist movement.



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**DEOLINDA CORREA** isn't recognized by the Catholic Church as a saint, but there are shrines in her honor all over the country. This one is in Mendoza, Argentina. Like Camila, people bring Deolinda the water she needed in the desert.





In spite of the economic and social problems that affect my country, I miss Rosario every day. Writing *Furia* was a way for me to go home, even if it was only in my imagination. Fortunately, I always have my mate by my side, and if I'm lucky, an alfajor. Or if I'm extra homesick, I make one of my favorite dishes, gnocchi, from scratch!

## THE WRITERS THAT CHANGED CAMILA'S LIFE

The following are some of the real-life South American authors whose stories influenced Camila (and me). Enjoy some of the best art our continent has to offer.

Alfonsina Storni

Gabriela Mistral

Alma Maritano

María Elena Walsh

Elsa Bornemann

Laura Devetach

Liliana Bodoc

Florencia Bonelli

Agustina María Bazterrica

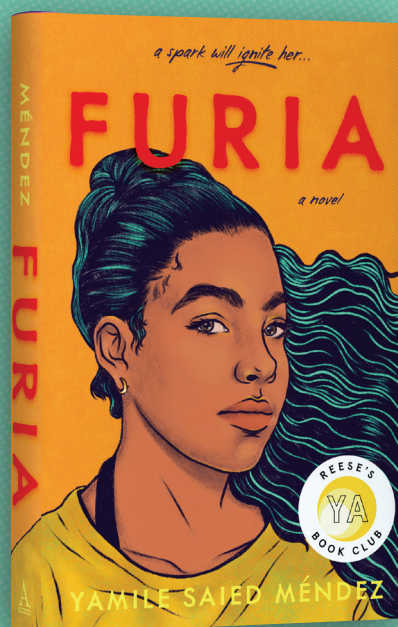
Samanta Schweblin

Mariana Enríquez

Claudia Piñeiro

Selva Almada

Natalia Rodríguez Simón





# In Conversation with SOL MADARIAGA

## Audiobook narrator for *Furia*

### What did you do to prepare before you began recording?

My main background is in theater, so besides the usual highlighting/annotating of the text that all narrators do, I like to use the tools I would normally utilize when prepping for a show. Whether it be Shakespeare or narrating, getting to know your lead's POV and essence at its core will dictate the work you do, more so in this medium. For *Furia* specifically, I have the benefit of firsthand experience, having been to Rosario multiple times and knowing very well the character archetypes that Yamile has put at the forefront of this story.

### How well do you know the game of football/soccer?

There are fundamentally no Argentines that don't know fútbol extremely well—even if you haven't played it much past your high school's gym classes (like me), you know the game.

### Is it true that your father grew up in Rosario, where the book is set?

That is true! My father's parents immigrated from Aragon after the Spanish Civil War and settled in Rosario, where my father was born and lived until he was 18, after which he left to study in the US (like me!). My grandmother's sister still lives in Rosario, along with her children. They manage the family hotel, which to this day still hosts Central's fútbol players after matches.

### Do you feel the author accurately captured the feel of life in Rosario?

Yamile did a heartbreakingly good job at depicting the macho culture that is very much ingrained in most Argentine provinces, which haven't quite caught up to #MeToo. More than that, she understands that to tell Camila's story, making money and education a central part of *Furia* is essential. If anything, I find that Yamile's handling of Rosario's socioeconomic status and the work that still needs to be done to build a safe environment for girls is what makes the world of the novel feel so authentic. She manages to do all this without preaching at you but rather by putting up a mirror to the city of Rosario.

### Do you have a favorite scene or section of the book?

Well, I cried while reading and recording the airport scene at the end—it hit very close to home—and all the fútbol scenes were a delight to read. But the part that made everything click for me in terms of story, and that I had to re-record because I cried through it, interestingly enough, was one of the acknowledgments at the very end. Yamile thanks her mother and says, “Mami, you broke the cycle.” I'm a sucker for stories of healing after generational trauma, and while I was aware that this particular theme occupies a significant part of *Furia*, the key space that it takes up within Camila's journey didn't click until then.

### If you could ask Yamile one question, what would it be?

Where do I find myself a boy like Diego?!

Okay, two questions. Where's our Karen sequel? We need to know what happens to our little incorregible.

The audiobook edition of *Furia* is available from Workman Audio.

