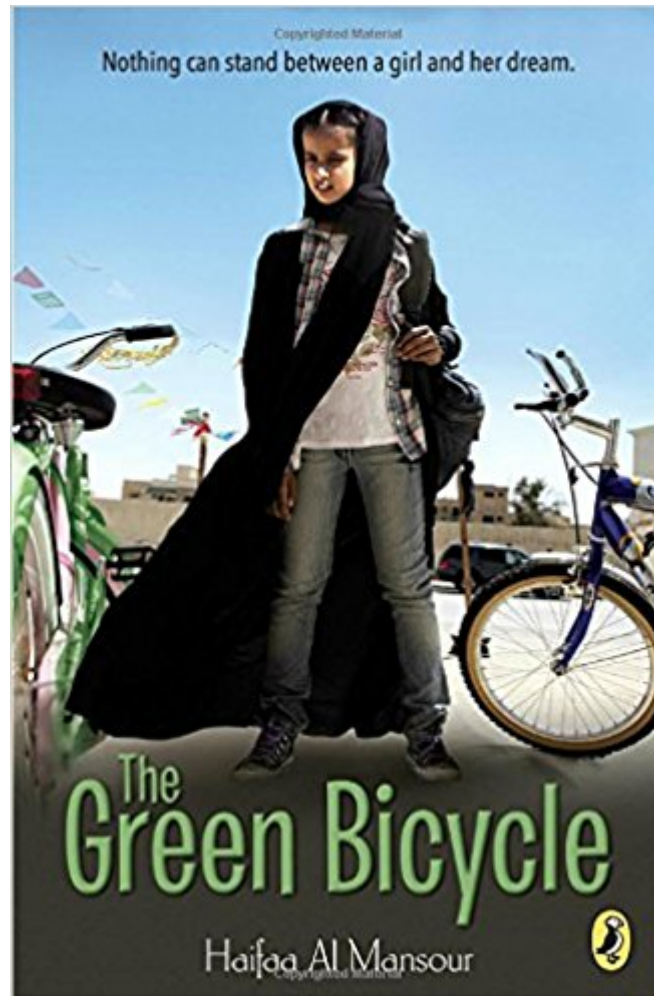




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The Green Bicycle



In the vein of *Year of the Dog* and *The Higher Power of Lucky*, this Middle Eastern coming-of-age story is told with warmth, spirit, and a mischievous sense of humor. Spunky eleven-year-old Wadjda lives in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia with her parents. She desperately wants a bicycle so that she can race her friend Abdullah, even though it is considered improper for girls to ride bikes. Wadjda earns money for her dream bike by selling homemade bracelets and mixtapes of banned music to her classmates. But after she's caught, she's forced to turn over a new leaf (sort of), or risk expulsion from school. Still, Wadjda keeps scheming, and with the bicycle so closely in her sights, she will stop at nothing to get what she wants. Set against the shifting social attitudes of the Middle East, *The Green Bicycle* explores gender roles, conformity, and the importance of family, all with wit and irresistible heart.

Gr 4-5 In 2012, Al Mansour directed the film *Wadjda* and made history by becoming the first female Saudi Arabian filmmaker to shoot a full-length movie; here, she adapts her successful work for a middle grade audience, with mixed results. Hewing close to the original film, Al Mansour tells the story of *Wadjda*, a rebellious and snarky 11-year-old Saudi Arabian girl. In a

society that prizes modesty and piety in women, Wadjda clashes with authority: fiercely independent, she talks back to adults, listens to Western music, and yearns for a green bicycle she sees in a toy store. When her wayward habits land her in trouble yet again, she decides to go in a new direction by taking part in her school's Koran competition in order to obtain the prize money and purchase the coveted bike. Wadjda is a well-executed character: despite her feisty nature, she's vulnerable and flawed, and her story will resonate with boys and girls alike. However, whereas in Wadjda, striking visual imagery conveyed the girl's desire for freedom, here, Al Mansour relies on often-clunky prose to describe every action, thought, or emotion. The author often pauses to explain the cultural context of various elements of Saudi culture (the significance of the veil, the concept of a second wife), which provides helpful background for readers unfamiliar with the region but feels purposeful and overwritten compared with the far more artful film. VERDICT The original source material wins out here; however, those seeking to introduce students to Saudi Arabian culture should consider this title. —Mahnaz Dar, School Library Journal --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

"A winningly told story of struggle, solidarity, and optimism." —Kirkus Reviews "Wadjda is a well-executed character: despite her feisty nature, she's vulnerable and flawed, and her story will resonate with boys and girls alike." —School Library Journal "Al Mansour's debut novel is a revelatory glimpse into a culture unfamiliar to many American readers." —Booklist "This novel has a cinematic sense of place...accessibly written and stealthily gripping." —Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books "Fans of feisty protagonists will love this book and root for Wadjda from beginning to end." —School Library Connection This middle grade novel is based on the acclaimed film Wadjda! "A slyly subversive delight." —Dana Stevens, Slate.com "Wadjda is something rare." —The Village Voice "Guaranteed to charm." —Variety "Lively and sly... a cultural thunderclap." —NPR.org From the Hardcover edition.

I loved the story! Especially the courage and tenacity and joy embraced by the heroine, Wadjda.

gave this book as a gift. receiver says that she loves it.

Excellent read for all.

Set in modern day Saudi Arabia, this middle grade fiction book tells the story of Wadjda, a spunky eleven year old girl who is challenging what is expected of her. As I was reading, the scenes sprung to life, as if in a movie. I thought it would be fabulous as a movie and was excited to read in the "About the Author" section at the end, that this is the author's debut novel and was based on her award winning feature film "Wadjda". This would be a fantastic book for readers of any age to gain insight into everyday life in Saudi Arabia. The writing is simple enough for middle grade readers yet still engaging for older readers. I received this book free from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

A beautiful #ownvoices middle grade novel about a Saudi girl's determination to buy her own bicycle. I appreciated how Al Mansour gets middle grade relationships just right: Wadjda has a good friend in Abdullah--most of the time. She loves and admires her mother--but she's frustrated by her, too. And she doesn't care about fitting in at school--except when she wants the rebel girls to notice her. A powerful story, simply told.

full of spirit and spunk! We need more Wadjdas in the world who can stand up and follow their dreams! My full review here:[...]

Loved this book.

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