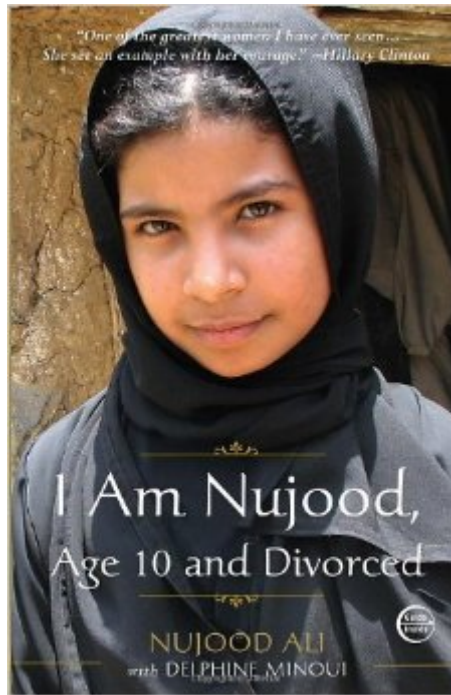


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I Am Nujood, Age 10 And Divorced



Synopsis

“I am a simple village girl who has always obeyed the orders of my father and brothers. Since forever, I have learned to say yes to everything. Today I have decided to say no.” Nujood Ali’s childhood came to an abrupt end in 2008 when her father arranged for her to be married to a man three times her age. With harrowing directness, Nujood tells of abuse at her husband’s hands and of her daring escape. With the help of local advocates and the press, Nujood obtained her freedom—an extraordinary achievement in Yemen, where almost half of all girls are married under the legal age. Nujood’s courageous defiance of both Yemeni customs and her own family has inspired other young girls in the Middle East to challenge their marriages. Hers is an unforgettable story of tragedy, triumph, and courage.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This short book, which I read in a single sitting, astounded me with its narrative and left me feeling a mix of anger and incredulity upon completing it. Before reading this book, I’d read about Nujood Ali, who has been described as possessing a "precocious self-assurance." After reading the book, it’s clearly an accurate description of a young girl who refuses to accept a situation that she knows is wrong. In doing so, it turns out, she opens the door for long-overdue change. Nujood doesn’t live an easy life as a young girl in Yemen, but she still finds time to enjoy her childhood. Her father, who has two wives, seems incapable of supporting them on his meager salary, and the rest of the family must find ways to make ends meet. Her father, in an effort to ease his own burden, agrees to an arranged marriage with a man three times Nujood’s age, with the condition that he not consummate

the marriage until one year after her first period. The new husband breaks that promise on the very night of their wedding, and from that point forward continues to beat her and rape her nightly. This is not consensual sex, but child rape, pure and simple. The story that unfolds from that point forward is nothing short of amazing. It's also heartening to learn that right from the beginning of her ordeal, several Yemenese men stepped forward to stand up for her rights, even while knowing that Sharia law and local customs would be working against them. It is also important to realize that educated, empowered women in these countries are also willing to step forward and challenge such destructive customs and laws, and one of them, Shada Nasser, becomes her lawyer and champion.

Nujood Ali, a ten-year old Yemeni girl forced into marriage with a repulsive older man, refuses to put up with the injustice of the terrible abuse she suffers daily at his hands. Against tremendous odds, she will not back down until she gets what she wants: a divorce. Nujood tells her own amazing story with the help of co-author Delphine Minoui. This inspiring book, which comes out in February 2010, has already been translated into 16 languages. The eleven chapters, plus epilogue, alternate between her determined legal battle beginning at the court house in the capital city of Sana'a, and the idealic early childhood in a remote village, leading up to her the disastrous union with her abuser. Bucking the forces of age-old customs, family disapproval, and the tabu of "bringing shame to her family", Nujood's bravery and determination never flicker nor flag. She is completely sure of the justice of her cause, of her own self worth, and her faith in God. Really, Nujood is just a regular kid, like any other; she likes to play, to draw pictures and learn to read, and she loves her family--not so different really than millions of other girls who live in this mostly impoverished society, where men have the final word, no questions asked. But she has an internal strength to never question herself, and the simple belief that right will win out. I think that, although Nujood's world may seem impossibly remote to our own, her book has universal appeal. It's the story of courage, of human rights, of passion and of compassion. Little Nujood manages to find powerful allies within the justice system, including a remarkable attorney named Shada, and international support from women's and human rights groups, such as Oxfam.

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