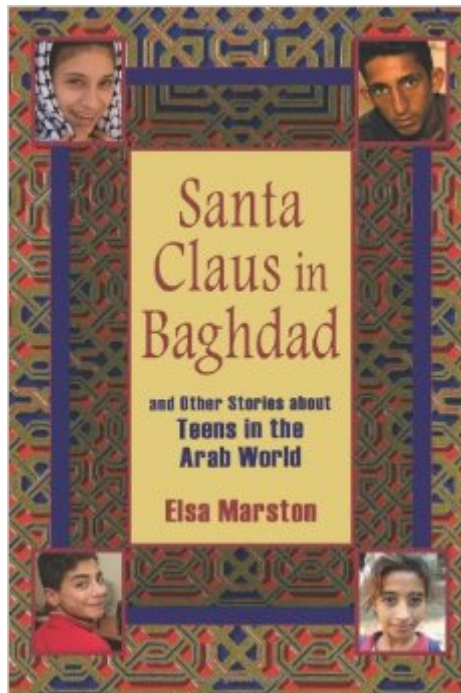


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# Santa Claus In Baghdad And Other Stories About Teens In The Arab World



## Synopsis

What is it like to be a young person in the Arab world today? This lively collection of eight short stories about Arab teenagers living in Iraq, Tunisia, Egypt, the West Bank, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and a Palestinian refugee camp engagingly depicts young people's experiences growing up in the Middle East. The characters, drawn from urban and rural settings and from different classes as well as a mix of countries, confront situations involving friends, family, teachers, and society at large. Along with some specifically Middle Eastern issues, such as strife in Iraq, the hardships of life in a Palestinian refugee camp, and honor crimes, the young people deal with more familiar concerns such as loyalty to friends, overcoming personal insecurities, dreams of a future career, and coping with divorcing parents. Coming of age in a complicated world, they meet life with courage, determination, and, not least of all, humor. With accompanying notes that provide contextual information, *Santa Claus in Baghdad* brings a fresh perspective to youth literature about the Arab world.

## Book Information

Paperback: 198 pages

Publisher: Indiana University Press (May 13, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0253220041

ISBN-13: 978-0253220042

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.5 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (7 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #881,807 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #201 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Middle East](#) #266 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > World Literature > Middle Eastern](#) #6953 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Short Stories & Anthologies > Anthologies](#)

Age Range: 11 - 15 years

Grade Level: 6 - 10

## Customer Reviews

I chose this rating for a few reasons: the book arrived earlier than expected, in great condition (no writing or markings) and has a really wide variety of stories. I felt like it was a good representation of the diversity within Middle Eastern cultures. The stories were moving, heartbreaking, encouraging

and funny- I think teens in the U.S. (or any English speaking populations really) would appreciate the stories, and would be able to identify with many of the stories and characters within the book.

Half a world away, are children really all that different? "Santa Claus in Baghdad: And Other Stories about Teens in the Arab World" is a collection of stories that although fictional, express the real thoughts and beliefs of many Arabic Teens in the modern world. Showing the issues that Arabic students face, American readers will learn to empathize with these teens and not be scared of something they don't understand. "Santa Claus in Baghdad" is a unique anthology of stories, highly recommended to young adult readers everywhere.

For today's American teenager, this is a "must read". Our society is now increasingly multi-cultural while world cultures are being thrust together at an excellerating, sometimes violent rate. This means that awakening in young people a better understanding of Arabs and their culture is becoming vital. SANTA CLAUS IN BAGHDAD does that in a non-preachy, enjoyable way. Through these stories, we dip into the lives of eight teens growing up in the Arab world. Some stories are told in first person, some in third, some from a girl's point of view, some from a boy's. The physical and cultural settings differ from each other and even more from what the average American reader knows. However, it is the similarities linking the reader and the story characters that are most important. The young people portrayed here all share emotions and hopes that will resonate with any teen - anywhere. All are linked by the common theme of duty -- duty to one's self, to one's beliefs and to one's friends and family. I can't praise this book enough, and wish that the adults currently managing our country had read and absorbed this book when they were young. It's message, that despite our differences we are all the same underneath, is one we all need to internalize.

This book let's you experience a different side of the Middle East. Through the reading of this book I learned how the history of this region of the earth impacts the people who live there today. The best story is "Honor." I would highly recommend this book being used in schools.

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