



The Servant

By Fatima Sharafeddine

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Faten's happy life in her village comes to an abrupt end when her father arranges for her to work as a maid for a wealthy Beirut family with two spoiled daughters. What does a bright, ambitious 17-year-old do when she is suddenly deprived of her friends, family, education, and freedom? Enlisting the help of Marwan, the mysterious, wealthy young man who lives in the next apartment building, Faten finally figures out how to pursue her studies in secret. Even against the uncertain backdrop of the civil war, their romance develops, as Marwan and Faten conspire to exchange notes and meet at an idyllic seaside café. But in Lebanese society the differences in religion, class, and wealth are stacked against them, and their parents have very different ideas about what their futures should be. An engaging and lucidly written coming-of-age novel.

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The Servant By Fatima Sharafeddine Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 8 Up—Forced to supplement her family's income, Faten must leave behind her village, friends, and schooling to work as a maid in Beirut for a family with two daughters and an unkind, demanding housewife. As she goes about her daily chores, she dreams of returning to school and becoming a nurse in the war-torn city. With the aid of another housekeeper in her building, she seeks help from an admired stranger in the building across the street. Marwan not only facilitates the testing Faten will need to enter college, but he also becomes her clandestine love interest. The teen's plans suddenly come to a halt when her employer discovers that she has lied to them about the days she spent away from work to take her baccalaureate exams. Suddenly, Faten is unemployed and sent back to her hometown where she must convince her angry father that investing in her education will bring the family more money than she makes as a housekeeper. Faten creates an ambitious and independent plan to continue her studies and return to Beirut. This quick, straightforward, Cinderella story mirrors the plight of young girls all over the world who are forced to sacrifice their own goals to support their families. However, this modern-day fairy tale abandons the prince as the problem solver and instead features a heroine whose talent, work ethic, and ambition break the spell of servitude and poverty.—Lynn Rashid, Marriotts Ridge High School, Marriottsville, MDα(c) Copyright 2013. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

From [Booklist](#)

When Faten turns 17, her father sends her away from her Lebanese mountain village and forces her to work as a servant for a privileged family in Beirut. Her dream is to become a nurse, and after her housework is done, she secretly studies with the help of a kind elderly neighbor and a handsome young engineering student, Marwan. Translated from Arabic by the Lebanese author, the rapid present-tense narrative is a powerful take on the Cinderella story. Never simplistic, the story's twists and turns are surprising. The daughter in the privileged family is spoiled and mean, but she is also a prisoner of the social mold as she dreams of studying modern art and resists an arranged marriage. Even Marwan is tempted by an arranged marriage with an American. Can Faten break free? The novel's climax is when Faten takes the nursing exam at last. The contemporary story is sure to hold readers with its depiction of personal struggles behind the news images of turmoil. Grades 6-9. --Hazel Rochman

Review

"Shortly after he enters his building, the young man appears in his apartment. Faten watches his movements from the corner of the little window in her room. He appears here. Disappears. Reappears there. He plays the piano sometimes, and Faten watches. Her heart jumps at every glimpse she gets of him."
— from the book

Selected for the American Library Associations's Amelia Bloomer Project List

"[Faten's story] will draw in young readers preoccupied with society, challenging parents and their own fears." — *The New York Times*

"Fans of literary and historical fiction will be drawn to this rich portrayal of the challenges faced and opportunities forged by brave young women in patriarchal, war-torn Lebanon." — *Kirkus Reviews*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Cathleen Read:

This The Servant book is not ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you get by reading this book will be information inside this reserve incredible fresh, you will get details which is getting deeper you read a lot of information you will get. This specific The Servant without we recognize teach the one who studying it become critical in contemplating and analyzing. Don't become worry The Servant can bring once you are and not make your carrier space or bookshelves' become full because you can have it within your lovely laptop even cellphone. This The Servant having good arrangement in word and layout, so you will not sense uninterested in reading.

Caleb Jones:

As people who live in the modest era should be revise about what going on or data even knowledge to make these people keep up with the era which is always change and move ahead. Some of you maybe will update themselves by studying books. It is a good choice to suit your needs but the problems coming to an individual is you don't know what kind you should start with. This The Servant is our recommendation to make you keep up with the world. Why, as this book serves what you want and wish in this era.

Richard Freed:

The guide with title The Servant includes a lot of information that you can learn it. You can get a lot of help after read this book. This kind of book exist new understanding the information that exist in this book represented the condition of the world today. That is important to yo7u to understand how the improvement of the world. This book will bring you throughout new era of the internationalization. You can read the e-book on your smart phone, so you can read that anywhere you want.

Sherman Etheridge:

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