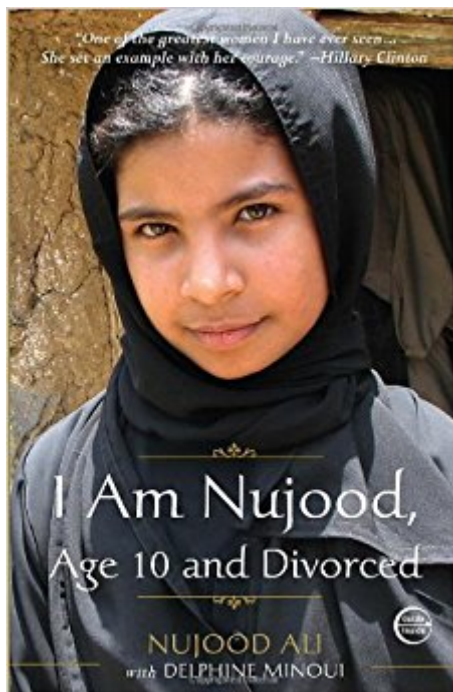


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I Am Nujood, Age 10 And Divorced



Synopsis

She is 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.

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Customer Reviews

Chosen by Glamour magazine as a Woman of the Year in 2008, Nujood of Yemen has become an international hero for her astonishingly brave resistance to child marriage. Sold off by her impoverished family at the age of 10, continually raped by her husband before she even reached puberty, Nujood found the courage to run away, and with the help of an activist lawyer, sympathetic judges, and the international press, she divorced her husband and returned home. Her clear, first-person narrative, translated from the French and written with Minoui, is spellbinding: the horror of her parents' betrayal and her mother-in-law's connivance, the grown-ups who send the child from classroom and toys to nightmare abuse. She never denies the poverty that drives her parents and oppresses her brothers, even as she reveals their cruelty. Unlike her passive mother,

she is an activist, thrilled to return to school, determined to save others, including her little sister. True to the child's viewpoint, the grown-up's cruelty is devastating. Readers will find it incredible that such unbelievable abuse and such courageous resistance are happening now.

--Hazel Rochman

"A powerful new autobiography...It's hard to imagine that there have been many younger divorcees or braver ones than a pint-size third grader named Nujood Ali." Nicholas Kristof, New York Times "Shocking...captures the social challenges facing Yemen better than any scholarly work could hope to do." Washington Post "Her case has brought international exposure to the archaic practice of robbing girls of their youth." People (Four Stars) "An international icon of tenacity and courage." New Yorker "One of the greatest women I have ever seen . . . She set an example with her courage." Hillary Clinton "This book took my breath away. It broke my heart but put it back together again with a renewed hope in the staggering power of the human spirit. What Nujood did to save her life was a miracle; that she did it as a ten-year-old child is, quite simply, astounding." Carolyn Jessop, author of *Escape and Triumph* "Nujood and all other girls like her who are traded like objects deserve to be heard. This important book gives them a voice and sheds light on an ugly secret that has destroyed the lives of children for centuries." Marina Nemat, author of *Prisoner of Tehran* "Simple and straightforward in its telling, this is an informative and thoroughly engaging narrative." Publishers Weekly

As you can tell from the title, this book focuses on a very disturbing topic - child abuse. Unfortunately, the forced marriage of young girls to older men is an all too common occurrence in many areas of the world. Nujood is only one such victim. This book tells her story. Essentially sold by her deadbeat father to a man more than three times her age, Nujood's childhood comes to an abrupt end. At ten years old, she is repeatedly beaten and raped by her new husband. She is also moved to a remote village where she further isolated from anyone that might be able to help her. Eventually, she is able to go to visit family in the city. After her own parents fail to help her, she is able to get some guidance from one of her father's other wives. Then, this incredibly brave little girl sets out for the courthouse to ask for a divorce. I could not get over how courageous this ten year-old little girl had to be. What she did would be intimidating in any country, much less in a country where women are extremely oppressed and viewed as property. Yet, this little girl was brave enough to walk into a courthouse and demand to see a judge and ask for a divorce. I was in

awe of this young girl. Thankfully, the judges decide to take up Nujood's cause. She is given a "safe haven" of sorts while the case is brought before the court. Since Nujood was younger than the legal age for marriage in Yemen, her father and husband were brought up on charges. From there on out, the court proceedings turned into a bit of a circus. Nujood's case made international news and she became a sort of poster-child for women's rights and child abuse organizations. Meanwhile, her father and husband alternated between placing blame on the other and trying to plead ignorance and innocence on their own part. It was pathetic. Eventually, the men responsible paid a small fine and Nujood was granted her divorce. While the divorce was unheard of and paved the way for other young girls in the Middle East to speak out, the forced marriage of young girls is still a huge problem. Of course, that is only one manifestation of a much larger problem. Nonetheless, in a place where women and children have virtually no rights, this was a remarkable case. From start to finish, I was taken in by Nujood's story. My heart broke for this young girl, who was the same age as my oldest daughter. I can't even begin to imagine maltreatment that girls like Nujood are forced to endure. Once again, I am reminded of how lucky I am to have been born in a region of the world where women have rights. As the mother of two young girls, this is something that is never far from my mind. Although this didn't prove to be the in-depth expose that I had hoped for, it was definitely a worthwhile read. At less than 200 pages, or around 2 hours of listening time, Nujood's story serves to raise awareness of a very important topic. While this isn't the type of story that you read for enjoyment, it is the type that you read for enlightenment. It is painful, but necessary to read stories like Nujood's. I won't pretend that everything worked out like I would've liked. The granting of her divorce was only one triumph, in a world of defeats for women. Nujood was ultimately returned to the very person that sold her in the first place. Where is the logic in that? I can't help but wonder where Nujood is now, nine years later. I can't help but wonder if her notoriety has turned her into a cash cow for the very father that shared responsibility for her abuse in the first place.

This is a remarkable book. Yemen, the poorest country in the Arab Peninsula, has had a long and checkered history and is now a major battleground in the war on terrorism. It is the last place you would expect to become a center in the age-old struggle for women's rights, and Nujood Ali, a ten-year old girl, was an unlikely hero. When her desperately poor father sold her into marriage to a much older man, she suffered months of horrific abuse before finding the courage to rebel, becoming the first child-bride in Yemen history to be granted divorce. Remarkably the judges at the courthouse were genuinely sympathetic to her plight, and she found lawyers and journalists ready to fight for her. Later, as she found out more about her family's history, she came to understand why

her father acted as he did, but she never forgave her "husband," whom she refers throughout the book as "The Monster." "I Am Nujood" contains fascinating insights into Yemeni culture, family life, and the role of women, and sheds a light on the often abysmal plight of women in the Muslim world. Like Malala Yusefzai, Nujood is a hero for the ages.

I gave this 5 stars because there is nothing wrong with the content or how it was written. It's just a very, very sad, gut wrenching story. If you look up population statistics for the most population growth, it is sadly the severely troubled countries like Yemen and Afghanistan. Men are apparently allowed to take multiple wives, whether or not they can afford to support them and the multitude of children that follow. Then when they become desperate, the fathers will "sell" their daughters off as brides. They have been sold as young as 6 years old, and with the supposed "promise" that they won't be touched until 1 year after they start menstruating... of course the 'groom', who may be 30-50 or more years of age, does not wait. It seemed that poor Nujood was finding a way out of her living hell, and to a point she did, in that she got away from the creep that she was forced to marry. However, according to what I recently read online, according to Yemen law, her father gets all the proceeds from the book, and instead of using it for the education and betterment of his existing family, the bastard took 3 new wives. This is when his first children were sent to beg on the streets! Except for the innocents who are there, it kinda makes you wish we could nuke countries with these reprehensible practices irresponsible breeding and that endorse the slavery raping of little girls.

Many people do not realize in most Arab nations girls are often married before their teen years or even puberty. In theory they are brought into the household of their husband's family as a sister until they are old enough to take on the role as wife, in actual practice most are little more than a slave to the household. Often the husband will force the child into sexual relationships. Many young girls become pregnant at the onset of puberty before she is mentally or physically ready to have a child. Nujood's story is of one child traded into marriage in exchange for money and to avoid the honor destroying shame brought to the family and especially the father if a girl is raped. Such a rape to an older sister had already shame and great financial loss to the family. Nujood was an extremely young and naive small village girl. I feel her lack of fully understanding how severe her task of seeking a divorce was the thing that made her discover the great strength she had within herself to try this unheard of feat. That she found such understanding and helpful support in the legal system is encouraging.

I have to say that this girl is VERY BRAVE. In the country that she lives in I don't know if I would have had the nerve to challenge their system! Women complain all the time how unfair this country is ... they should read about the country this girl lives in. Glad I'm an American!

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