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Ayan, of the Lucky

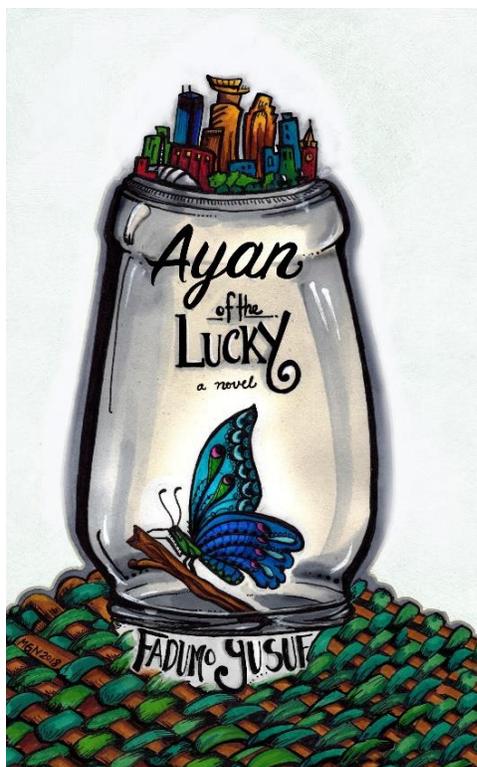
Ayan, of the Lucky is an exquisite novel about the emotional turmoil of loss and refuge, the powerful bonds of family and love, and the bright promise of a young woman's dream.

Ayan spends her days dreaming of being a doctor, but education is limited for a girl living in rural Somalia. Born into a nomadic family that raises goats and camels, Ayan longs to live in the city—Mogadishu—where she can fulfill her ambitions. With her grandmother's help, Ayan eventually travels to Mogadishu to live with her uncle and his family, and she attends school. But the garden wall surrounding her uncle's beautiful home cannot protect her forever, and the civil war soon appears at their doorstep. Ayan is forced to set out on a harrowing journey across the country as she seeks refuge. Through terrifying adventures and moments of touching generosity, Ayan arrives in Kenya, where she finds work as a maid, restarts her education, and discovers a love that alters the course of her life. Ultimately, she resettles in Minnesota, where she pursues her dream of being a doctor—now with all the challenges of a new life in a new land.

"Fadumo Yusuf has brought to us a remarkable story that is at once breathtaking, hope-inducing, and heartbreaking. She fuses an intimate knowledge of rural Somalia with the Somali-American experience to create a sweeping novel that will move you from anger to laughter within a single passage. We become invested in Ayan's journey from the very beginning and can see ourselves in her, no matter our background. That, to me, is the mark of a gifted storyteller who can unite entire communities in a time of unparalleled division. This book will change how you see your place in the world." - Said Shaiye, Writer

"Ayan's story is invaluable to me, a Somali born in the States. It is more than a story of a civil war. It is also a story of love, laughter, tradition, and resilience that brings together generations of Somali diaspora. This brilliant novel filled me with hope and kept me on edge." - Asma Ahmed, Somali-American Engineer

"In *Ayan, of the Lucky*, Fadumo has illuminated and addressed the pile of pain that Somalis have been through in the last thirty years or so, while articulating the uplifting layers of our commitment to care for one another. She has crafted a story that represents the resilient nature of Somalis." - Ahmed Ismail Yusuf, author of the 'Lion's Binding Oath and Other Stories'



Ayan, of the Lucky

Author: Fadumo Yusuf

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Cultural heritage
Contemporary women

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To order visit: Itascabooks

<https://itascabooks.com/ayan-of-the-lucky/>

Also available on Ingram, [Amazon](#), Burns and Nobles, and other retailers.

About the Author



Fadumo Yusuf (better known by her nickname, **Derbi**) is a Somali American author, engineer, and cultural-identity advocate. She was born in the Somali region of Ethiopia to Somali parents and immigrated with her family to Minneapolis, Minnesota, when she was a teenager. *Ayan, of the Lucky* is her first novel.

Fadumo obtained Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from University of St. Thomas and Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering from University of Minnesota. Fadumo currently works in the medical device industry where she works on developing new medical technologies.

Fadumo is an author featured in Green Card Voices book, *STEM Voice – Stories from Minnesota Immigrants Working in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math*.

Interview Questions

1. **What inspired you to write this book? What does this book mean to you?**

When I first started writing this book, I didn't really think too much about what this book meant to me, why I wanted to write it or what I wanted to achieve with it. I just kind of found myself writing it, it was like a visitor that knocked on my door and would not let go of me until I brought it to life. But as time went, it started to mean different things to me, there were two key things that it started to mean to me.

The first thing is that I wanted to shed some light on one of my favorite aspects of the Somali culture, the culture of showing kindness to others through the culture of storytelling. The Somali culture is an oral culture that uses stories to pass down history, morals and values. Growing up, I remember the many family members, relatives and neighbors who have told me countless stories. One of those stories having saved my life, in the literal sense.

The second thing that this book meant to me is that it is my very small contribution to the refugee and immigrant narratives. According to the UN refugee agency (UNHCR), by the end of 2018, nearly 71 Million people have been displaced due to conflict or persecution. And that number is growing by the second. One person is forcefully displaced as a result of conflict or persecution in every two seconds. Refugees are some of the most resilient and hopeful people that I know. Many immigrants and refugees have overcome unimaginable horrors, and many have amazing stories to tell. I wanted to write a story that contributed to that narrative, that showed the strength, the hopefulness and the resiliency that refugees and immigrants exhibit every single day.

2. **What is your writing process like? Do you write every day?**

My writing process is very random and disorganized. Somedays I can't stop writing and somedays I cannot manage to put couple of sentences together. No, I do not write every day. I would like to write every day, but I am not that disciplined.

3. **What has been the best compliment?**

There were two compliments that have filled my heart. One of the people who read the initial draft said that I wrote a novel that only I could have written. Another one said that Ayan, of the Lucky got her emotions riled up and that it was very captivating. She said that she had laughed, frowned, and cringed reading it.

4. **Are you working on another book?**

I want to focus on getting Ayan, of the Lucky out into the world at the moment, but I do plan to write more books. My goal is to continue writing for the rest of my life.

5. **What do you love most about the writing process?**

I love how freeing writing process is, it allows me to write from the deepest part of my heart. It enables me to express myself in ways that I could never otherwise express myself in. It helps me process my emotions and make sense of the world around me.

Media Assets

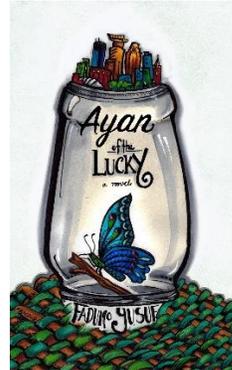
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Book: Ayan, of the Lucky



Author: Fadumo Yusuf



Cover: Ayan, of the Lucky



"To the children of this world who lost their homes to war and oppression.

May we all find peace and an accepting home." Fadumo Yusuf