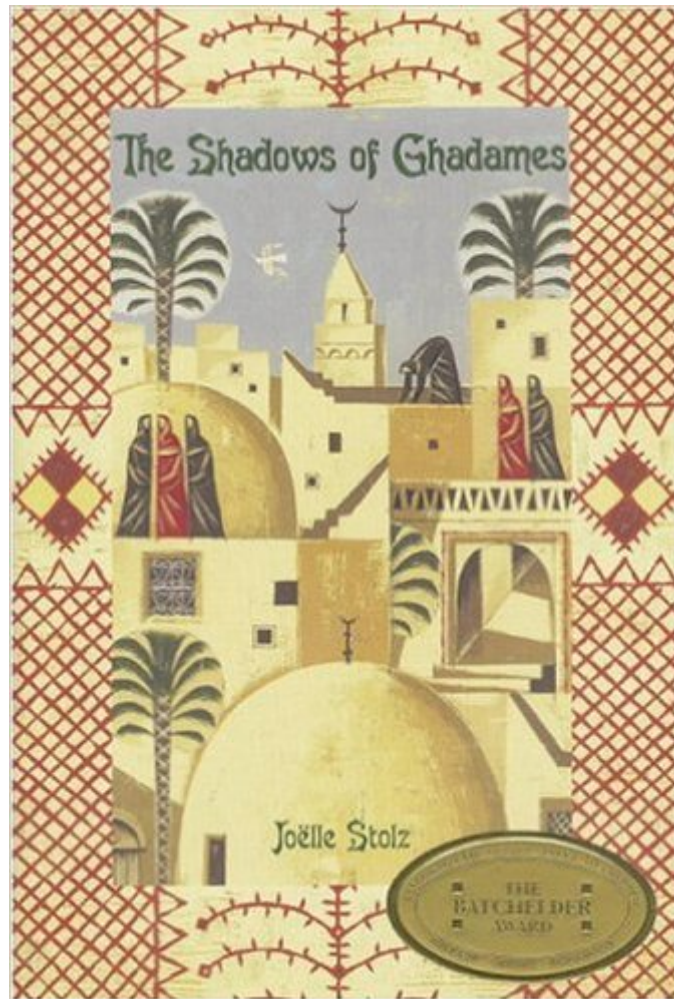


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# The Shadows Of Ghadames (Mildred L. Batchelder Award Book (Awards))



## Synopsis

IN THE LIBYAN CITY of Ghadames, Malika watches her merchant father depart on one of his caravan expeditions. She too yearns to travel to distant cities, and longs to learn to read like her younger brother. But nearly 12 years old, and soon to be of marriagable age, Malika knows that "like all Muslim women" she must be content with a more secluded, more limited life. Then one night a stranger enters her home . . . someone who disrupts the traditional order of things "and who affects Malika in unexpected ways." I was enchanted by this story of a brave Berber girl who dares to dream and its filigree of details about harem life, ancient trade routes, goddesses and healers. The real beauty of *The Shadows of Ghadames* is that it transcends the exotic to explore universal truths about the condition of being human.

—Suzanne Fisher Staples, author of Newbery Honor Book, *Shabanu: Daughter of the Wind*

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 920L (What's this?)

Series: Mildred L. Batchelder Award Book (Awards)

Hardcover: 119 pages

Publisher: Delacorte Books for Young Readers (October 12, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0385731043

ISBN-13: 978-0385731041

Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 0.5 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.6 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (3 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,605,344 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) [#80 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Africa](#) [#636 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Africa](#) [#860 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Religious Fiction > Other Religious Fiction](#)

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

A bit of context. When I reviewed "Shabanu: Daughter of the Wind" (a tale about a Pakistani nomadic daughter and her struggle against repression), I characterized it as a slow moving epic. The kind of thing that kids should read but that if you forced it down their gullets they'd immediately

detest. And though "The Shadows of Ghadames" is similar to "Shabanu" in a number of ways, I simply cannot repeat this advice. Here we have a small, unassuming, but brilliantly succinct encapsulation of the maturity of a young woman in late nineteenth century southern Libya. The book is fascinating and short, but says everything in its mere 118 pages that needs to be said. Unlike some historical fiction novels written for children, I'll be recommending this book to any and every kid I see. It's an infinitely interesting look at a world unlike our own but can (as "Shabanu" author Suzanne Fisher Staples says in her blurb on the back of the book), "explore universal truths about the condition of being human". Once again Malika's father is taking off from the city of Ghadames to sell his wares to lands distant from his daughter's home. As a girl, Malika is finding the freedoms she experienced as a child curtailed with the approach of puberty. Soon she will be condemned to remain on the rooftops of the city where all the women live, like her mother and her father's second wife Bilkisu. Malika challenges a society where she isn't allowed to learn to read and where the only garden she'll soon be seeing is the red one painted on the walls of the roofs. It isn't long before such brooding is changed to fear, however, when she and Bilkisu discover an injured man, hunted by the townspeople for preaching a different religion.

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