



# BOOK RESUME: WHEN STARS ARE SCATTERED

## BOOK SYNOPSIS

A National Book Award Finalist, this remarkable graphic novel is about growing up in a refugee camp, as told by a former Somali refugee to the Newbery Honor-winning creator of *Roller Girl*.

Omar and his younger brother, Hassan, have spent most of their lives in Dadaab, a refugee camp in Kenya. Life is hard there: never enough food, achingly dull, and without access to the medical care Omar knows his nonverbal brother needs. So when Omar has the opportunity to go to school, he knows it might be a chance to change their future . . . but it would also mean leaving his brother, the only family member he has left, every day.

Heartbreak, hope, and gentle humor exist together in this graphic novel about a childhood spent waiting, and a young man who is able to create a sense of family and home in the most difficult of settings. It's an intimate, important, unforgettable look at the day-to-day life of a refugee, as told to *New York Times* Bestselling author/artist Victoria Jamieson by Omar Mohamed, the Somali man who lived the story.

## REVIEWS AND PRAISE

★ "Jamieson's characteristically endearing art, warmly colored by Geddy, perfectly complements Omar's story, conjuring memorable and sympathetic characters who will stay with readers long after they close the book . . . This engaging, heartwarming story does everything one can ask of a book, and then some." —*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

★ "With this sensitive and poignant tale, Jamieson and Mohamed express the power of the human spirit to persevere." —*School Library Journal*, starred review

★ "Tragedy is certainly present throughout the story, yet Mohamed and Jamieson's focus on deep familial love and education works to subvert many refugee stereotypes." —*Horn Book*, starred review

★ "Jamieson and Mohamed together craft a cohesive, winding story that balances daily life and boredom, past traumas, and unforeseen outcomes alongside camp denizens' ingenuity and community . . . colorist Iman Geddy's deep purple skies drive home the title. The result of this team effort is a personal and poignant entry point for young readers trying to understand an unfair world." —*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

**Title:** When Stars Are Scattered

**Author:** Victoria Jamieson and Omar Mohamed;  
Illustrated by Victoria Jamieson and Iman Geddy

**Imprint:** Dial Books

**Publisher:** Penguin Young Readers

**On sale date:** April 14, 2020

**ISBN:** 9780525553915 and 9780525553908

**Format:** Hardcover and Paperback

**Age Range\*:** 9-12 years

**Grade Range:** Gr 4-8

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\*Publisher suggested age range covers the wide range of readers publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate range for their diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

★ "Mohamed's experience is unfortunately not unique, but it is told with grace, humility, and forgiveness. This beautiful memoir is not to be missed."  
—*Booklist*, starred review

★ "The graphic novel presentation and first person narration from the young narrator creates an immediacy and connection with the events of the story. Readers are quickly drawn into Omar's world and worry for him and his friends."  
—*School Library Connection*, starred review

"Over the next fifteen years chronicled in this moving, slightly fictionalized graphic novel, the boys grow to manhood in an overcrowded tent city . . . Jamieson's artwork, affectionately depicting resilient kids who manage to carve out lives in a community with few solid prospects, reprises the inviting ebullience readers will recognize from *Roller Girl* and *All's Faire*." —*Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*

### **AWARDS AND ACCOLADES**

- A New York Times Bestseller
- A National Book Award Finalist
- A Schneider Family Book Award, Middle School Honor
- A YALSA Great Graphic Novel for Teens
- AYALSA Quick Pick for Reluctant Young Adult Readers
- A YALSA Excellence in Nonfiction Nominee
- A Walter Award Winner (Younger Readers)
- A Amazon Best Children's Book of 2020
- A New York Times Book Review Notable Children's Book
- A TIME Best Book of the Year
- A School Library Journal Best Book of 2020
- A Kirkus Best Children's Book of 2020
- A NYPL Best Book for Kids
- A NPR's Book Concierge Pick
- A Jane Addams Children's Book Award Finalist
- Charlotte Huck Award Honor Book
- 2021 ALSC Notable Children's Books List
- 2021 Children's Africana Book Award Honor Book
- 2021 Josette Frank Award Winner
- 2021 Notable Books for a Global Society List
- 2021 Kids' Book Choice Award Winner
- An Arizona Grand Canyon Readers Award selection
- An Arkansas Teen Book Award selection
- An Arkansas Charlie May Simon Book Award selection
- A Colorado Children's Book Award selection
- A Connecticut Nutmeg Book Award winner
- A Delaware Blue Hen Book Award selection
- A Florida Sunshine State Young Readers Award winner
- A Georgia Children's Book Award winner
- An Illinois Rebeca Caudill Young Readers Book Award selection

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- An Indiana Young Hoosier Book Award selection
- A Kansas William Allen White Book Award selection
- A Kentucky Bluegrass Book Award selection
- A Louisiana Readers' Choice Award selection
- A Maine Student Book Award selection
- A Maryland Black-Eyed Susan Book Award selection
- A Massachusetts Children's Book Award selection
- A Michigan Great Lakes Great Books Award selection
- A Michigan YouPer Award honor book
- A Michigan MISelf in Books selection
- A Minnesota Maud Hart Lovelace Book Award winner
- A Mississippi Magnolia Book Award selection
- A Missouri Dogwood Book Award selection
- A Missouri Mark Twain Readers Award selection
- A Nebraska Golden Sower Book Award selection
- A New Hampshire Great Stone Face Book Award selection
- A New Jersey Garden State Children's Book Award selection
- A New Mexico Land of Enchantment Book Award winner
- A North Carolina Children's Book Award selection
- An Oklahoma Sequoyah Intermediate selection
- A Pacific Northwest Young Readers Book Award selection
- A Pennsylvania Keystone to Reading Book Award selection
- A Pennsylvania Young Readers Choice Award selection
- A South Carolina Book Award selection
- A South Dakota Teen Choice Book Award selection
- A Tennessee Volunteer State Book Award selection
- A Texas Lectio Book Award selection
- A Texas Little Maverick Graphic Novel Reading List selection
- A Texas Maverick Graphic Novel Reading List selection
- A Vermont Golden Dome Book Award selection
- A Virginia Readers' Choice Award selection
- A Washington Evergreen Teen Book Award selection
- A Washington, DC Capitol Choices selection
- A Wisconsin Just One More Page! selection
- A Wyoming Indian Paintbrush Book Award selection

#### **MEDIA AND RESOURCES**

- [TeachingBooks.net resources](#)
- [Educator Guide](#)

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