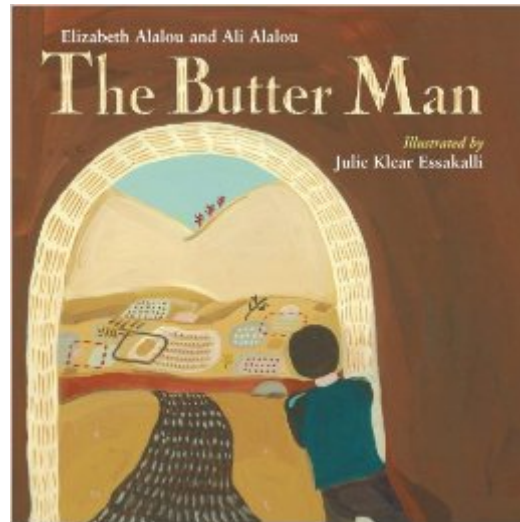


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# The Butter Man



## Synopsis

As young Nora waits impatiently for her mother to come home from work and for her father to serve the long-simmering couscous that smells so delicious, her father tells her about his childhood in Morocco. During a famine, when Nora's grandfather had to travel far to find work and bring food for the family, her father learned the valuable life lessons of patience, perseverance, and hope.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 930L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 32 pages

Publisher: Charlesbridge (February 1, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1580891276

ISBN-13: 978-1580891271

Product Dimensions: 9.2 x 9.3 x 0.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (8 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #872,873 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #198 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Middle East](#) #1665 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Multigenerational](#)

Age Range: 6 - 9 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 4

## Customer Reviews

Nora's family has a special Saturday afternoon ritual in which Nora keeps her father, Baba, company in the kitchen while he cooks a savory Moroccan dish of couscous, meat, and vegetables. While they wait for her mother to come home from work, and as the tantalizing smells fill the kitchen, Nora feels increasingly hungry and complains to Baba that she is starving. But Baba knows what it really feels like to slowly starve. He recounts to Nora a story from his youth in a mountain village of Morocco when a famine left him no more than a little bit of hard crusty bread to eat every day, and the jar of butter in which he liked to dip the bread had gone empty. Wanting to distract him from his hunger pangs, Baba's mother sent him outside to sit along the dirt road and wait for the butter peddler to come along. The butter man never did come, but watching the passers-by served as a necessary diversion until the day his father returned home from across the mountains with a sack of flour and a basket of food. This outstanding book has much to offer with its powerful lesson about

famine and hunger, the introduction of Moroccan culture and vocabulary, and the dramatic folk-art illustrations. The Butter Man communicates in a sensitive and careful way what it may feel like to experience extreme scarcity and how a particular family gets through the difficult time. Readers will appreciate how this important lesson is woven into an engrossing story with a unique international context.

I bought this for my five-year-old daughter and she loves it. For us, it was not only a clever story, but the start of an education about Morocco. We have also talked a lot about world hunger (and helping people in need) since reading it, which I think is great. The story of Ali & the Butter Man is now a family favorite.

I think the story is...ok. The book is rather lengthy for reading out loud and the ending is unsatisfying. I was looking for a book with strong cultural connections, and there's some of that in this. Hardly a lifetime classic, though.

What a great story! My sister and her family are moving to Morocco for a few years, and she and her husband are preparing my two young nephews for a different culture than they are used to here in the United States. I love this book because it introduces many new words they will hear in Morocco, and shares a bit of the cultural background they will soon be immersed in. It's a lovely story, and beautifully illustrated as well.

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