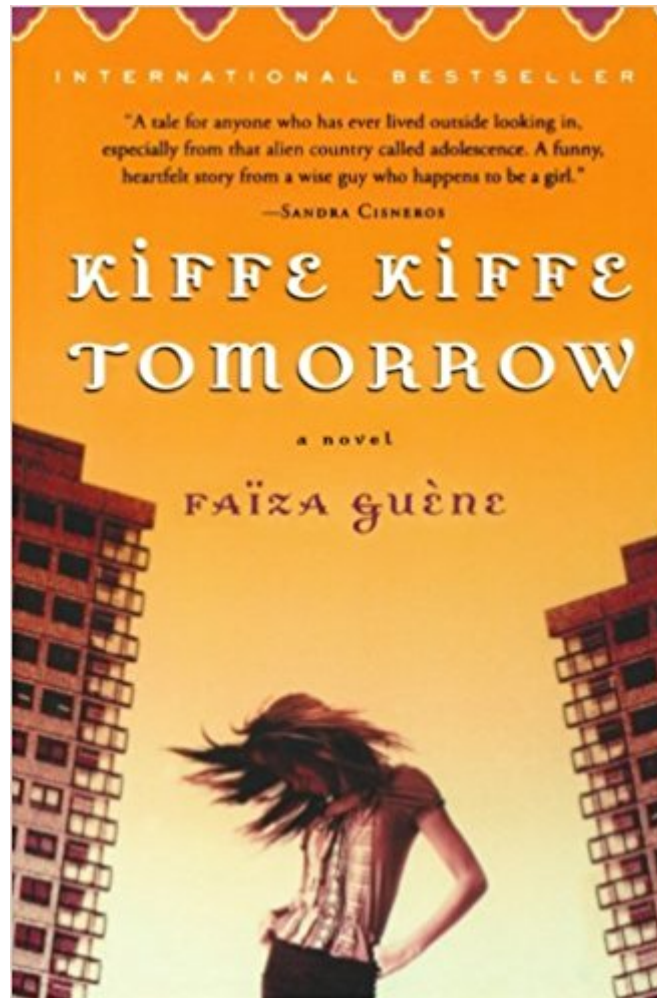




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Kiffe Kiffe Tomorrow



Synopsis

He thought I'd forged my mom's name on the slip. How stupid is that? On this thing Mom just made a kind of squiggly shape on the page. That jerk didn't even think about what he was saying, didn't even ask himself why her signature might be weird. He's one of those people who think illiteracy is like AIDS. It only exists in Africa.--from *Kiffe Kiffe Tomorrow* "A tale for anyone who has ever lived outside looking in, especially from that alien country called adolescence. A funny, heartfelt story from a wise guy who happens to be a girl. If you've ever fallen in love, if you've ever had your heart broken, this story is your story." -- Sandra Cisneros, author of *THE HOUSE ON MANGO STREET*

The Paradise projects are only a few metro stops from Paris, but here it's a whole different kind of France. Doria's father, the Beard, has headed back to their hometown in Morocco, leaving her and her mom to cope with their mektoub "their destiny" alone. They have a little help-- from a social worker sent by the city, a psychiatrist sent by the school, and a thug friend who recites Rimbaud. It seems like fate's dealt them an impossible hand, but Doria might still make a new life. She'll prove the projects aren't only about rap, soccer, and religious tension. She'll take the Arabic word kif-kif (same old, same old) and mix it up with the French verb kiffer (to really like something). Now she has a whole new motto: KIFFE KIFFE TOMORROW. "Moving and irreverent, sad and funny, full of rage and intelligence. [Guane's] characters are unforgettable, her voice fresh, and her book a delight." -- Laila Lalami, author of *Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits* Fa'za Guane, the child of Algerian immigrants, grew up in the public housing projects of Pantin, outside Paris. This is her first book.

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Customer Reviews

College-aged Guène was raised by Algerian immigrant parents in a Parisian housing project; in her debut novel, a French bestseller, 15-year-old Doria and her illiterate mother, having been abandoned by Doria's alcoholic father, are stuck in a Paris housing project called the Paradise. Dependent on welfare and subjected to the obligatory succession of social workers, the two are determined to face forward, despite Doria's sense of doomed mektoub (destiny), where gradual improvement (French: kiffe kiffe) gets flattened by the same old quotidian (Arabic: kif-kif). Doria, perpetually failing at school, begins a job babysitting a neighbor's much-adored four-year-old daughter, and Doria's mother begins literacy courses. A smart older boy, Nabil, is enlisted to tutor Doria, and she soon recognizes the potential of someone with dreams (as opposed to neighborhood teens like Hamoudi and Youssef, imprisoned for drug dealing and car theft). Throughout, the strictures of patriarchal Muslim culture clash with a nascent feminist freedom and Doria's exuberant, sophisticated teen talk. This small novel reads like a quiet celebration within a chaotic ghetto. (July) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

In the rough Paris housing projects, Doria, 15, a child of Muslim immigrant parents, sets her soap-opera dreams against the grim daily struggle, even as she does sometimes find the bold and the beautiful in herself and in her neighborhood. "It's like a film script. . . . Trouble is, our scriptwriter's got no talent. And he's never heard of happily ever after." Author Guene, 19, has grown up in the neighborhood she writes about, and her irreverent commentary never denies how hard it is. The first-person contemporary narrative, translated from the French, is touching, furious, sharp, and very funny. Since Doria's dad moved back to Morocco to marry again (he wants a son), Mom cleans hotel rooms, and Doria wants to drop out of school. The boy she loves is in trouble with drugs and loves someone else. Honest about the oppression of women and about the prejudice, both ways, Guene also shows those who break free. Much like enduring the pain of her wisdom teeth, she discovers that "it hurts to learn." Hazel Rochman Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

I found this book to be an insightful look at the hardships of growing up in the projects. I have worked with many underprivileged students who have the same out look on life as Doria, the narrator. I loved seeing her grow and develop as a character throughout the novel. Even more, I

loved the inside glimpses I was able to grasp to help me better understand the students I serve. I would highly recommend this novel to anyone. Seeing how others live in hardship is an enlightening experience. I would especially recommend this to teens.

I bought this book for class and ended up enjoying it. The blurb makes the book sound more complicated than it really is. The protagonist speaks in different voices, including filtered and unfiltered depending on who she is talking to... But nearly always directly with the audience. The chapters aren't numbered and each one sort of covers an event or circumstance in Doria's life. You view the world through Doria's eyes as she matures and learns more about herself and others. A sort of coming-of-age story with several empowered female characters, this is a great book for any person under 25 who feels that life is difficult... And will learn that things can change. TL;DR: Good book, sound plot, interesting read, good use of voice, it's not overdone, different from classic coming of age stories, with themes of female empowerment in a sort of sexist, uneducated and foreign setting.

First off, may I just say how happy I was to learn the author was 19 when she wrote this, after Kaavya Viswanathan's plagiarism was excused because of her age, as if it's impossible for a young writer to write an original story without "internalizing" half a dozen other (better) books. This is patronizing and untrue. Anyway, (getting off my soapbox) the book is a coming of age novel about a Moroccan teenager whose father has left her and her mother, and who lives in a low income part of France. The heroine's economic situation is the polar opposite of Holden Caulfield's so her cynicism about her future doesn't come across as a pose. Things are bleak all around, but eventually, they improve for her and her mother. To tell more would be giving away too much for the book is fairly short. The book is compulsively readable, and Doria, the heroine, is an engaging and perceptive narrator. However, there were a few flaws. When I read a novel, I expect the scenes to eventually build up to a climax, rather than just be strung together. With this book, it felt like things improved a bit, the narrator told us (rather than the author showing) that she was now more optimistic and then it ended, just like that. It felt like the author got called away for dinner mid-scene and never went back to wrap things up in a more cohesive manner. The heroine seemed to jump from pessimism to optimism rather abruptly, rather than growing progressively happier. But the reader won't begrudge her, her better fortune.

I ordered this book as a requirement for one of my classes, and I ended up loving it! The plot is well

thought-out and the writing is beautiful, especially considering it's a translation! As for the factual accuracy of the book, I read it for a class on the urbanization of Paris, and everything checked out! All in all, a wonderful read :)

This book came just in time for my class, and was in mint condition. I truly enjoyed this semi-autobiographic story of a Morocco girl growing up in a impoverished section of suburbs outside Paris whose father left them . It was a great story!

Interesting to hear about a part of Paris/outside of Paris that isn't generic. Great writing style, inner monologue/stream of consciousness is always a good take on story of someone's life.

A wonderful novel to inspire the French classroom!

This is a quick read, it took me like 2.5 or 3 hours to finish. This book was a requirement for one of my literature classes and this rivals 'The Madonnas of Echo Park' as one of my favorite books. It's humorous all the way through which makes it very entertaining, it's really my sense of humor.

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