

Omar Rising

By Aisha Saeed

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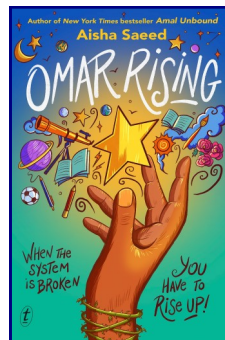
Blurb:

From the internationally bestselling author of *Amal Unbound* comes a delightful companion novel featuring a new lead character, Omar.

In this compelling companion to the bestseller *Amal Unbound*, Omar finds a way to change the corrupt system in his new school.

Omar, the son of a servant, is thrilled when he gets a scholarship to an elite school. But he's not so thrilled when he finds out that the school weeds out kids like him by requiring them to get higher grades than fee-paying kids so it's almost impossible for scholarship students to graduate. On top of that, they aren't allowed to join clubs or teams, and have to do menial chores. It's a good thing Omar has learnt to hold on to his dreams. With the help of his friend Amal and his new school mates - and with the threat of expulsion looming over him - he sets out to do what seems impossible - change a rigged system.

Omar Rising is an exciting middle-grade story about student activism, believing in yourself and fighting for justice.



Lamont Review:

This is a companion story to the wonderful *Amal Unbound*, that was published in 2018, but with a different main character it is definitely a stand alone story.

Omar is a character that you will feel an affinity with right from the start of the book. He loves his family, friends and his community, and is extremely intelligent. He knows education is his best chance to have a more prosperous life. So when he gets into the prestigious Ghalib Academy on a scholarship, he is determined to make the most of this opportunity.

He quickly makes friends - some are other scholarship students, and some are not. But things are not in equal between the different groups of students right from the start. Only full fee paying students can join the clubs that the school offers. Although at first this is devastating, he accepts that this is the way it is. Then he learns that they must also do chores that the fee paying students do not have to do. How can this be fair?

However, this is only the start of the battle! No matter how hard he and his scholarship friends work, it just is never enough. How are they going to get through this, and not bring shame on their families by being expelled?

Omar decides that it is time to stand up and try to bring about change. But this is going to take enormous courage, determination and resilience. This is a wonderful story about the power of friendship, education and student activism and will be thoroughly enjoyed by all students in upper primary and lower secondary.

Reviewed by Sam