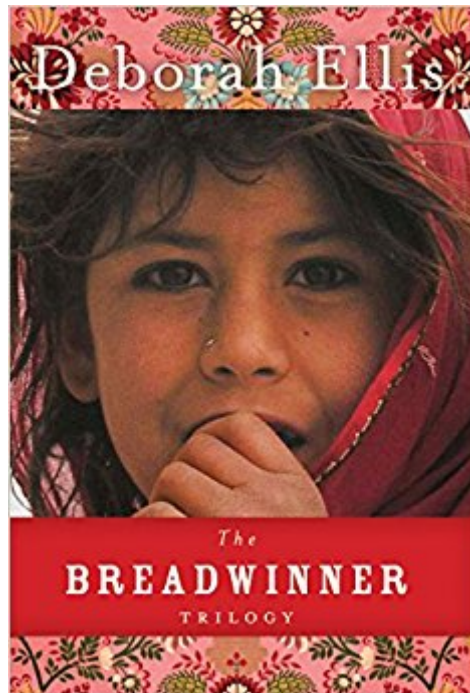




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The Breadwinner Trilogy



Synopsis

Deborah Ellis's trilogy has been a phenomenal success, both critically and commercially. Now young readers can experience this entire epic story in one volume. *The Breadwinner* is set in Afghanistan, where 11-year-old Parvana lives with her family in a bombed-out apartment building in Kabul. When her father is arrested for the crime of having a foreign education, the family is left with no money or resources. Forbidden to earn money as a girl, Parvana must transform herself into a boy and become the breadwinner. In *Parvana's Journey*, her father has died and the family has scattered. Parvana, now 13 years old, is determined to find them. Again masquerading as a boy, she joins a group of wandering children, all refugees from war, who exist mainly on courage. In *Mud City*, the focus shifts to 14-year-old Shauzia, who lives in the Widows' Compound in Pakistan and dreams of escaping to a new life in France. Deborah Ellis uses simple, compelling language, memorable characters, and a wealth of imaginative detail in this wrenching look at the human cost of war that is also a surprisingly hopeful story of survival.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Nominated for the Jane Addams Children's Book Award, 2004 "A great kids' book"; a graphic geopolitical brief that's also a girl-power parable." *Newsweek*; hands-down, Newberry Medal worthy; "This was a fantastic read." *Washington Times* "This is an important and compelling story for young people"; *Today's Librarian*

The Breadwinner Trilogy tells the story of two young girls who lived in Afghanistan during the time of

Taliban rule in the 1990's. During this time of war, the two girls are forced to dress as boys in order to provide for their families. Later, the girls are separated from their families and each other, and have to fend for themselves; Overall, these were great books. I read them aloud to my children, ages 9 and 11. Whenever we reached the end of a chapter, they would beg me to read more. The story line had enough action to keep the kids' interest, while at the same time providing a wealth of information about Afghanistan, the Taliban, war, and human rights issues. My only negative comment is that the middle part of the second book (Parvana's Journey) was a little slow. I will also mention that some of the content was more serious in nature: the results of war; refugee camps; children who are maimed and missing limbs due to land mines; starvation; etc. If your children read the book, you should just be prepared to talk to them and discuss some of these issues. My kids and I had some very good discussions about the effects of war, women's rights, etc. after we read some of the chapters. The books were very thought-provoking and educational, while at the same time holding the kids' interest. I would definitely recommend it.

There are many books out there that tell the stories of women and girls in Afghanistan; however, *The Breadwinner* sets itself apart as a novel for young adults who may not know about the lives of young people their own age experiencing horrific challenges at a time when the reader is growing of age in completely different context. *The Breadwinner* is also unique in that it tells the story of life in refugee camps. Most readers will assume that once a refugee reaches a refugee camp they are safe. This is hardly ever true and *The Breadwinner* confirms that refugee camps, especially for women and girls, are dangerous prisons masquerading as safehavens where starvation, rape and sexual violence, tyranny and despair reign supreme. It's a good read, a truthful story of life for young women and girls on this side of life.

My 12-year-old daughter loves this trilogy. I don't have to beg her or argue with her to read it...she actually wants to. We have great discussions about the things that happen in this world that are beyond horrible and wrong and about the effects of war.

The trilogy describes the stark reality and struggles faced by women and girls in Afghanistan and refugees camp in Pakistan. Despite all the suffering, it is a story about courage and perseverance in the face of adversity and how the power to dream provides a glimmer of hope. As I read their stories, I felt their helplessness and sadness but am inspired by their strengths and determination. The trilogy also reminded me of affluence and wastefulness we have here in America and among

those who have versus those who do not. It has opened my eyes more for the need to the need to be thankful as well as appreciate every thing (no matter how trivial) that we have in our lives. While we complain about the mundaneness of our lives, there are those who continue to struggle daily to survive that even unclean water, old moldy rice and dried out nan are blessings and the difference between life and death.

There is no point in this book that doesn't absolutely amaze me that humans are so resilient, so determined to live and can endure such pain and destitution. The writer writes simply but that gives the book so much more power since the story is about children. A reader who lives in North America with such opportunity and wealth it is hard to imagine such horror happening to children elsewhere in the world. We have come so far and yet allow this to continue. A powerful story and message that makes one weep.

a hard read...but necessary.

Reading this with my 10 year old daughter. We read a few chapters a night before bed time, which gives us an opportunity to talk about the differences in cultures and in our world. Wonderful book. My husband was stationed in Afghanistan in the military so a great link between our two very different worlds.

Wonderful portrayal of the struggles of two cities in Afghanistan. Looking forward to reading more about these characters as I was eager to learn where their lives went. The plight of the Afghan people is not one I was very familiar with until I read The Kit Runner and A Thousand Splendid Suns. While I won't say "refreshing" it was a welcome change from murder mysteries, law suspense and espionage.

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