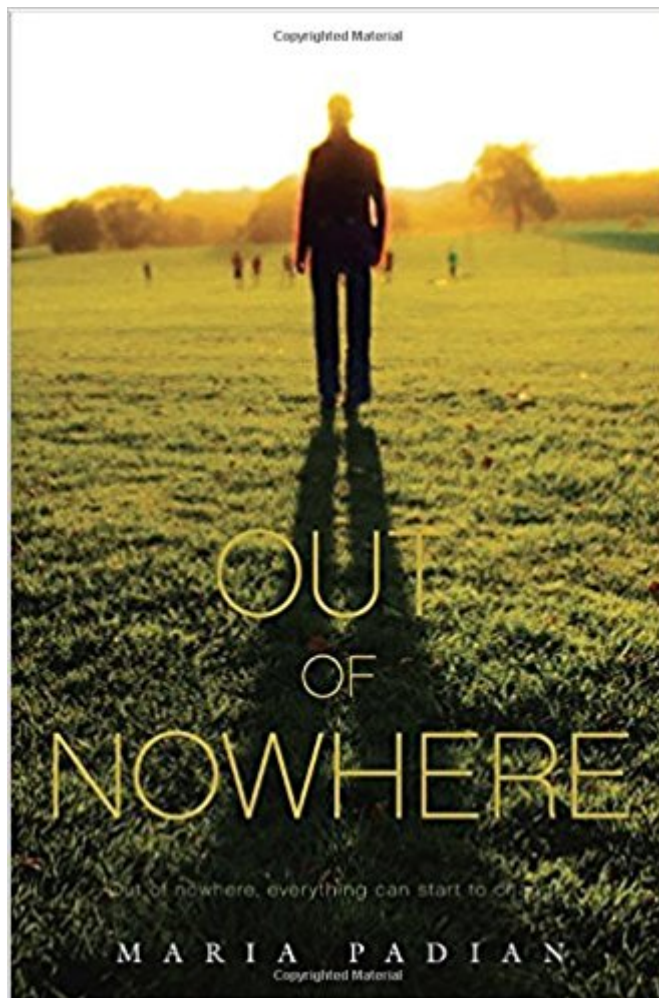


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# Out Of Nowhere



## Synopsis

Winner of the Maine Literary Award Called "rich and multidimensional" by School Library Journal in a starred review, *Out of Nowhere* follows Tom Bouchard: captain and star of the Enniston High School soccer team; boyfriend to one of the prettiest, most popular girls; and third in his class, likely to have his pick of any college (if he ever bothers filling out his applications). But life in his idyllic small Maine town quickly gets turned upside down after the events of 9/11. Enniston has become a "secondary migration" location for Somali refugees seeking a better life after their country is destroyed by war. Tom hasn't thought much about his Somali classmates until four of them join the soccer team, including Saeed. He comes out of nowhere on the field to make impossible shots, and suddenly the team is winning, dominating even. But when Saeed's eligibility is questioned and Tom screws up in a big way, he's left to grapple with a culture he doesn't understand and take responsibility for his actions. The refugees came out of nowhere and vanish just as quickly. And Tom may find himself going nowhere, too, if he doesn't start trying to get somewhere.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 670L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 352 pages

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Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.2 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 23 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #930,520 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #30 in Books > Teens >

Literature & Fiction > Sports > Soccer #76 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Emigration & Immigration #1187 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Fiction

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Gr 9 Up-Tom Bouchard's small Maine hometown has become a key secondary migration location

for Somali immigrants, and the local high school is overwhelmed with helping these students adjust to their new surroundings. As captain of the soccer team, Tom follows his instincts and recruits a Somali player, cashing in on Saeed's talents and unique playing style. In the wake of a racially charged incident on their home turf, the team goes on to beat their crosstown rival, sparking racist reactions both from the opposition and local authorities. To classify *Out of Nowhere* as a sports story sells it short. Soccer is certainly an element, with a fair amount of play-by-play action (and standard locker-room language), but the novel is rich and multidimensional, addressing the Muslim experience in America, addiction, and romance. Tom is an authentic narrator who deals out life-changing empathy. -Leah Krippner, Harlem High School, Machesney Park, IL (c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

“Grades, sports, and girls have always come easy to me,” muses Tom Bouchard, captain of his high-school soccer team. What happens when, out of nowhere, a phenomenally talented soccer player named Saeed joins the team? Quite a lot, actually. Saeed is part of a new community of Somali immigrants who have arrived in Tom’s small Maine hometown and created quite a stir. Not everyone welcomes them, and though Tom and Saeed become friends, there are those who would like to see Saeed removed from the team. Meanwhile, Tom has fallen for a slightly older girl who is a volunteer at the neighborhood center where he is performing community service. The two befriend Saeed’s sister, and when Tom performs an ill-conceived gesture of sympathy, the futures of both Saeed and his sister are put in jeopardy. Padian has written a sensitive, sympathetic, and insightful portrayal of the plight of new immigrants attempting to acculturate while being forced to deal with casual bigotry. A timely and thought-provoking examination of a continuing dynamic in American communities. Grades 9-12, --Michael Cart

Great read. My 13 yo & 15 yo really enjoyed the book.

The author successfully deals with a variety of issues - adolescence, class, race, religion, national and cultural origins - in a way that makes the book very difficult to put down. It forces us out of our own little world and shows us in a very realistic way that there are different ways of thinking about the world and puts our own problems in perspective. This is an invaluable read for every teenager but also thought provoking for any reader. A ton of research was obviously put into Somalian culture, Islamic teachings, Franco-American culture, and life in a former mill town, along with

teenage vernacular. The characters and situations are highly credible. Can't recommend it enough.

This well-constructed coming of age story for teens addresses some controversial diversity issues in a fictional (but based on a real situation) city in Maine which is the recipient of Somali refugees, for which the town is poorly prepared to successfully integrate. Sports is where boys from highly different backgrounds learn about each other. Teachers, a good paired text would be Gary Schmidt's LIZZIE BRIGHT, which is also set in Maine and also tackles diversity in an earlier era. All in all, a strong novel and an enjoyable read.

Young adult fiction themes of compassion and being a part of something greater than yourself. White high school teen discovers life is more than popularity and shallow girlfriends when he befriends Somali refugees, who happen to take his soccer team to new levels. Oh, and did I mention they have fled their homeland, losing everything?

Great funny book for soccer or sport fans. This book is definitely worth reading. I hope the author can make a sequel.

A good window into this clash of religions and cultures. This novel brings a personal face to the issues encountered when Islam is introduced into a mostly Roman Catholic Maine City. Perhaps it will enlighten those that are receptive to enlightenment.

It was a required reading book for my grandson and he loved it.

Like the skillful soccer players in her book, Maria Padian takes us through the richly complex situation of a small town trying to grapple with an influx of Somali refugees. The protagonist, the captain of an "okay" soccer team, is stunned and delighted when several new Somali students become a kind of secret weapon, giving them a chance to triumph over their arch rival team. But when he and a "loser" friend are caught in the midst of a prank and face hours of community service time, he must learn about a culture quite different from his own - one in which a hug can change the course many lives. This is a story where the cultural war is won - but each of the no-easy-answer battles break your heart. Many thanks to David Ward for introducing me to Maria's work. I'll be back for more! I loved it, and keep thinking about it.

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