



If You Could Be Mine: A Novel

By Sara Farizan

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**Winner of the Lambda Literary Award for LGBT Children's/Young Adult
One of Rolling Stone's 40 Best YA Novels**

A 2014 ALA Rainbow List Top 10 Title

A Booklist Top 10 First Novels for Youth 2013

A Chicago Public Library "Best of the Best" 2013

This Forbidden Romance Could Cost Them Their Lives

Seventeen-year-old Sahar has been in love with her best friend, Nasrin, since they were six. They've shared stolen kisses and romantic promises. But Iran is a dangerous place for two girls in love--Sahar and Nasrin could be beaten, imprisoned, even executed. So they carry on in secret until Nasrin's parents suddenly announce that they've arranged for her marriage. Then Sahar discovers what seems like the perfect solution: homosexuality may be a crime, but to be a man trapped in a woman's body is seen as nature's mistake, and sex reassignment is legal and accessible. Sahar will never be able to love Nasrin in the body she wants to be loved in without risking their lives, but is saving their love worth sacrificing her true self?

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If You Could Be Mine: A Novel By Sara Farizan Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #72293 in Books
- Brand: imusti
- Published on: 2014-09-09
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 6.90" h x .80" w x 5.00" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 272 pages

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 9 Up-In this terrific debut novel, readers meet Sahar, a 17-year-old student who lives in Tehran. She is smart and ambitious, and she has a secret that could get her arrested or even killed; she is a lesbian and is in love with her best friend. When Nasrin's parents arrange for her to marry a young male doctor, Sahar knows that she and Nasrin will no longer be able to be with each other. When desperate Sahar meets transsexual Parveen at a party given by her gay cousin, she thinks she sees a way to be with Nasrin. In Iran, it is not illegal to be transsexual, as it is to be gay or lesbian, and the state will even pay for sex reassignment surgery because it is seen as a necessary medical procedure. Sahar pursues sex reassignment, dreaming of marrying Nasrin even though she knows in her heart that she doesn't really want to become a man. As Nasrin's wedding approaches, Sahar realizes its inevitability and must decide what she is going to do. Farizan's portrayal of Sahar and her predicament is sensitive and heartbreaking. Even less-sympathetic characters, such as Nasrin and her parents, are portrayed in a nuanced manner; in the culture Farizan depicts, the girls' fears that their romantic relationship will become known are realistic and understandable. Rich with details of life in contemporary Iran, this is a GLBTQ story that we haven't seen before in YA fiction. Highly recommended.-Kathleen E. Gruver, Burlington County Library, Westampton, NJ(c) Copyright 2013. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review Teens Sahar and Nasrin have loved each other since they were young girls, but homosexuality is a crime in Iran, and the two girls could be severely punished, even executed, for their romantic love for one another. When an arranged marriage for Nasrin threatens the girls' secret relationship, Sahar vows to take action, but what can she do? Desperate, she decides to have sex-reassignment surgery to become a man so that she can marry her friend. Surprisingly, such surgery is legal in Iran and even paid for, at least in part, by the government, and Sahar also has the caring support of a transsexual friend. Still, will she be able to follow through, and, if not, what will the future hold for the two devoted friends? Farizan's first novel is an accomplished and compassionate look at a heartbreakingly difficult situation and the possibility of an unlikely but plausible solution. Throughout, the author presents a groundbreaking, powerful depiction of gay and transsexual life in Iran and its similarities to and differences from that of the West. An intimate look at life in modern-day Iran and its surprising Westernization, even though much of this culture is clandestine. Grades 10-12. --Michael Cart

Review

“Farizan’s prose is frank, funny and bittersweet, enjoyable . . . And her secondary storylines ring out memorably.” --*The New York Times Book Review*

“This beautifully crafted young-adult novel offers timely insight into the struggles of those who must be their authentic selves no matter where they live.” --*Ms. Magazine*

“Sharp and moving . . . An interesting look at gender identity and gay culture in Iran . . . Also a compelling story about class and the purpose of marriage.” --*The Boston Globe*

“[A] terrific debut novel . . . Rich with details of life in contemporary Iran, this is a GLBTQ story that we

haven't seen before in YA fiction. Highly recommended." --*School Library Journal*

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"[A] provocative coming-of-age story . . . Throughout this strong debut, Farizan weaves in details of daily Iranian life . . . Within a rigid societal structure, her fleshed-out characters wrestle with depression, hope, complacency, and risk." --**Publishers Weekly**

"A convincing portrait of everyday life in post-revolutionary Iranian society . . . While Farizan deals with LGBT issues in this book, she also is writing about the choices all young adults must face. Sahar must find her place in her family, decide which career to follow, and figure out how to let go of a first love--universal themes in all cultures." --**Durham Herald-Sun**

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(Reviews)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Thomas Brim:

Do you have favorite book? Should you have, what is your favorite's book? Publication is very important thing for us to learn everything in the world. Each book has different aim or perhaps goal; it means that guide has different type. Some people experience enjoy to spend their time to read a book. These are reading whatever they acquire because their hobby is definitely reading a book. Think about the person who don't like looking at a book? Sometime, individual feel need book once they found difficult problem as well as exercise. Well, probably you'll have this If You Could Be Mine: A Novel.

Andre Smith:

The experience that you get from If You Could Be Mine: A Novel may be the more deep you digging the information that hide into the words the more you get interested in reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to be aware of but If You Could Be Mine: A Novel giving you joy feeling of reading. The article writer conveys their point in specific way that can be understood by anyone who read that because the author of this publication is well-known enough. That book also makes your own personal vocabulary increase well. So it is easy to understand then can go along, both in printed or e-book style are available. We advise you for having that If You Could Be Mine: A Novel instantly.

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Beverlee Guthrie:

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