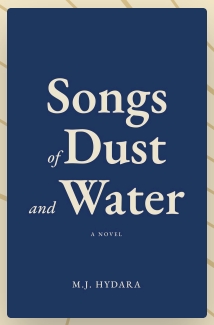
FOR READING GROUPS

Songs of Dust and Water

A novel by M.J. Hydara



“A blueprint is a plan for a house. Who is paying for this house?”

Fatou, a trader in Nafawol, chapter 10

The story starts with a weaver’s son who goes to work at a solar plant that his village has no say in running. Ten years later and far to the south, a woman who looks after a failing well is offered a machine that draws water from the air, on condition that her village owns it. She and her oldest friend must decide whether to trust the offer. There are plenty of characters to argue about.

Questions your group might take sides on

- Should a village take money that comes with conditions?
- Would you hand out water you knew was making children ill, if there were nothing else?
- How much does a son owe the family trade that feeds him?

At a glance

- 244 pages and twenty-eight chapters, in two parts
- Three meetings of about seventy pages each, or one evening
- For adults and confident teenage readers
- Hard moments, and a great deal of humour, most of it between old neighbours

Free at songsofdustandwater.com

- The reading-group guide, with questions for each meeting
- Meeting plans, ideas for food and drink, and games
- Bookmarks, chapter cards, a map and a who’s who to print
- The first pages of each part, to send round before you start

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