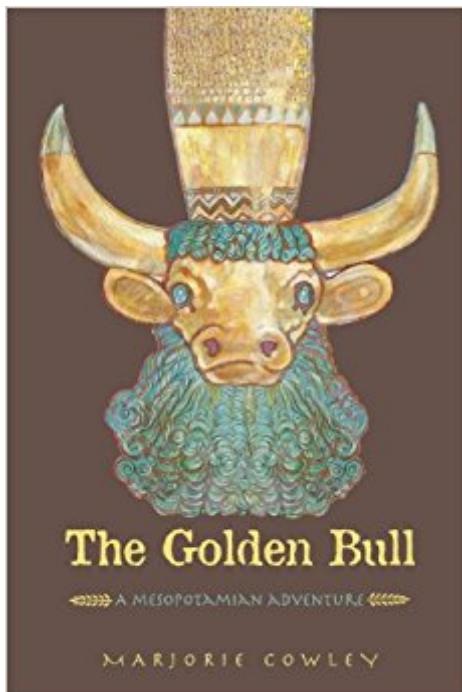


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The Golden Bull: A Mesopotamian Adventure



Synopsis

A brother and sister's search for a new life and new home . . . 5,000 years ago in ancient Mesopotamia during a terrible drought, Jomar and Zefa's father must send his children away to the city of Ur because he can no longer feed them. At fourteen, Jomar is old enough to apprentice with Sidah, a master goldsmith for the temple of the moongod, but there is no place for Zefa in Sidah's household. Zefa, a talented but untrained musician, is forced to play her music and sing for alms on the streets of Ur. Marjorie Cowley vividly imagines the intrigues, and harsh struggle for survival in ancient Mesopotamia.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Grade 5
Jomar, 14, and his younger sister have been forced to go to the city of Ur to bring income to their poverty-stricken family. Jomar will be an apprentice to a goldsmith, but Zefa has little talent for anything other than playing the lyre that her brother has made for her. He considers the instrument a toy and a burden, but Zefa's talent charms the siblings' way out of one dangerous situation after another. When they finally reach their destination, Jomar is warmly greeted, but Zefa is accused of stealing and runs away. The goldsmith's wife accuses her of stealing and she runs away. It is not until Jomar begs the help of a high priestess that he is able to clear the girl's name and entice her to play the honored temple lyre. This well-researched historical drama opens readers' eyes to the perils of starving farmers in ancient Mesopotamia. The simple story line, colorful descriptions, and endearing characters result in an entertaining tale.

•Kimberly Monaghan, formerly at Vernon Area Public Library, IL Copyright © Reed

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The drought in the Mesopotamian countryside is so dire that Jomar and his sister Zefa, a gifted lyre player, are being sent away to Ur, where Jomar will apprentice to a goldsmith. En route, the children fall into the hands of a ruthless temple official, Malak, who gathers them up for his work crew patrolling the rural irrigation system. After a bold escape, they live in fear of Malak recapturing them in Ur. Goldsmith Sidah and his less-than-welcoming wife, Nari, are willing to shelter Jomar, but balk at the unexpected Zefa, who eventually slips away and joins a street troupe. Pulsing action, suspenseful dilemmas, and well-chosen details of goldsmithing and Mesopotamian justice add up to a fine tale that entertains as it reveals the sophistication of society in the cradle of civilization. By the author of *Dar and the Spear-Thrower* (1995) and its sequel, *Anooka's Answer* (1998), this story's setting in ancient Iraq may be a special draw for children curious about this in-the-news country and its culture. Grades 5-8.

--Anne O'Malley --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Purchased for 11 year old, this is part of his required reading for 6th grade. Like most young folks his age, he spends a good amount of time on his I Pad...we were not sure that this would hold his interest. Surprisingly, he has been interested in the book and he has almost completed the book. Good choice.

Great book for teens but adults enjoy also. Bought for grandchild but I ended up reading it and learning a lot. Much ancient history in very readable form. Who knew where Mesopotamia was ?

My 11 year old son had this book for his school's summer reading assignment. He loved it!

Read it aloud to my 10 and 15 year old. We enjoyed it.

Summer reading list for my upcoming 6th grader. She loved it!

There are so few kids novels about Mesopotamia and this one is really well done. We read this aloud along with our unit study on Mesopotamia and it was fantastic!

Required reading for my middle school child. Very good book.

Awesome book to integrate into instruction when teaching Mesopotamia. Helps students see how life was during the time. All eight features of civilization are very clear

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