**Sabiha’s Dilemma Media Kit**

**Title:** Sabiha’s Dilemma

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**Rating:** Young Adult

**Hashtags:** #sabihasdilemma #loveozya #youngadultbooks #youngadultfiction #youngadultlit #yabooks #ownvoicesbooks #ownvoicesbooks #ownvoicesreads #intheirownvoices

**Tagline:** Author Amra Pajalić re-releases her own voices, award-winning, young adult novel

**Short tagline:** Can Sabiha play the part of the good daughter so that her mentally ill mother is accepted back into the Bosnian community?

**Medium tagline:** Sabiha and her mother Bahra are more than mother and daughter, they’re best friends. But when their extended family comes to Australia, Bahra becomes a Born-Again-Muslim to impress them, and expects Sabiha to step in line as the perfect daughter. Can Sabiha play the part of the good daughter so that her mentally ill mother is accepted back into the Bosnian community?

**Blurb:**

Sabiha and her mother Bahra are more than mother and daughter, they’re best friends. It’s been them against the world, with Sabiha being her mother’s carer and confidante during her periodic bipolar breakdowns.

When their extended family comes to Australia, Bahra becomes a Born-Again-Muslim to impress them, and expects Sabiha to step in line as the perfect daughter. Can Sabiha play the part of the good daughter so that her mentally ill mother is accepted back into the Bosnian community?

With the heartbreaking twists of John Green’s novels, and exquisite characters like those of Melina Marchetta’s, you'll love this hilarious, poignant, gutsy and real book.

‘*Sabiha's Dilemma* is a ‘raw and honest story about duty and the desire to run free. A strong voice in Australian fiction.’ MELINA MARCHETTA

**Lead In Post**

**Why Own Voices stories matter to young adults**

With the recent resurgence own voices stories (books about characters from marginalised groups in which the author shares the same identity) resonating with readers, author Amra Pajalić is re-publishing her young adult novel as Sabiha’s Dilemma.

In *Sabiha’s Dilemma*, Sabiha is expected to play the part of the good daughter so that her mentally ill mother is accepted back into the Bosnian community. Inspired by Pajalić’s experience as a high school student who ‘was always reading, but there seemed to be no books that represented my story about growing up. I’m talking about coming from the Western suburbs of Melbourne. About being from a migrant background and the family expectations placed on you to be a good ethnic girl, while at heart being Aussie and wanting to break out of this mould. So I wrote *Sabiha’s Dilemma* for myself and for teenagers like me so they have something to read that speaks to their experiences and that will inspire them to fight for their ‘outlandish’ dreams.’

**Excerpt**

**Chapter 1**

When I stepped out of my bedroom ready to leave, Mum gasped. ‘You can’t go like that!’ And pushed me back into the bedroom. We were going to a *zabava*, the Bosnian name for a party. *Zabava’s* were organised twice a year, once as a community meet and greet, the second to celebrate *Ramadan*, the Muslim religious month of fasting. This would be my first attendance.

‘Why not?’ I demanded, my hands on my hips as I twirled. I wore a little black dress Mum bought for my fifteenth birthday. I’d grown in the year since and the dress moulded to my body. I wore the dress a few months before, when we attended a work barbecue for Dave, Mum’s ex-boyfriend. Mum complimented me then.

‘It’s not suitable.’ Mum rifled through my wardrobe.

Even though both my parents are from Bosnia, I didn’t have anything to do with the community. When I was six-years-old Mum moved us to the inner-city. Now that I was sixteen we were back where we’d started—in St Albans.

Even though St Albans was established in 1887, at least that’s what the plaque at St Albans train station said, you couldn’t tell by walking through the bustling centre. The buildings are two-storey plain block structures with tin roofs. The shop fronts are a mix of European, who settled after the post World War II boom, and Vietnamese who came in the 1970s.

St Albans’ only distinguishing feature was the streets formed into perfect rectangles, an absence of trees on nature strips and the fact that every second shop is a pharmacy catering to the ageing population.

There were always Yugos in St Albans and after the Balkan war in the early 1990s the population exploded with refugees from all sides settling there. It wasn’t a coincidence that Mum and I moved away, while everyone else moved into St Albans.

I never thought of myself as Bosnian. I was born in Australia, all my friends were Australian, and if I thought about it all I would have called myself a true blue Aussie. All that changed three months ago.

‘What’s wrong with my dress?’ I admired myself in the mirror.

′You’re too, too...′

‘Beautiful, hot, gorgeous, sexy.’ I cocked my hip. The black dress brought out the highlights in my dark blonde hair. The V-line showed off my cleavage, while the mini skirt made my legs look longer.

My bedroom door was pushed open. ′*Hajmo*,′ my grandfather demanded that we leave. He caught a glimpse of me. ′*Bo*ž*e sa*č*uvaj*,′ he hissed, which meant ‘God Save Us,’ and turned his back so he couldn’t see me.

′*Bahra, nađi joj nešto drugo da obuće*,′ his torrent of Bosnian came in lightning-fast bursts. I understood that he wanted my Mum, Bahra, to find me something else to wear, what would people think if they saw how I was dressed, that I was a whore, and then I lost him.

′Did Dido call me a whore?′

‘He said you look like a whore because of your make-up.’

**BUY LINKS:**

**Amazon (US):**<https://www.amazon.com/Sabihas-Dilemma-Amra-Pajalic-ebook/dp/B09Y5DK38W>

**Universal (International Amazon ebook & Wide Print):** https://books2read.com/sabihasdilemma

**Prices (in USD):**

**Print:** $9.99

**E-Book:** $3.99

**Length:** 224 Pages

**Prices: (in AUD)**

**Print:** $19.99

**E-book:** $4.99

**Author Bio:**

Amra Pajalić is an award-winning author, an editor and teacher who draws on her Bosnian cultural heritage to write own voices stories for young people, who like her, are searching to mediate their identity and take pride in their diverse culture.

Amra Pajalić won the 2009 Melbourne Prize for Literature's Civic Choice Award for her debut novel *The Good Daughter,* now re-released as *Sabiha’s Dilemma*. The anthology she co-edited, G*rowing up Muslim in Australia* (Allen and Unwin, 2014, 2019), was shortlisted for the 2015 Children's Book Council of the year awards and her memoir *Things Nobody Knows But Me* (Transit Lounge, 2019) was shortlisted for the 2020 National Biography Award.

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