



2010

### Hacking Timbuktu

Rachel Wadham

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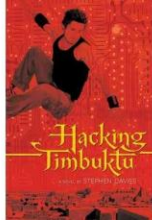
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Davies, Stephen. *Hacking Timbuktu*. Clarion Books/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. ISBN 9780547390161. \$16.00. 264 p.

Reviewer: Rachel Wadham

Reading Level: Young Adult

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Fiction; Adventure stories;

Subject: Timbuktu--Juvenile fiction; Computer hackers--Juvenile fiction; Treasure hunts--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

In the fourteenth century a crafty university student living in Timbuktu is detained after he stole two million mithquals of gold. Leaping to his death to evade capture, he reveals the gold's location can be found through a special code. Centuries later, as ancient manuscripts are being digitized, the code is discovered, and the student who found it is on the run. You can't hide things for long on the web, and soon the world knows about the gold. Turning to expert hackers to retrieve the clues they need, treasure hunters draw Danny into their quest, whose expert computer skills reveal the map. Soon he and his friend Omar are also hot on the trail of the treasure. Pursued by dangerous men, they must use their expert mental and physical skills to get to the gold before anyone else.

The first of Davies works to be published in the United States, this is a perfect adventure. While some books of this genre seem farfetched with the hero's luck getting him through, Davies has given his heroes just the right combination of skills to make them truly believable. In addition to their hacking abilities, Danny and Omar are expert practitioners of Parkour, a fascinating combination of running and gymnastics, and it is these real mental and physical skills that make this story plausible. Additionally, the exotic settings and fast plot of the story will appeal to many readers. *Hacking Timbuktu* will fill a niche for boy readers who crave daring exploits.

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