



**HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN AWARD 2018
IBBY TURKEY AUTHOR NOMINEE**

Mavisel Yener



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Mavisel Yener

She was born in 1962 in Ankara. She graduated from the Dentistry Faculty in Ege University in 1984. She started writing early in her teens and continued to pen many-an-amateur stories for twenty years before she quit her private practice to pursue her calling as an author.

Today, she is one of the most renowned contemporary Turkish authors who have written over one hundred children's, young adult and adult books. Her works vary in many genres such as children's novels, poems, short stories, fairy tales, radio plays and theatre scripts and she writes for both children and adult. However her primary audience is children and she has devoted her life to children's literature.

Besides writing, she has worked as an editor for many children's and young adult books. She writes book reviews and articles in the children's section of the literature supplement of *Cumhuriyet* newspaper. She also produced and hosted two radio programmes titled "Sounds in our Hearts" and "Book Worm".

Her short stories, fairy tales and poems appear in school text books.

The plays she wrote "Purple Night, Blue Day" and "Red Umbrella" have been put on stage by Ankara State Theatre and Istanbul State Theatre respectively. She has also written radio plays. Her play "Little Girls Little Boys" represented Turkey in International Theatre Festival and was put on stage in India.

Yener does workshops on children's literature, attends symposiums on children's literature all around the world and gives lectures at universities. She also represented Turkey in Tiran and Split at Literature in Flux, an annual organization aiming to connect literary centers of Europe, in 2012.

Her literary works have been translated into a number of languages.

She is a member of P.E.N.

She works on braille books for blind children.

Various papers, M.A. and PH.D. thesis were written on her. Some of the thesis on her books that were written and presented are:

Aydemir, Sultan. "A Research on the Works of Mavisel Yener as a Children's Literature Author." (Çocuk Edebiyatı Yazarı olarak Mavisel Yener'in Eserleri Üzerine Bir Araştırma) Dokuz Eylül University, Language and Literature Teaching Master's Thesis: İzmir, 2010.

Cesur, Enise. "What are the Messages in Mavisel Yener's Children's Stories?" (Mavisel Yener'in Çocuk Öykülerinde İletiler Nelerdir?) Aydın University Master's Thesis: İstanbul, 2015.

Durmuş, Gülşah. "A Linguistic Research on Mavisel Yener's 'Dilatory' Short Story." (Mavisel Yener'in 'Üşengeç' Öyküsü Üzerine Dilbilimsel Bir İnceleme) İnönü University Turkish Language Teaching Department: Malatya, 2015.

Küçükavşar, Aslıhan. "Universal Values in Mavisel Yener's Books." (Mavisel Yener'in Kitaplarında Evrensel Değerler) Kafkas University Children's Literature Symposium Paper: Azerbaijani - Baku, 2008.

Yeniçeri, Yunus. "The Characters in Mavisel Yener's Detectives of the Full Moon." (Mavisel Yener'in Dolunay Dedektifleri Kitabında Yer Alan Karakterler) Erzincan University Social Sciences Institute: Erzincan, 2013.

THE BOOKBIRD PROFILE

“I love creating another world in stories. I find my freedom in stories. Everything is possible in them. Because I love freedom, I love stories.

“ —Yener

Born in 1962 in Ankara, she studied dentistry in Ege University. However since her teens, writing was her calling. She won her prize at the age of sixteen. Her debut novel *The Blue Apple*, a tale which she first told to her two daughters after their visit to the Insuyu Cave, was published by a local publishing house in Izmir in 1998. Since then she has become one of the most renowned contemporary Turkish authors who have written over one hundred children’s, young adult and adult books. She addresses to children and young adults in many genres: novels, poems, short stories, fairy tales, radio plays, theatre plays. She writes for adults as well but her primary audiences are children and young adults, and she has devoted her life to children’s and young adult literature.

The essence of her literary style lies in her uninhibited imagination. Her works ignite wonder, excitement, desire and call the reader to join the journey. They encourage the children to let their imagination free and dream alongside the characters. She assumes the role of a guide through the inner world of the reader. She lets the child be a child and not a being that should be fed information, directed, molded and shaped. Her mantra is that literature should not be didactic. When she is asked why she writes for children, she says that they are not only our hope for the future but they are the only ones who can have limitless hopes and dreams.

She does not believe in obstacles when it comes to children’s right to enjoy literature. A special play she penned for the hearing impaired children, *Red Umbrella*, was staged by Ankara State Theatre and Istanbul State Theatre, respectively. She also regularly goes into recording sections and contributes to brail books for visually impaired children.

Yener has become a credible authority in children’s and young adult literature. She manages the children’s section of the literature supplement of Cumhuriyet Newspaper with co-author and colleague Aytül Akal. She also produced and hosted two radio programmes titled *Sounds in our Hearts* and *Book Worm*.

She also represents Turkish literature at international platforms. Her play *Little Girls Little Boys* represented Turkey in International Theatre Festival and was put on stage in India. She also represented Turkey in Tiran and Split at Literature in Flux, an annual organization aiming to connect literary centers of Europe, in 2012. The novel, *Skeleton of the Lost Library*, she co-authored with Akal was selected as one of the titles for Found In Translation anthology -an anthology that honors worlds the best children's literature works- in 2015. Her works were translated into several languages.

Yener has won a large number of honors and awards for her novels, poems, short stories and radio plays among which are Children's Humorous Stories Award, Samim Kocagöz Short Story Award, Ömer Seyfettin Short Story Award, Kosovo 2013's Best Children's Author Award, and Last 15 Years Best Children's Poetry Book Award by ÇGYD.

YENER'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO LITERATURE

Mavisel Yener is one of the pioneers of children's and young adult literature in Turkey. She has been active since 1998 in the literary world and since then she has been one of the most creative and productive authors of Turkey. She has won many acclaimed awards and honors besides being selected for the Found In Translation anthology, an anthology that honors the best children's literature works in the world. However, the most important of them all, she has gained a wide popularity among children in a world the number of readers are diminishing rapidly. She offers a magical world to children, reminding them the wonders of reading.

One of the most important features of Yener's works is her language. She has a simple and pure tone. She uses the language skillfully and a strong advocate of using genuine mother tongue. She is the first children's author to use genuine native words instead of foreign words assimilated into Turkish, such as computer and fax machine. With that she not only exhibits the beauties of her native language but also helps preserving the language. She aspires to raise language awareness.

Another important feature of Yener's works is their universalness. There are socially, economically, culturally diverse classes in Turkey. Being able to touch the souls and minds of all children from these diverse classes, to address them in an equally compelling manner, to unite them in one adventure that speaks to them all is nearly impossible. However, with her word plays, humorous tone, thought-provoking themes, intriguing subjects she achieves to speak to all the children of the world regardless of their social statuses, religion, gender, and where they live. In Yener's literary world children are children and therefore they should be able to enjoy same things. A boy from a remote village will equally relate to and enjoy her works as much as a girl from a big city.

Children's world is different than the world of grown-ups and it is essential to speak the language of children. Yener speaks this language fluently. Her creativity exceeds the limits of grown-ups' imaginations; she has a childlike imagination of her own. Her poetic tone, imaginative characters, playful language in her fiction cherishes children's world.

Yener's works promise a good time. But Yener also believes in encouraging children to think and learn. In the works of Yener, there are embedded messages that encourage self-development such as taking responsibility, not being prejudiced, being considerate, selflessness, empathy, being respectful to others' ideas and honesty; that support social-development such as helping others, equality, being respectful to others' rights and sharing; that promote national awareness such as language awareness and environment awareness; and that boost universal awareness such as living in peace. However, Yener never employs a didactic tone; she never forces these messages but gives them so skillfully that they don't alienate the reader.

In all her works, Yener has only one objective: to children for children. Yener has devoted her life to children's and young adult literature and this devotion predominates every other thing. She does not attempt to stand out as an author, make a name for herself. In short, she is not an egocentric author. To achieve her objective, she even united her literary force with Aytül Akal in some of her works. Their poetry, novel, creative writing collaborations not only won awards but also offer a polyvocal world for children.

Yener is an important figure in children's and young adult literature because of her dedication, her language, her approach, her ceaseless effort in producing for children and in overall her contributions to the field.

NOVELS

Mustafa Kemal'in Kayıp Seslerinin İzinde. (On the Trail of Lost Sounds of Mustafa Kemal) BU Publishing, İstanbul, 2002.

Mavi Zamanlar. (Blue Times) Tudem Publishing, İzmir, 2003.

Sırsayar. (The Secretcounter) BU Publishing, İstanbul, 2003.

Önce Çocuklar Düşledi. (First the Children Dreamt) History Foundation Publications, İstanbul, 2004.

Dolunay Dedektifleri - İz Peşinde. (Detectives of the Full Moon: Chasing Down the Trail) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2007.

Dolunay Dedektifleri - Dehşet Mektuplar. (Detectives of the Full Moon: Terror Letters) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2007.

Dolunay Dedektifleri - Mumya Dükkânı. (Detectives of the Full Moon: The Mummy Store) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2008.

Dolunay Dedektifleri - Korkunç Satranç. (Detectives of the Full Moon: Dreadful Chess Game) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2009.

Dolunay Dedektifleri - Ölümler Ormanı. (Detectives of the Full Moon: Forest of Dead) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2010.

Dolunay Dedektifleri - Yarasa Yarışları. (Detectives of the Full Moon: Bat Races) Bilgi Yayınevi, Ankara, 2012.

Çılgınlar Sınıfı - Korsan Takımı. (The Mad Class: Pirate Team) Bilgi Yayınevi, Ankara, 2011.

Çılgınlar Sınıfı - Çıldıran Kasaba. (The Mad Class: The Town That Went Mad) Bilgi Yayınevi, Ankara, 2011.

Çılgınlar Sınıfı - Dinozor Takımı. (The Mad Class: Dinosaur Team) Bilgi Yayınevi, Ankara, 2012.

Çılgınlar Sınıfı - Sırlar Takımı. (The Mad Class: Mysteries Team) Bilgi Yayınevi, Ankara, 2013.

Çılgınlar Sınıfı - Atlantis Takımı. (The Mad Class: Atlantis Team) Bilgi Yayınevi, Ankara, 2015.

Pasaklılar Serisi - Tehlikeli Maymun. (The Messies: Dangerous Monkey) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2015.

Pasaklılar Serisi - Timsah Havuzu. (The Messies: Crocodile Pool) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2016.

Pasaklılar Serisi - Şapşal Baykuş. (The Messies: Silly Owl) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2017.

NOVELLAS

Mavi Elma. (The Blue Apple) K Publishing, İzmir, 1998.

Dinozorla Kahvaltı. (Breakfast with Dinosaur) BU Publishing, İstanbul, 2003.

SHORT STORY COLLECTIONS

Kızlar Sünnet Olur mu? (Do Girls Get to Have Circumcision?) K Publishing, İzmir, 2000.

Çikolata Zamanı. (Chocolate Time) K Publishing, İzmir, 2001.

Çorap Canavarı. (Sock Monster) K Publishing, İzmir, 2001.

Zeki'nin Zekası Kaçtı. (Brian's Brain Ran Away) K Publishing, İzmir, 2001.

Üşengeç. (Dilatory) BU Publishing, İstanbul, 2001.

Uzaylılar Bize Geldi. (Aliens Came to Visit Us) K Publishing, İzmir, 2005.

Vampir Öyküsü. (Vampire Story) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2005.

Zaman Torbası. (Time Sack) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2007.

Hayaletten Mektuplar. (Letters from a Ghost) Uçanbalık Publishing, İzmir, 2009.

Öğretmen Neden Çıldırıldı? (Why Teacher Went Crazy) Uçanbalık Publishing, İzmir, 2009.

Karamelli Akide Şekeri. (Caramel Hard Candy) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2015.

TALES

Evinden Kaçan Masal. (Run Away Tale) K Publishing, İzmir, 2001.

Masal Sandığı 1. Kitap. (Tale Chest - First Book) K Publishing, İzmir, 2003.

Masal Sandığı 2. Kitap. (Tale Chest - Second Book) K Publishing, İzmir, 2003.

Mektup Sandığı 1. Kitap. (Letter Chest - First Book) K Publishing, İzmir, 2003.

Mektup Sandığı 2. Kitap. (Letter Chest - Second Book) K Publishing, İzmir, 2003.

Sihirli Masallar. (Magic Tales) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2009.

Kedi Ted'in Serüvenleri. (Cat Ted's Adventures) Türk Eğitim Derneği Publishing, Ankara, 2011.

Elma Şekeri Ülkesi. (The Taffy Appleland) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2013.

PICTURE BOOKS

Mavi Masallar Serisi - Uçan Goril. (Blue Tales Series: Flying Gorilla) K Publishing, İzmir, 2003.

Mavi Masallar Serisi - Köpek Okulu. (Blue Tales Series: Dog School) K Publishing, İzmir, 2003.

Mavi Masallar Serisi - Köpeğim Aşık Oldu. (Blue Tales Series: My Dog is in Love) K Publishing, İzmir, 2003.

Mavi Masallar Serisi - Tırtıl Teyze. (Blue Tales Series: Caterpillar Aunt) K Publishing, İzmir, 2003.

- Mavi Masallar Serisi - Dedektif Ece.* (Blue Tales Series: Detective Ece) K Publishing, İzmir, 2003.
- Mavi Masallar Serisi - Masalcının Mektubu.* (Blue Tales Series: Storyteller's Letter) K Publishing, İzmir, 2003.
- Mavi Masallar Serisi - Mavi Orman.* (Blue Tales Series: Blue Forest) K Publishing, İzmir, 2003.
- Mavi Masallar Serisi - Dipsiz Göl.* (Blue Tales Series: Bottomless Lake) K Publishing, İzmir, 2003.
- Mavi Masallar Serisi - Ödev Makinesi.* (Blue Tales Series: Homework Machine) K Publishing, İzmir, 2003.
- Mavi Masallar Serisi - Düş Sandığı.* (Blue Tales Series: Dream Chest) K Publishing, İzmir, 2003.
- Armut Kafa Ailesi'nin Serüvenleri - İkizler Okula Başlıyor.* (Adventures of Pear-Head Family: Twins are Starting to School) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2012.
- Armut Kafa Ailesi'nin Serüvenleri - Köpekleri Seven Kedi.* (Adventures of Pear-Head Family: The Cat Who Likes Dogs) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2012.
- Armut Kafa Ailesi'nin Serüvenleri - Papağanlar Ne Yer?* (Adventures of Pear-Head Family: What Do Parrots Eat?) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2012.
- Armut Kafa Ailesi'nin Serüvenleri - Piyano Çalan Kedi.* (Adventures of Pear-Head Family: Piano Playing Cat) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2012.
- Armut Kafa Ailesi'nin Serüvenleri - Sihirbaz Dinozor.* (Adventures of Pear-Head Family: Wizard Dinosaur) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2012.
- Haylaz Köpek Pati'nin Serüvenleri.* (Adventures of Naughty Paw: Paw the Naughty Dog) Tudem Publishing, İzmir, 2012.
- Haylaz Köpek Pati'nin Serüvenleri - Kremalı Köpek Gofreti.* (Adventures of Naughty Paw: Doggy Cream Waffles) Tudem Publishing, İzmir, 2012.

Haylaz Köpek Pati'nin Serüvenleri - Flüt Çalan Köpek. (Adventures of Naughty Paw: The Dog Who Plays the Flute) Tudem Publishing, İzmir, 2012.

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Haylaz Köpek Pati'nin Serüvenleri - Öğretmen Sınıfa Ne Getirdi? (Adventures of Naughty Paw: What Did Teacher Bring to the Class?) Tudem Publishing, İzmir, 2012.

Palyaço Okulu Serisi: Ödevimi Kim Yapar? (The Clowning School: Who Would Do My Homework?) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2013.

Palyaço Okulu: Unuttum Öğretmenim. (The Clowning School: I Forgot Teacher) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2013.

Palyaço Okulu: Sınıfta Karmaşa. (The Clowning School: Conflict in Class) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2013.

Palyaço Okulu: Sınıftaki Aslan. (The Clowning School: The Lion In The Class) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2013.

Palyaço Okulu: Çantadaki Hazine. (The Clowning School: The Treasure In The Bag) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2013.

Mimi'nin Serüvenleri - Masalları Çok Severim. (Mimi's Adventures - I Love Tales Very Much) Uçanbalık Publishing, İzmir, 2015.

Mimi'nin Serüvenleri - Dans Eden Dinozorlar. (Mimi's Adventures - Dancing Dinosaurs) Uçanbalık Publishing, İzmir, 2015.

Mimi'nin Serüvenleri - Sevgili Anneannem. (Mimi's Adventures - Dear Grandma) Uçanbalık Publishing, İzmir, 2016.

Uçan Nine. (Flying Nana) Doğan Egmont Publishing, İstanbul, 2016.

POEMS

Şiir Saldım Gökyüzüne. (I Let Poems Loose in the Sky) Toroslu Publishing, İstanbul, 2006.

Komik Şiirler. (Funny Poems) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2010.

Reçelli Şiirler. (Jammy Poems) Redhouse Kidz, İstanbul, 2014.

Şakacı Kitap. (Playful Book) Doğan Egmont Publishing, İstanbul, 2015.

Gıdıklanan Kitap. (Ticklish Book) Doğan Egmont Publishing, İstanbul, 2015.

Şiir Atölyesi. (Poetry Workshop) Tudem Publishing, İzmir, 2017.

CREATIVE WRITING BOOK

Eğlenceli Şeyler Kitabı. (Amusing Things Book) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2014.

Öykü Yazmayı Seviyorum. (I Love Story Writing) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2014.

ADULT SHORT STORY COLLECTIONS

Derin Yırtmaç. (Deep Slit) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2004.

Gitme Dönmezsin. (Don't Go, You Won't Come Back) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2011.

Gölgeler Islanmaz. (Shadows Don't Get Wet) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2013.

COLLEBORATIONS WITH AYTÜL AKAL

NOVELS

Kayıp Kitaplıktaki İskelet. (Skeleton of the Lost Library) Tudem Publishing, İzmir, 2011.

Kayıp Kitaplıktaki İskelet - Yaşayan Ölüler. (Skeleton of The Lost Library - Living Dead) Tudem Publishing, İzmir, 2014.

Kayıp Kitaplıktaki İskelet - Fare Sarayı. (Skeleton of The Lost Library - Mouse Palace) Tudem Publishing, İzmir, 2017.

STORIES

Kırmızı Şemsiye. (Red Umbrella) Uçanbalık Publishing, İzmir, 2007.

Hastanede Şenlik Var. (There is a Festival in the Hospital) Oncology Association, İzmir, 2013.

Bu Ne Biçim Sunum? (What Kind of a Presentation is This?) Doğan Egmont Publishing, İstanbul, 2015.

Bu Ne Biçim Armağan? (What Kind of a Gift is This?) Doğan Egmont Publishing, İstanbul, 2015.

Bu Ne Biçim Yarışma? (What Kind of a Competition is This?) Doğan Egmont Publishing, İstanbul, 2016.

POEMS

Mavi Ay. (Blue Moon) Uçanbalık Publishing, İzmir, 2004.

Denizin Büyüsü. (Sea Spell) Uçanbalık Publishing, İzmir, 2005.

Ay Kaç Yaşında? (How Old is the Moon?) Uçanbalık Publishing, İzmir, 2006.

Kaç Güneş Var? (How Many Suns Are There?) Uçanbalık Publishing, İzmir, 2008.

Kar Sesi. (The Voice of Snow) Uçanbalık Publishing, İzmir, 2009.

Kuş Uçtu Şiir Kaldı. (Bird Flew Poem Remained) Uçanbalık Publishing, İzmir, 2004.

Şiirimi Kedi Kaptı. (Cat Snatched My Poem) Uçanbalık Publishing, İzmir, 2004.

Balığım Şiir Yazdı. (My Fish Wrote A Poem) Mandolin Publishing, İstanbul, 2013.

Uçan Şiirler. (Flying Poems) Mandolin Publishing, İstanbul, 2013.

Şaşkın Şiirler. (Puzzled Poems) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2011.

Zıplayan Şiirler. (Bouncing Poems) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2014.

CHILDREN'S PLAYS

Kırmızı Şemsiye. (Red Umbrella) State Theatre Repertoire (Istanbul State Theatre 2011-2012)

Mor Gece Mavi Gün. (Purple Night Blue Day) State Theatre Repertoire (Ankara State Theatre 2006-2007)

AWARDS & HONORS

- Yaşar Culture and Education Foundation Writing Award (1978)
- Yeni Asır Newspaper – Columnists Among Us Award (1998)
- TÖMER Mother Tongue Story Competition Award (1999) [*Runaway Tale*]
- TÖMER Mother Tongue Stories to the Year 2000 Competition Award (2000) [“Water Green,” *Deep Slit*]
- BU Publishing House – Children’s Humorous Stories Award (2001) [*Dilatory*]
- Samim Kocagöz Short Story Award First Place (2002) [“The Age of Pigeons,” *Deep Slit*]
- Ömer Seyfettin Short Story Award First Prize (2002)
- BU Publishing House – Children’s Novel Award First Place (2002) [*On the Trail of Lost Sounds of Mustafa Kemal*]
- TUDEM Publishing House – Literature Award for Young Adult / Novel Category (2003) [*Blue Times*]
- ÇGYD Awards Best Children’s Poetry Award (2004) [*Blue Moon*]
- Laborers’ Stories Award (2005), ÇGYD Design Award (2008) [“Eyes of a Miner,” *Don’t Go, You Won’t Come Back*]
- ÇGYD – Last 15 Years (Between 1994 and 2008) Best Children’s Poetry Book Special Prize (2009) [*Blue Moon*]
- Çamlaraltı College – Authors Who Support Republic With Their Works (2011)
- Kosovo 2013’s Best Children’s Author Award (2013)
- ÇGYD – Best Book Design of the Year Award (2015) [*Jammy Poems*]
- Found In Translation Anthology (2015) [*Skeleton of the Lost Library*]

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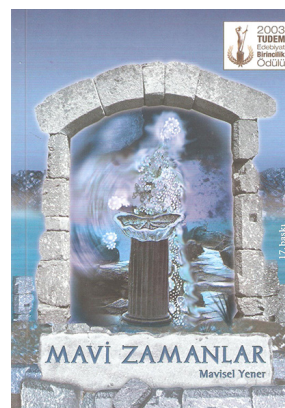
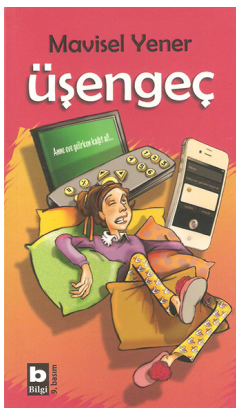
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Kayıp Kitaplıktaki İskelet. (Skeleton of the Lost Library) Tudem Publishing, İzmir, 2011.



TRANSLATED TITLES

التفاحة الزرقاء . (The Blue Apple) Safeer Publishing, Egypt, 2008.

A Kék Alma .(The Blue Apple) Napkut Publishing, Budapest, 2012.



LIST OF BOOKS SENT TO THE JURY

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Mavi Zamanlar. (Blue Times) Tudem Publishing, İzmir, 2003.

Çılgınlar Sınıfı - Korsan Takımı. (The Mad Class: Pirate Team) Bilgi Yayınevi, Ankara, 2011.

Elma Şekeri Ülkesi. (The Taffy Appleland) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2013.

Palyaço Okulu: Unuttum Öğretmenim. (The Clowning School: I Forgot Teacher) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2013.

Pasaklılar Serisi - Tehlikeli Maymun. (The Messies: Dangerous Monkey) Bilgi Publishing, Ankara, 2015.

Mimi'nin Serüvenleri - Sevgili Anneannem. (Mimi's Adventures - Dear Grandma) Uçanbalık Publishing, İzmir, 2016.

*Selected Poems by Mavisel Yener. [Poems Selected from *Funny Poems*, *I Let Poems Loose in the Sky*, *Amusing Things Book*, and *Ticklish Book*]*

INTERVIEWS

AN INTERVIEW WITH MAVİSEL YENER

9 Eylül Newspapers

Interview by Neslihan Perşembe

Publication Date: April 13, 2014

Mavisel Yener, one of the gems of İzmir, graduated from Ege University's Faculty of Dentistry. She has 87¹ books consisting of poetry, short stories, tales and novels. Her plays were staged by State Theatres. She has given speeches at national and international symposiums in the field of Children's Literature. She has also given lectures in universities. Her stories, tales and poems are in elementary school textbooks. She holds her own Children's Literature Workshops. Yener has won 16 literature awards². Her books have been translated into other languages, and reached children all over the world. (For more information, visit: www.maviselyener.com)

How did the passion of writing arise? We know you from your books for children and young adults, but you do have books for adults too, don't you?

My passion for writing steamed during the early years of elementary school with the support of my teachers and my family. I was a lucky child; we had a huge library at our home... As I read, my desire to write increased. I was both a dentist and an author, but later on I fully dedicated myself to Children's and Young Adult Literature. And you have a point there, I am known as a Children's and Young Adult author since out of my eighty seven books only two are for adults!

Children's literature is very important. In addition to writing, you also review children's books in Cumhuriyet Newspaper's Book supplement. You had a similar section in another newspaper before, too. I always buy books for my nieces based on your references and they always end up loving them. What do you think about the relationship between children and literature? What should this relationship be like in order to make a child care for books?

There is one thing that's crucial to getting a child to love books: The approaches in the book should not be enforcing! In fact, isn't it exactly like that in real life, too? Do we enjoy someone's company if they patronize us all the time? Children never

1 As of December 2016, Yener has 96 books published.

2 As of December 2016, Yener has won 16 awards.

embrace anyone or anything if they are pressured into it. Child readers do not enjoy a book that “thinks instead of them”; they like books that make them ask questions and feel that they have intellectual freedom. This liberating approach is very important for a child to show empathy towards the characters. Only then they have fun, have adventures, ask questions, wonder; in this way the relationship between the reader and the character starts effortlessly. Children will know if a writer raves trying to please them or force wonderment on them. Because as they can tell sincerity apart from forced writing!

The world of children is more open to imagination and creativity. In that sense, what are the differences between and common points of children’s, young adult and adult literature?

Writing for children requires a different repertoire. A children’s story written by an adult literature author may not be appealing to children. Understanding of childhood requires an entirely different talent and point of view. If it is the children and literature for them that are in our mind, we have to focus on pieces that will bring the child together with the eternal joy and meaning of literature! Children and their literature are and should be above all political views. In such an assessment not the political but artistic criterions should be weighed. Those who use religion for political gain are also attempting to make books an instrument for religion, as well. I believe that recommending such publications as children’s literature works for schools is the equivalent of child abuse. Besides capturing the imagination and creativity of children while writing for them, you should have a keen understating of the language properties, physical characteristics, fields of interest and philosophies of every age group. At the same time you should be able to invite them into to infinite depths of literature. At times you should be able to think like a pedagogue. But when you are writing for adults, it’s only you and your literary concerns.

Would you share the responses you get from children with our readers? 19th İzmir Book Fair is upon us. You participate to other book fairs then Izmir, as well... I suppose book fairs are one of the most pleasurable parts of your job. What do you think of the Izmir Book Fair? And taking other fairs into consideration as well, how are the responses from your readers, especially children readers?

Before communicating through online means became common, I used get lots and lots of letters from children and I'd respond to each and every one of them. Now, they mostly send me emails, and again, I write back to them all with such joy. Child readers' reactions' are so sincere... "I love your books, what will you write about next?" is a definite question. You can imagine how much that motivates me as an author. But of course, having the chance to look into the readers' eyes in book fairs certainly makes me really happy. In fairs, I can chat with children or young readers, with their parents, teachers and I get to learn their opinions and expectations from my work. TÜYAP's Book Fair has become a classic in Izmir's culture scene now. It is also a great touch that the fair takes place in Kültür Park (Culture Park); I hope it won't be moved to new fairground.³ As readers and writers we are looking forward to the fair.

You are invited to the Budapest Book Fair in April 26th by the Ministry of Culture. But I know that this is not the first international fair you've been invited to. How do you feel about participating in the Budapest Book Fair? How are they different from fairs in Turkey, in terms of the profiles of reader and publishing sector?

In April 26th I will give a speech representing the children literature of Turkey, and then I will talk about my books that were translated into Hungarian. As an artist, it always gives me joy if my books are being read in abroad. It is very pleasing how much our literature gets attention in international fairs or at gatherings with readers outside of the fairs. I find participating to such events very important in terms of understanding the contemporary and future trends in children's and young adult literature in the world, and making acquaintances with international publishers. International fairs are held mostly to bring publishers from all around the world together, but they do not forget of the readers either. Fairs in Turkey are mostly targeted for readers.

3 As of 2017 Izmir Book Fair will be held in a new venue little outside the city which inflamed a huge discussion on how it will affect the number of visitors attending the fair. Culture Park was in the heart of the city allowing visitors to reach the venue easily. The new venue will require all the visitors to use a means of transportation even if it's a short ride. At the time this interview was conducted Yener, just like many of her fellow authors, was concerned of such a change. However TÜYAP decided against the public opinion changing the venue.

Compared to the day to day life, is your state of mind different when you're writing? If so, how does it enrich your life?

As a person whose life is dedicated to Children's Literature, I cannot deny that writing has given me back so much. One of my young readers once asked me what I have learned from my own books. Yes, it is true that I've learned so much from my books. But the biggest thing I've learned is this: Every child is a manifesto, every child is a revolution. When you're writing, you willingly or unwillingly cross to an alternate, fictional, imaginary universe. The reality of that place and that of my life here complete each other, as well as enrich one another.

What feelings does Mavisel Yener experience as she starts and finishes writing a book?

Especially when I am starting off writing a new novel, every time I am filled with a strange excitement as if I am feeling something entirely new and that I have never experienced something like that before. I turn into a little child afraid of getting lost in a forest. I prepare myself for a new adventure. The magic starts happening usually on a night of full moon. Whenever I finish my work I feel happy and surprised as if a miracle has just happened. Isn't it funny that I still get surprised each and every time?

I know despite your busy schedule, you volunteer at non-governmental organizations. Would you like to give a message through our newspaper?

I try to help out as much as I can when organizations from Izmir reach out to me. I believe that anyone who calls herself an 'intellectual' should do it. For example I contribute to "Let's Be Happy Foundation"; we have workshops with children cancer patients. I volunteer for Turkey's Library for The Visually Impaired. I have books printed with the Braille alphabet for children who can't see. Volunteering is the best way to give back to the society. While giving back, I think it's important to keep it on the low, not to make a huge deal out of it by putting on display for the world to see.

Dear Neslihan, I thank you and your newspaper for providing me another opportunity to get together with my lovely readers.

INTERVIEWS

AN INTERVIEW WITH MAVİSEL YENER

Aegean Telgraf Newspaper

Interview by Gülşah Elikbank

Publication Date: January 24, 2015

“The secret to creativity is to stay free.”

What do you attribute the obsession of “a child’s book should be based on real stories” that some parents, teachers and even some librarians that I’ve personally met to?

They say that one should ‘sink’ to the level of children’s imagination; for me, it is not ‘sinking’ but ‘rising’ to that level. An adult who rises to the level of children’s imagination, who trusts them would never make such an argument. S/he wouldn’t make a distinction between a realistic and an imaginary character. A child would know that this fiction is really a fiction. They grow up with fairytales; it is first literary genre they encounter with, and fairytale is one of the most important branches, even the main artery of fantasy literature. To me, saying “don’t tell children about characters that aren’t real” is the same as saying “don’t tell them fairytales”. What I would suggest to those people is to read a little bit more, to do their research and to get to know children a little better.

Do you think it’s about not trusting children?

I am not someone who accepts the concept of not trusting the other person. It is the self that lacks trust. If there is something wrong with you, you see it in the person before you; people become your reflection. The one who does not trust his/her child actually does not trust oneself.

You know, there are some authors who work with pedagogues and specialists to write books. Do you think it agrees with literature? Is there a need for such a thing in order to bring forth children’s literature?

If you are writing for children, you should know them very well. A children’s author should have a keen understanding of what a child will comprehend at which age, their fields of interest, their verbal skills, and what emotional associations

the child will make with what is written. As my sole purpose is to present my reader an enjoyable piece, I've never consulted a pedagogue, and asked if my book was up to the standards of pedagogical formation; because, as an author, I should already be equipped with this kind of knowledge. Besides, while I was training to be a dentist, I studied a great deal of child psychology for my pedodontics class, and for a long time I worked with children patients.

You live in Izmir. I think you are not practicing dentistry anymore?

I carried on doing both for a long time. I was a dentist working with patients, and I wrote. Those two nourished each other. It is so fun to be responsible of the care of both teeth and dreams! But now, I am completely dedicated to children's literature.

Do you think it's possible for an author to write for a living in Turkey? Do the publishing houses provide proper conditions for the authors or does a long time have to pass to reach to that point as is in your case?

It takes a lot of time and perseverance. Of course it's directly proportional to society's perception of art, labor, books and authors. It's nearly impossible for a new author to support herself/himself just by writing, no matter how good an author s/he is. That would be utopic. Wish writing for a living was possible but it is very hard. Certainly, as years pass by, the number of your books increase, your relationship with the reader gets stronger; then, it can be possible to earn a living by writing. But the journey is long and hard.

Teenagers seem to think writers make a lot of money and it's one of the reasons they're interested in the profession. But that's not the cast, is it?

That is a very relevant question, Gülşah. An author should never surrender the feeling of self-reliance to greed, whim of fame, or the order of compliment. If they surrender to these, without realizing, their creativity will dry out. If your initial intention behind writing is being famous and rich, you're going in the wrong direction; your literary integrity is in danger! If you're putting literature to the back seat, you'll be overcome by your ambitions. But this has never been the way of art for centuries. You'll have to be liberated from everything, in order to get creative.

Do you think living in Izmir has its pros or cons in consideration of your profession, or do you manage either way?

In the first years my books started to get published and I started winning awards there were headlines like “There is someone from Izmir who is winning awards...” In the following years they stopped emphasizing the city I live in, because they realized that I’ve abolished the borders. When you look at Turkey, you see that the biggest pens in literature come from the heart of Anatolia. There is no prerequisite for an author to live in Istanbul in order to advance in the literary world. Especially now with the communication age gaining speed, it doesn’t make a difference if you live in Istanbul, Paris or Izmir. I cannot say that living in Izmir is a drawback when my articles are being published every week in a national newspaper, my plays are being staged in theaters and my books are being read here and in abroad. In my opinion it’s has more positive qualities to it; Izmir is a calm and inspiring city. I have a lot more time to write here.

There are books you’ve collaborated with Aytül Akal. How is your collective mind and collective imagination received in Turkey?

It’s been sixteen books so far that I’ve co-wrote with Aytül Akal¹. Our book *Skeleton of the Lost Library* (Tudem Publishing) was awarded internationally and will be translated to various languages. At the talks we give at schools, children always ask us if we ever get jealous of each other. Of course not. On the contrary, we inspire each other. It doesn’t look easy for two authors to produce a work together, does it? But actually, it is really fun. Our intention was never to set an example for others. After a while we realized that children were impressed by our collaboration. Then they started to work together as well. There are even some fellow authors who tried it. But you cannot force it; it has to come naturally. If it is meant to be, it unfolds on its own. Don’t you argue while working together, they ask, because it is said that authors always have high egos. They ask how we manage our egos. On that account, to me, Aytül Akal is a special author who should be taken as a role model, and beyond that she is a special person. We get past our egos while work-

¹ As of December 2016, there are nineteen books and two plays that Mavisel Yener and Aytül Akal co-authored.

ing. We've never had an argument or a disagreement because we respect each other's thoughts and literary sense. I think our success comes from this respect.

What do you think of the perception of Turkish literature in abroad? Do you think that the Turkish authors are well-represented internationally?

Actually, our books are under the foreign children's literature standards; however there are some representation problems, of course. In the abroad publishers do not contact with the authors they want to publish but rather with their agents. Agents in Turkey are not too interested in children's and young adult literature. Among printing, marketing and distribution in Turkey, publishers simply don't have enough time to spare to market their book in abroad. My books that were published abroad were translated under the TEDA Project. They are translated into Arabic, Hungarian and English. Three out of eighty seven of my books were translated; but *Skeleton of the Lost Library* was named one of the "ten books that should be translated to world languages," so I think this number will go higher soon. I hope agents in Turkey become more aware and active in this process.²

Is there a city in Turkey that you haven't been to?

There are few places left, but I've been to numerous cities and towns. Because I believe that it is a duty of the author to reach every inch of her/his country and I'm just trying to make that happen. I feel incredibly happy when I get to meet the children of the cities, towns and villages as I get to know the lands and people of my own country. Of course from time to time, I give speeches abroad. I attend international book fairs. I've discovered that a child from abroad laughs to the exact same lines in a story as a child from Turkey. Being a child is a universal thing, no matter where you're from. This is one of the indicators that my writing has a universal appeal.

It's been established that you travel a lot. How does your family feel about this?

I am really lucky on that department. My husband and daughters are always supporting me. They understand that my travels nourish my literary style. I always have so many stories to tell when I get back, so they feel happy as well. We feel as

2 As of November 2015 Kalem Agency started to represent Yener.

though what matters is the quality of the time we spend together, not the quantity.

Are you currently working on a book?

The Mad Class series published from Bilgi Publishing consisted of four books. My readers really liked the series, so now I'm writing the fifth book. It will be finished soon.

Do you have a story in your mind that you haven't gotten around to, that you save for later?

I don't save stories for later; I write what's on my mind immediately. I write and get it out of my system. Because life goes on a very fast pace and every moment triggers a new thought. Instead of regretting not having written it already, I sit and write it right away. When it's time, the universe sends it to you. When an idea blossoms in your mind, it means it's the right time to write it. When you postpone it, you're going against the universe. And when you do that, the universe can turn against you and make you wait even more!

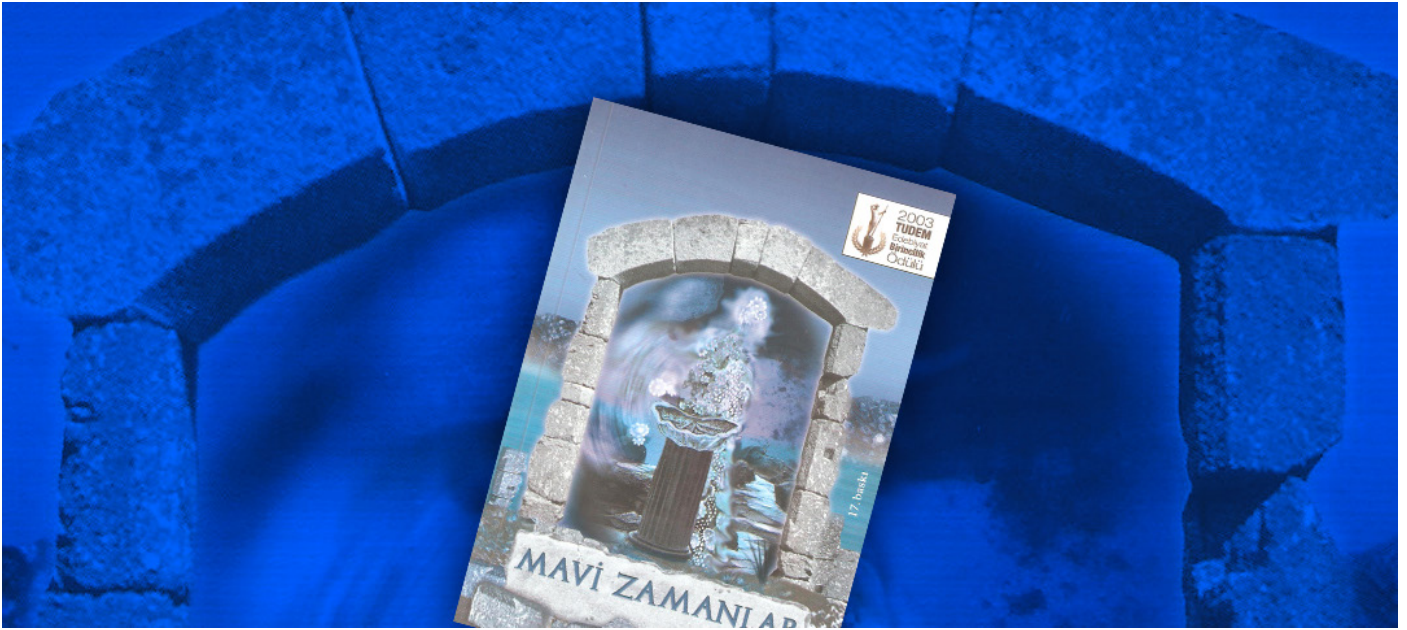
We should go with the flow of the universe then?

Absolutely! It is very important to me. I believe in miracles. Everything becomes better when we go with what universe unfolds for us, and listen to that little voice in our hearts. This is my advice to young authors; sit down and write, don't ever put it off. When you put it off, life puts you on hold!

Cumhuriyet Newspaper Book Supplement

By Nilay Yilmaz

Publication Date: September 2014



Book Review

You've picked up a book and started reading it. All of sudden, you come across a warning that reads:

"Of all those books, it cannot be a coincidence that you have chosen this particular one, could it? Now, you and I must make a pact. As you start reading this tale, you must know that, either you must carry this mystery until the end, or you must stop reading right away. Because it came to you from streams and hills, passing through fiery waters and smoky mountains.

"No matter in which era your world is, you must find the mystery within the source of the water's fire. My tale is going to bring you to the Blue Time, inside a bathhouse so you can solve the mystery.

"Don't you ever say that the bathhouse has no dome, no bowl, no basin, no water! Here's a first hint for you. The most beautiful Nymph is still bathing there."

What would you if *you* were to come across such a warning? Would you put it back immediately or would you continue reading and try to solve the mystery behind it?

Birce is a stubborn girl. She would never back down. Birce, a bookworm, cannot stop reading the book *Ways to Find Secret Passages* ever since she picked it up from the bookstore... She does not just read book but writes stories too. Moreover one of the stories she penned wins her an award in a contest among elementary schools. In that moment the mystery behind the book is revealed or perhaps it gets more complicated. Because Birce finds herself in an archeological excavation site as well as in a tale at the same time. After winning a one week vacation in an archeological excavation site as the reward of the contest she meets with Işıl, Sevilay, Aktan and Gilman there. After a while they will find themselves in the tale and mystery this red covered book tells just like Birce. While youngsters try to solve the mystery of the Nymph and the Storyteller of the Full Moon, İbrahim, Reşat, Necip and Tony are planning to change the world. *Realities* and *Fantasies* intersect; lives cross paths at the mystery of the nymph. Who knows what is real and what is imagination?

Adolescence period is a rough. The never-ending anxieties, problems, fears... Love affairs, vulnerabilities, friendships... Wild spirited youngsters who suffer in between when expectations of parents and the society are added to the equation... With everything that happens the week Birce and her friends spend in the excavation site feels like it lasted a life time. Traveling back and forth through past, present and future, they acquaint with themselves and get to know people all the while trying to solve the mystery of the nymph.

Every detail in this well-crafted story has a mystery to it. In the multilayered plot of the story there aren't only the problems of the adolescence period. It also consists of social concerns: Alliano! Ancient healing center Alliano that will be destructed just like Zeugma after being flooded by the Yortanlı Dam is where the story takes place... Beauties of the Aegean can be seen in ever line of the book, we get pulled into the nature that we've been long estranged. All those fragrances and sights we've missed...

“The warm breeze revived the smell of herbs, slowly wandering for a bit across the skirts of the valley across Alliano before rising towards the peaks of the distant mountains. In an unexpected moment of the night, the obscurity suddenly turned to morning. A giant ball burst out of the trees, distributing hope to the hopeless and love to the lovers, it went on and on to finally stop at the top of a mountain imbued in herb smells.

The mountain with its precise and smooth lines, as if it was trimmed by the sword of a tale’s giant villain, was gradually rising higher and higher. It seemed like it was multiplying and growing under the spell of a wizard facing the giant.

The silver-coloured night birds perched like soaring eagles on the peak of the mountain whose lines seemed to have been drawn by moonlight. Their eyes gazed upon the stars.

At every full moon, the blue winged butterfly, the caterpillar that forgot to sleep and the dragonflies moving fast towards the light would all experience the excitement of a young girl on her way to meet her boyfriend for the first time. Just like that night... When the moonlight washed in the Ilya, the sky and the earth kept silent. Not a single sound could be heard.

The kids uncovered the entrance of the tunnel and jumped in.”

Nowadays, Alliano is silently screaming again. Last week it was announced that the institution that had been sponsoring the excavation for the last three years was withdrawing its support and the excavation work that had been going on for seven years were to come to a halt. However only 10% of the health center had been unearthed. Who knows what is still under the ground and what we’ll miss out!

Mavisel Yener’s book *Blue Times* is Alliano’s silent scream! While we’re anxious to see if Alliano will face the same tragedy as Zeugma, let’s hear out what the Aphrodite statue that was unearthed in the excavation has to say to from the voice of the nymph in the novel...

“The Nymph had forgotten humanity’s greed. She knew of the only way to protect North and South.

“If human beings were one day to move the Nymph’s origins that extend to the centre of the Earth, the healing fire would belch flames again...”

“...The eyes that can follow the traces will see the Full Moon Storyteller’s hints. Go to her nest and save the Nymph’s twin.”

With this book, Yener won the 2003 TUDEM Literature Award for Young Adult in novel category. One can feel that the author put long hours to this book, handled every piece like it was from an archeological dig and penned every word with the sensibility as an Aegean. In this book there here is history, archeology, mythology... While talking about all these, Yener managed to hook her readers to the story. Instead of boring them with old documents, she talks about old times in today’s terms.

“Looking carefully at the statue he just found, Bülent said, ‘I think there’s a crack on the head!’

Aktan started guffawing. ‘She’s crackers!’

Arzu added a romantic tone to her voice and spoke,

‘A mermaid used to live on the crystal mountain. For thousands of years she would cry, ‘Ah, if only Bülent could save me!’ But she was crackers...’

‘What is a mermaid doing in the mountains, Arzu?’

‘She’s also crackers or what?’”

How can we talk about young adult novels without also talking about a ‘love’. This book is no exception. Moreover, it is such a secret and at the same time obvious love that it will make you reread the novel looking for traces of it!

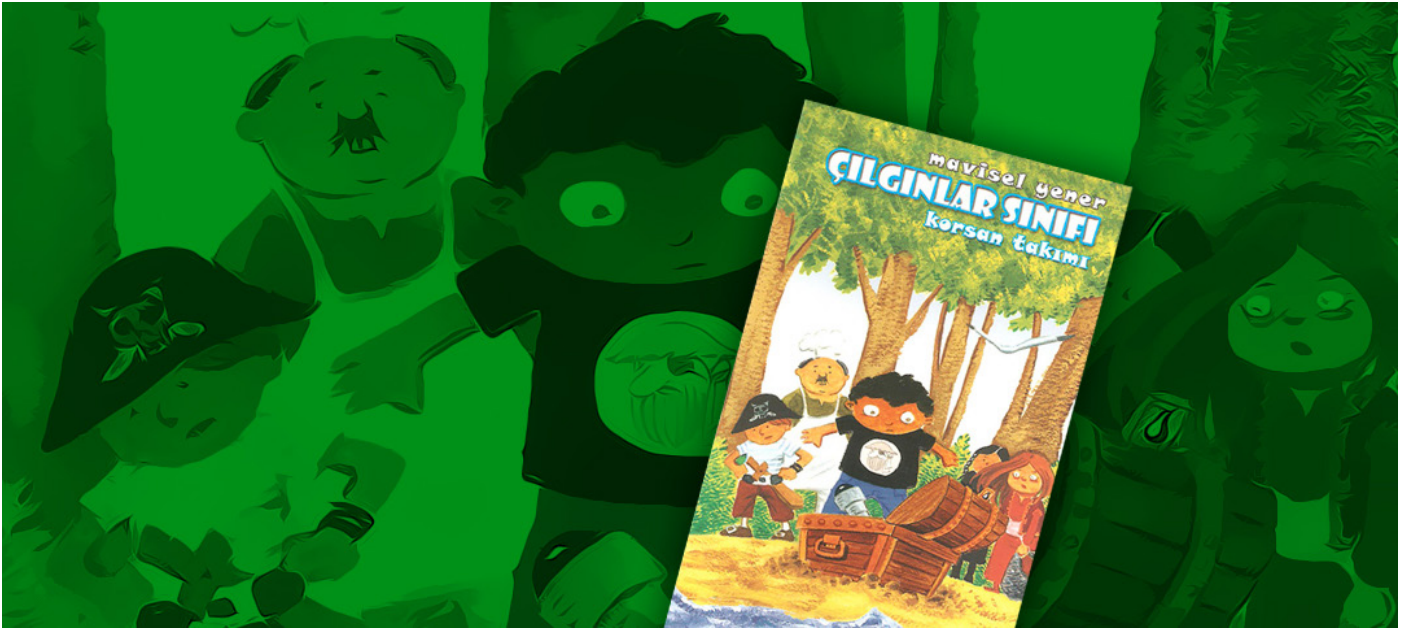
“Of all those books, it cannot be a coincidence that you have chosen this particular one, could it?” says the red book. Our realities and dreams collide in Alliano; all lives unite in the mystery of the nymph. Are the things that happen in Alliano real or a dream? Alliano is slipping away from our fingers... Are we asleep? Are we aware of it?

Sol Newspaper Book Supplement

Efe Özçataloğlu

(3rd year Student – Adnan Mazıcı Elementary School / İzmir)

Publication Date: April 23, 2014



This Class is Something Else!

I had so much fun and laughed a lot while reading Mavisel Yener's *The Mad Class*. The series consist of four books¹. The first book of the series is *Pirate Team*. Members of the team are Daniel, Mary, River, Luke, Ashton and Michaela. We travel through time with Piri Reis in this book. And we learn how he drew his maps.

Second book is *The Town That Went Mad*. In this book, we meet with the "Zombie Team". The team visits Museum of Anatolian Civilizations. Captain of the team, Arya, witnesses two thieves take a tablet from the museum and replace it with a replica. Even though she tells this to the museum director, he doesn't believe her. Weird events unfold as she tracks the thieves and the history.

The Dinosaur Team is the third book of the series. In this book we learn that crime doesn't pay off and frauds end badly. Two men that claim that they have a fossil of

1 As of 2015 the series consists of 5 books.

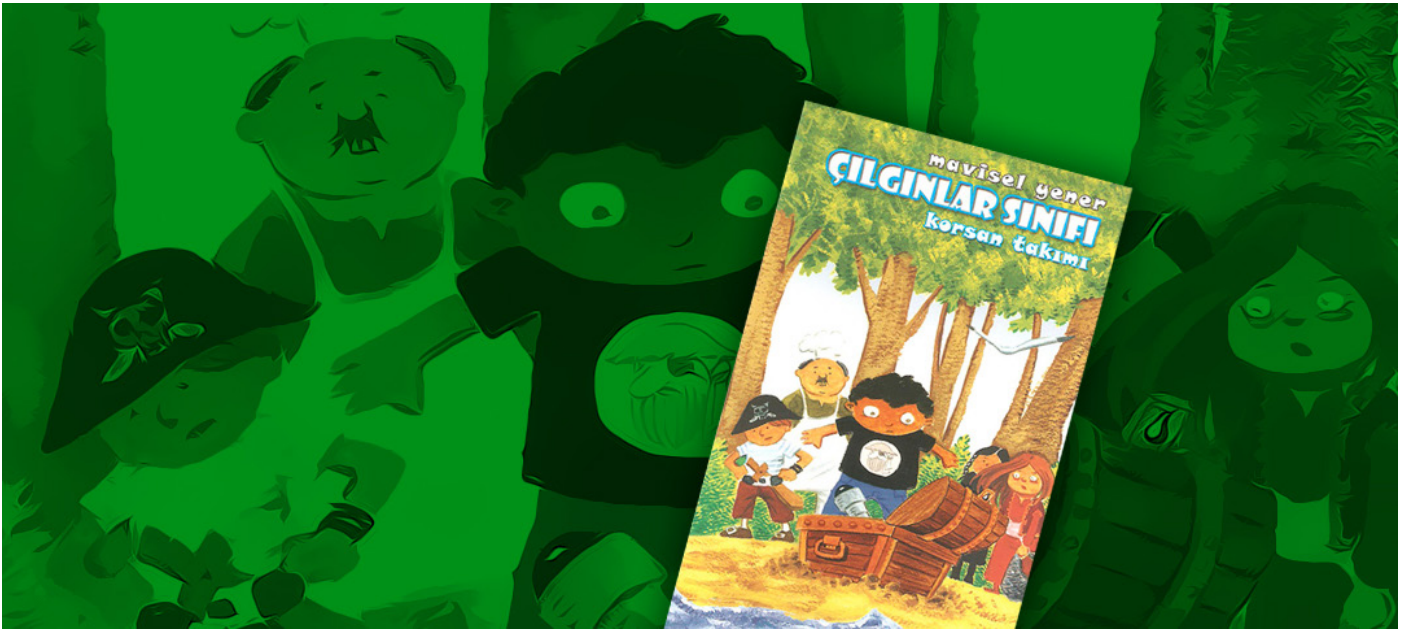
a bird and dinosaur hybrid, and members of the Dinosaur Team that chase these men. It is a breathtaking adventure.

The last book of the series is *The Mysteries Team*. Team members are Meriç, Ozan, Kuzey and Gül. The Mysteries Team had heard of Laproşka Show that will be held at the Mount Nemrut. And they persuade their teacher to see the show. But they aren't aware of the surprise that awaits them at the show. And the adults will never believe what they went through. An exciting journey awaits you with Teacher Claire Sapphire, Vice-Principal Blair Eerie, janitor Buck Toothed and the *Mad Class*.

Cumhuriyet Newspaper Book Supplement

By ıgdem Gündes

Publication Date: December 10, 2016



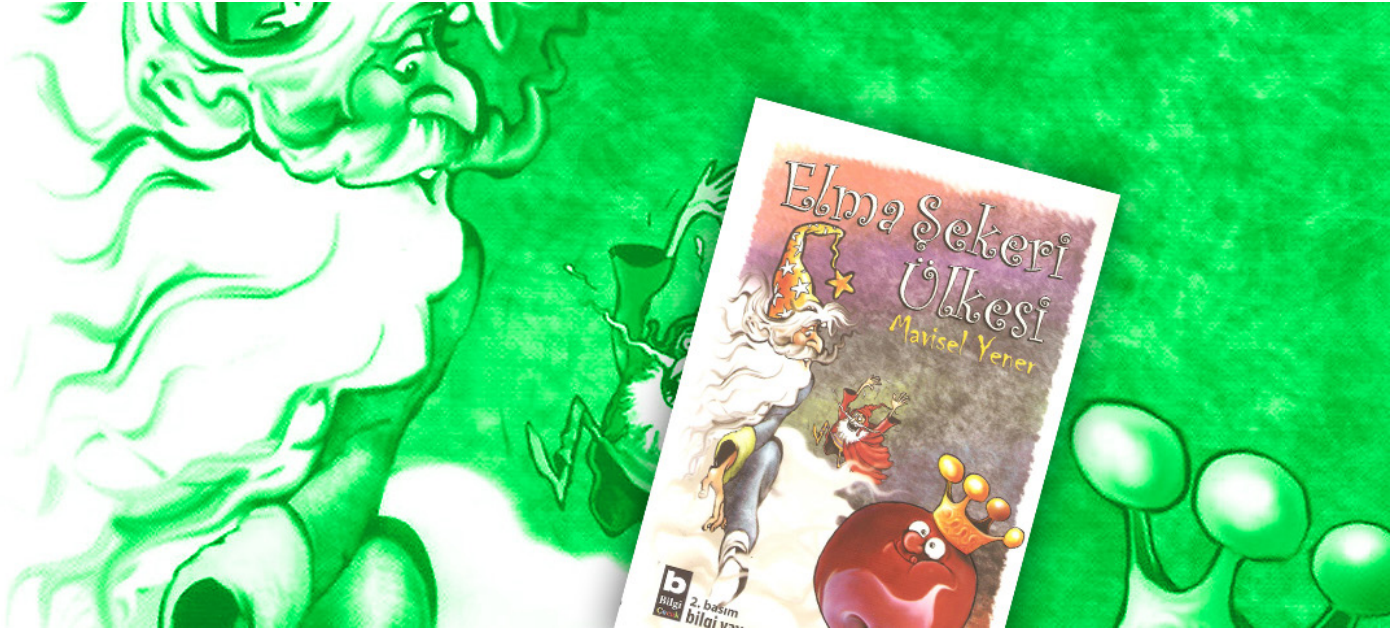
Mad Class - Pirate Team

We are invited to the skillful Mavisel Yener's immense ocean of dreams, and we read this book. *Pirate Team*, the first book of the *Mad Class Series* that consists of five books, opens the door of literature's magical realm. With the fantasy fiction of the productive, award winning Turkish children's literature author Mavisel Yener, *Pirate Team* meets with the readers. In addition to author's mastery of the language and mellifluous writing skills, her humorous style is also remarkable. Children who both enjoy adventures and researching will have fun reading this book. Do you wonder who draw the first world map? The mystery of the world map which is very close to the reality drawn by the famous Turkish sailor Piri Reis in 1528 onto gazelle skin is revealed in this book. Would you like to be one of the Mad Class students who go travel in time and meet Piri Reis? Children love reading *Mad Class Series*. There is always more to things than it meets the eyes. The "real story" is written by those who are not mentioned in history books! The readers have sent countless letters to the author, asking her to continue the series.

The Book Post

By Hülya Soyşekerci

Publication Date: August 11, 2012



A Fairy Tale Universe in the Midst of Intergalactic Space: 'The Taffy Appleland'

Fairy tales are works that spark creative imaginations of children and convey diverse life experiences through the messages in them. Fairy tales are a gift to humans from the childhood times of humankind, and every child finds, in some way, himself/herself in the fairy tales s/he reads or listens to. Besides the anonymous folk tales, original and modern tales by authors also make an impression on children's worlds.

A collection of tales by Mavisel Yener awaits the children in Storier Grandpa's chest of tales in the Taffy Appleland. Tellers of the olden tales would travel from land to land, compose bits and pieces of dreams and lives they collect and create new tales; then, once again, they would travel from land to land telling their tales to the people. In *The Taffy Appleland*, which contains tales of our age with a touch of sci-fi, the purple bearded Storier Grandpa sometimes hopes on the wings of a cloud, sometimes in his invisible car traveling from one planet to another, from

one dream to another and fills his chest with marvelous tales, and shares them with the children of this world and other planets.

Storier Grandpa, in wisdom, watches the weaknesses and wickedness peculiar to mankind and shows them to his children readers. For example, he neither tells the tale of an angry and grumpy man who fights even with his own shadow nor those over greedy, jealous and hateful. Sometimes with his words of wisdom in a blue envelope, Storier Grandpa reaches children: "At times the thing that was hoped for and the thing that come to be may be more than light years apart. Every disappointing event holds a gift within," says Storier Grandpa filling hopeless hearts with light.

I have to tell you that my inner child is rather touched by the tale named The Storyteller of the Black Hole. In this black tale, that starts off as "Once upon a ceaseless time of ceaselessness, in the middle of the deep blue sky, there was an endless black hole," our Storier Grandpa goes to visit the Storyteller of the Black Hole who keeps calling for the grandpa in his dreams. He sees that the black hole is a negative universe, in which all the knowledge disappear and fairy tales fade away. The Storyteller of the Black Hole has no tales to tell; so he ceaselessly calls for storytellers and learns tales from them. The Storyteller of the Black Hole even attempts to write a black book by copying other storytellers' tales. But in the end, Storier Grandpa bids farewell with words of wisdom to the Storyteller of the Black Hole.

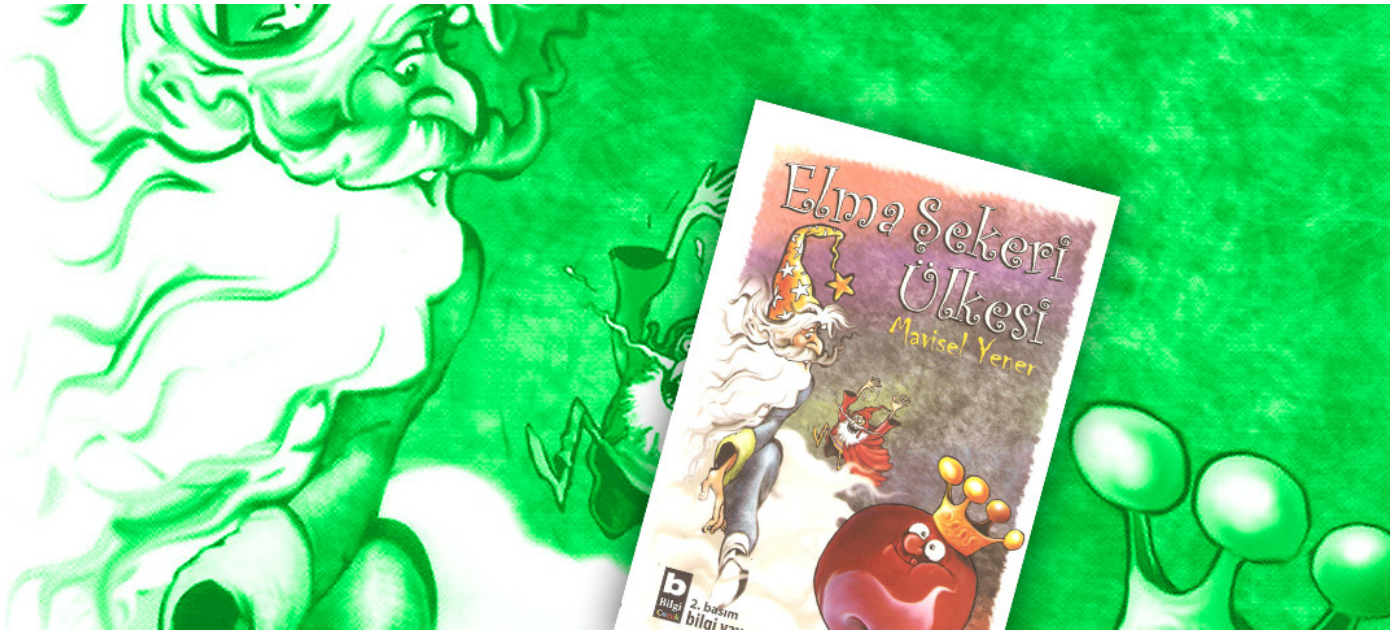
The Taffy Appleland offers a feast of tales with the words of wisdom that broadens the readers' horizon and guides them in life; and its Storier Grandpa who approaches to mankind's conflicting circumstances with tolerance and sympathy. Grandpa's magnificent chest of tales waits to be discovered by young readers to visit many a dreams.

İyi Kitap (Children's and Young Adult Books Monthly)

By Nilay Kaya

Publication Date: December 2012

Issue number 46



What Spills out from Storie's Grandpa's Chest of Tales

The main character of *The Taffy Appleland* -a land that Yener created with her humorous style- is the purple-bearded, crimson-haired Storie's Grandpa. She both tells beautiful tales and encourages her little readers to think about how fairy tales first came to be.

Have you ever thought about who finds from where and brings forward those fairy tales that nourish the thoughts and dreams of all people regardless of their age? If we are to take folkloric and language studies into account, we know that people like Grimm Brothers collected them travelling from land to land, and presented to us. Well, taking the fiction itself into account, what if this time we were to imagine how those tales were composed in the first place? If you believe in the funny little man living who lives on the moon and tells stories to those on the Earth, or in white bearded Santa Claus who brings sacks of toys to the children living all around the world, consider also the possibility of a Grandpa who travels

between planets and collects fairy tales in a chest in order to deliver to us. This sweet possibility comes true in *The Taffy Appleland*, the latest book of Mavisel Yener -one of the most productive authors in the children's literature-, in the best way of tale telling possible.

PURPLE-BEARDED STORIER GRANDPA

We know how much Yener loves pondering on the nature of tales with her excellent humorous style and making it the concern of her fiction by means of her other works like *Runaway Tale* and *The Storyteller's Letter*. With a similar approach in *The Taffy Appleland*, as she tells us tales she makes how fairy tales came to be the outline of her story. As the purple-bearded, crimson-haired Storier Grandpa -main character of this book- travels to different planets and lands except for the Earth and Venus for the sake of presenting us fairy tales, his journey becomes a fairy tale in itself.

Not confining himself to tales of the Earth, Storier Grandpa goes on a business trip starting from the planet of Zologain order to gather the freshest fairytales. I should tell you in advance that during his trip he collects tales that will satisfy us very much; don't you think for a second that it's an easy task to accomplish. Because those who, in order to become a fairy tale character in Storier Grandpa's chest, throw fits of caprice and are brown noses are cloying. Fortunately, our Grandpa is so well versed in his work that he knows well how to defeat all kinds of greed in a wise and kind manner. For example, an angry citizen of Zologain who wants to be a hero by fighting his shadows both misses the contest of wisdom and takes his share from Grandpa's chest of wisdom. And these are the morals that we are used to receiving at the end of each story.

RESIDENTS OF PLANET OF ZOLOGA

With whom does Storier Grandpa meet in other galaxies that he would make a fairy tale character in his chest, you ask? Those who keenly pick on each other during the wisdom contest in Zologain; honest ones who succeed without considering attacking to others necessary like Chabi and unsportsmanlike ones like jealous Mula; rabbits who are always trying to get to places on time and carry pocket

watches just in Alice In Wonderland. Those are just a few of colourful characters that become a fairy tale character in the Grandpa's chest of tales. Especially one of them reminds us of the German fairy tale character Struwwelpeter who refuses to have his nails and hair cut, and so, scares everyone around him with his scissors-like long nails and thorn-like hair: this 8-years-old little girl named Nebula wants to make cookies for everyone but she sees that no one wants to eat her cookies. Why, you ask? Because Nebula has ignored to clean her nails till then. And she isn't aware of the nickname her friends have given her: "The President of Germ-Protection Club".

One of the most significant aspects of *The Taffy Appleland* is the language Mavisel Yener used while telling her tales each of which is more enjoyable and humorous than the other. It's a tone both befitting to the book's own world and benefiting from the traditional story-telling discourse.

For instance, in the opening lines of the tales princes still set out to seek their fortunes but tales that star off as "Once upon a time," continue as, "in a haystack of galaxies where alien race and a space flea's place... As the twinkled twinkled little star, there lived a cat named Raggedy on the sky..." Moreover, I won't tell you what it is but there is a surprise waiting for you at the end of the book.

Aydınlık Newspaper Book Supplement

By İrem Haliç

Publication Date: June 7, 2013



I Wish I Were a Clown

«Are you bored to death in Mr. Smith's math class, Mrs. Anderson's literature class? Then come to the Clowning School!»

Dear reader, who is possibly a student, are you board to death surrounded in stone walls, on wooden chairs, among books and notebooks, in Mr. Smith's math class, Mrs. Anderson's literature class? Then come to the Clowning School!

Mavisel Yener, who never loses her childlike joy that compete with her little readers, tells the adventures of a little, grumpy clown student in a school where clowns are educated in her *The Clowning School* series. But you get to write the ending of each book.

You get to choose how Pinpin will extricate himself from the trouble his is in, how he will gain his friend's forgiveness for breaking his heart, how he will respond to his teacher's warnings. In a way, you get to be Pinpin. So, maybe it isn't too late to become a clown.

WHAT IF CLOWNS GO TO SCHOOL

In a story that starts as “There was once or maybe twice upon a time. And in that time when it was at its prime, those who read this book all passed their classes just fine. But after reading this line, what Pinpin did would you say, dearest of mine?” even the misfortunes that befall on Pinpin are funny. What is the worst that can happen to you in a colorful, lively school?

In this school, the teachers’ names are Mr. Woodlegs and Ms. Butterscotch. The students go to school with backpacks full of Clowning History books, wigs, false noses, pinecones and bowties. Would you like me to tell you the names of their classes? Face Painting, Trickery, Costume Class, Clowning History, Circus Sciences, Dancing, Hula Hopping and Juggling Class, Candy and Paste Making. What do you think? Consider this, your parents and your older siblings help you with your homework, solve math questions, and write poems. Well, how is Pinpin’s granny going to help her dear grandson? Is she going to practice walking with clown shoes? If I were to have such fun classes, I wouldn’t ask for my granny’s help, you can say!

These beautiful stories become even cuter and brighter with Ayda Kandar Ataman’s huge watercolor illustrations. As you read, you will wish you were a clown!

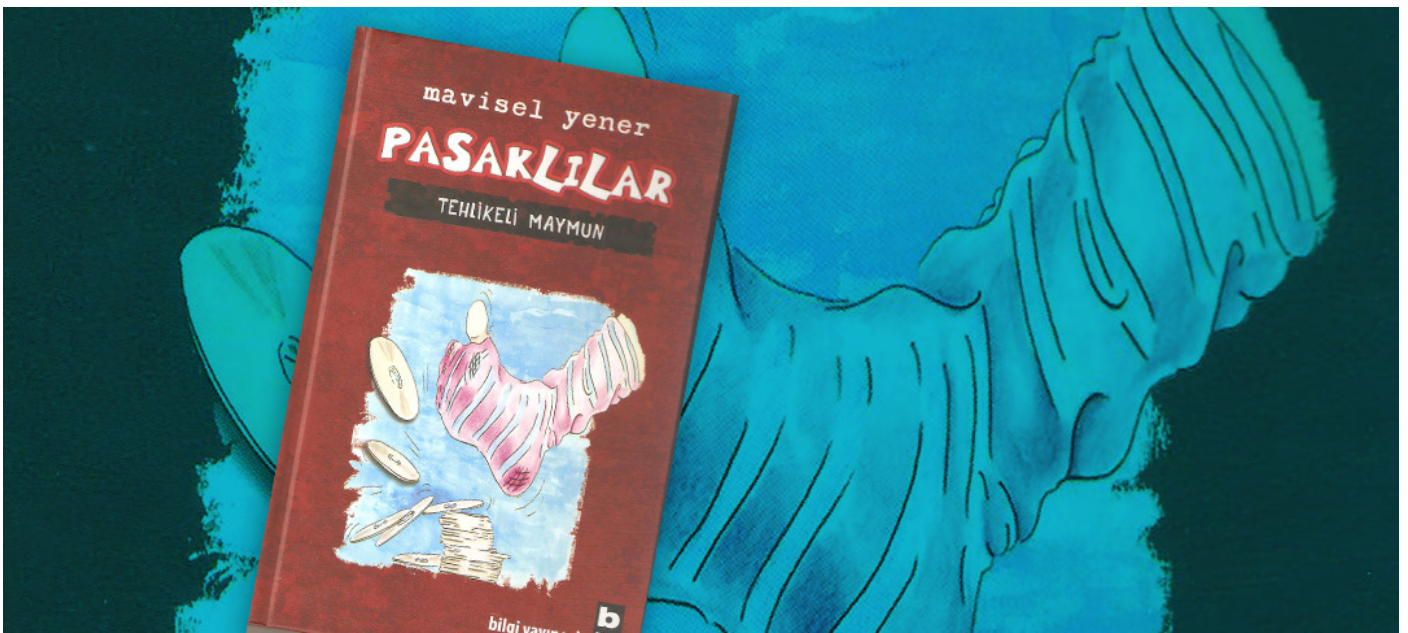
Following are the books in this series: *Who Would Do My Homework*; *The Lion in the Class*; *The Treasure in the Bag*; *Conflict in Class*; *I Forgot Teacher*.

I wish you all a fun reading.

Radikal Book Supplement

By Devrim Yilmaz

Publication Date: November 20, 2015



Welcome to Messy Town

A witty town by Mavisel Yener... One of the most important children's literature penner tells a page-turner story full of adventure and draws attention to public memory with the Messy Town she's created.

People from other places immediately wipe out fingerprints from coffee tables and glasses, can you believe it? If you are surprised too, come to this town; they don't waste time on silly things such as dust, spots, tidying their mess or looking for lost documents.

While Mavisel Yener, in the first book of the series, *The Messies - Dangerous Monkey*, takes the reader on a journey full of fun and adventure in a town where such troubles do not exist, she also helps the residents of the town to become acquainted with their history that they didn't even know existed.

The residents of Messy Town, who don't even waste their time on looking for their lost things, of course, don't pay much attention to who the man that comes

to town one day wearing weird clothes and walking around with a monkey is. Somehow this mysterious man actually draws Massivemess's attention but as everybody ignores him, she quickly forgets the man as well. Besides, Massivemess is up to more important things. She needs to trick her grandfather and grandmother, take hold of the computer they won from a sweepstake, and prepare for a party.

Although we get a little mad at Massivemess as she terrifies her grandmother and grandfather by wearing glows and a mask before approaching their computer to be protected from computer viruses, one cannot help but laugh at the conversation that takes place between them. After all, her grandfather gets back at her by winning the argument about the shopping mall.

Although Messy Law clause four states that "A Messy should know all the basic methods of persuasion and use all his/her creativity," this law is of no use when Massivemess plans to drag the sweet oldies to the mall. Neither the fact that the restaurant and the pudding shop are located side by side, nor the existence of toilets and elevators can convince this witty grandfather.

"A kebab shop where cats cannot enter is no kebab shop to me, and there is not even a junk dealer, weren't we supposed to find everything in the shopping malls? So it is the place where people who cannot hold their pees go shopping."

While we listen to the grandfather, an old marketplace with a greengrocer, a haberdasher, and a hardware shop comes to mind. Her grandfather is not interested in the fact that life gets easier with shopping malls; he is more concerned about the culture, the soul, and loyalty to the past.

As Massivemess does not have such concerns, she quickly gives up on her attempts of persuading them and gets down to her birthday plans. The thing that happens after a great birthday party marks the beginning of fear and confusion in Messy Town. As notable people of the town get kidnapped one by one, gossips and panic gradually escalate. Unfortunately, they neither have the knowledge nor archives or a past that they could look back and consult in order to solve these events. Therefore, we see how the Messy Law that states "Messies never lose

time to search for their lost belongings,” fails. In that point, the stranger in town once again becomes the main topic of conversation and arouses curiosity of Massivemess and her friends. Who is this mysterious man? Could all these events be connected to him and his monkey? The real adventure begins with these questions.

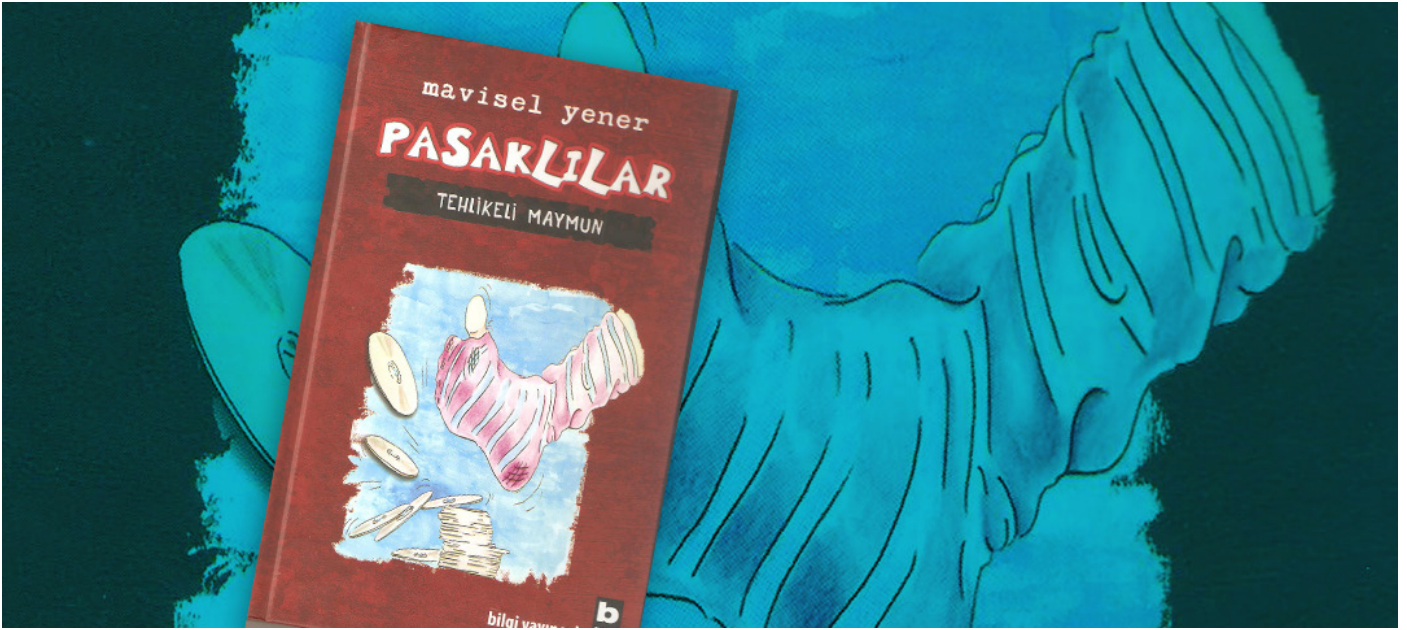
The author describes how societies that do not have any memory or knowledge about their past, that have a damaged public memory and historical awareness falter in times of crisis in a page-turner adventure.

Just when we are thinking “what a laid back society, what a great town,” we realize that we are actually reading a story on the value of the traces of history in understanding our present. Where is this town, you ask? As it is stated in the beginning of the book; “Dear reader, it is up to you! The Messy Town can be far away from where you live, or close by...”

Sözcü Newspaper Book Supplement

By Bahri Karaduman

Publication Date: August 2016



A Book About Social Memory: The Messies

*“The Messy Town can be very far away from where you live,
or very near...”*

Parents who know their responsibilities are aware that their child should get a very good education. They want their child to study in the best schools with the best programs. However, most of the time these parents who have different frames of mind aren't satisfied and get what they expect from any institution completely since they have a tendency to choose these programs based on their subjective values. Criticism always leads the way; complaints that start with “Back in our time...” are blended into conversations and the moments of outpour. In such cases a very essential fact sets the agenda: The importance and place of children's books in child education. Most of the time student, teacher and parent seek refuge in quality books.

With the advances in the last years, I believe that the Turkish children's literature have become successful. The sensitive approaches of great authors and publishers that take their work seriously have increased the number of children who read. One does not have to be an oracle to know that this favorable development -which is visible in the book fairs-, will improve even further. Happy faces showing the books they have in their hand to the cameras at frequently held book signings and author talks increase every year and will continue to do so. Acquiring good habits at young ages also lowers the risk of picking up bad habits later on. It is because of this that a reading habit is very important, and certainly a vital factor in shaping an individual's future.

The reason behind me expressing these thoughts and observations is the latest children's book I've read: *The Messies - Dangerous Monkey*¹. Bilgi Publishing presents this book to readers with a quality printing; the book is in hardcover and illustrated. It is exemplary in terms of the value given to children.

Past is forgotten and no lessons are taken from it...

The author, Mavisel Yener, takes the readers to Messy Town penned with a pleasant tone of irony. This is a town where charming characters such as *Massivemess*, *Messalot*, *Messymess*, *Messmina* live; where a contest of *The Messiest Messies* are held, and *Messy Law* is enforced. This law is rather cute. It's the voice of our heart. It does not force people into doing things they don't want to. Each individual has a serious, hardworking organized side; but also a somewhat more "humane" side that lacks seriousness, evades responsibilities and is fond of its comfort. That "humane" side takes precedence of the residents of Messy Town. They always lose stuff and never spend any time looking for them. This messiness is in fact a social wound. Therefore the past is forgotten and no lessons are taken from it.

Knickknack Town, where sordid gangs that are trying to wipe the Messies off the face of the earth live, can be far away from where you live, or close by... According to the residents of the Knickknack Town, Messy Town is full of rich underground

1 First of *The Messies* series, *Dangerous Monkey* was published by Bilgi Publishing in 2015.

resources that cannot be left in the hands of the Messies. The aim of the gang is to set the Messies against each other by causing disturbance. The people of Messy Town must become conscious; but how? What can the Messy youth do? It wouldn't be right for me to tell you what happens. What would be right is for the reader to live the experience alongside the characters, swim in that sea of excitement, and jump from one adventure to another. This book has a lot to say about what would happen to societies that forget their past.

The first book of *The Messies* series is an important work showing children that they need to question themselves, their environments and the town they live in, without preaching and in a delicate way.

