



2026

ELHASSAN BENMOUNA

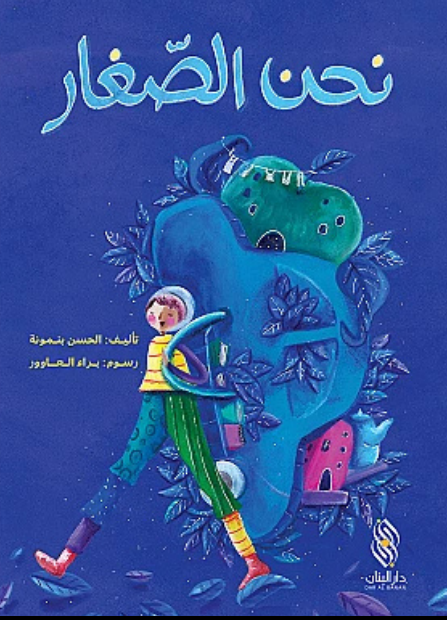
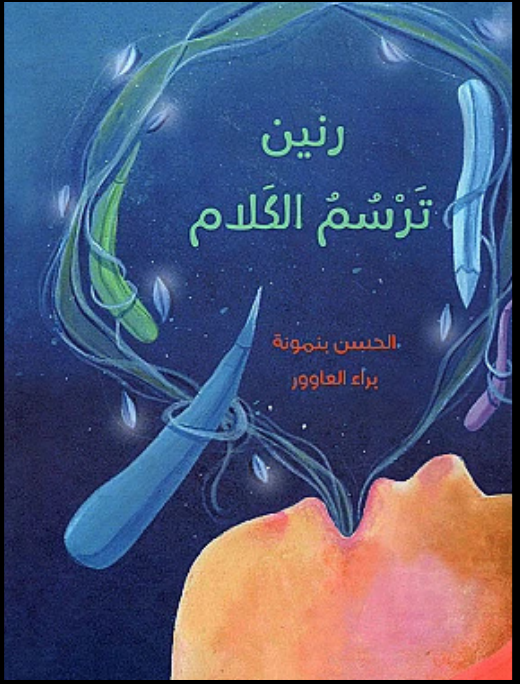
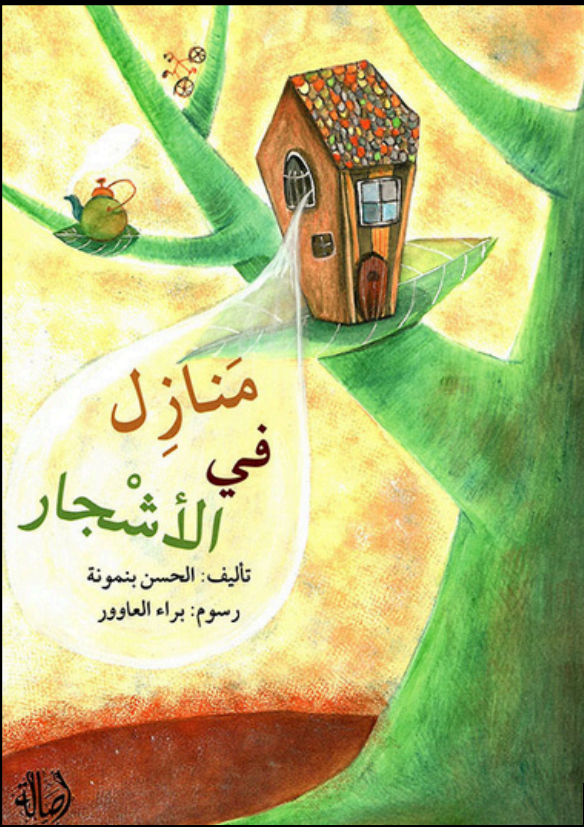
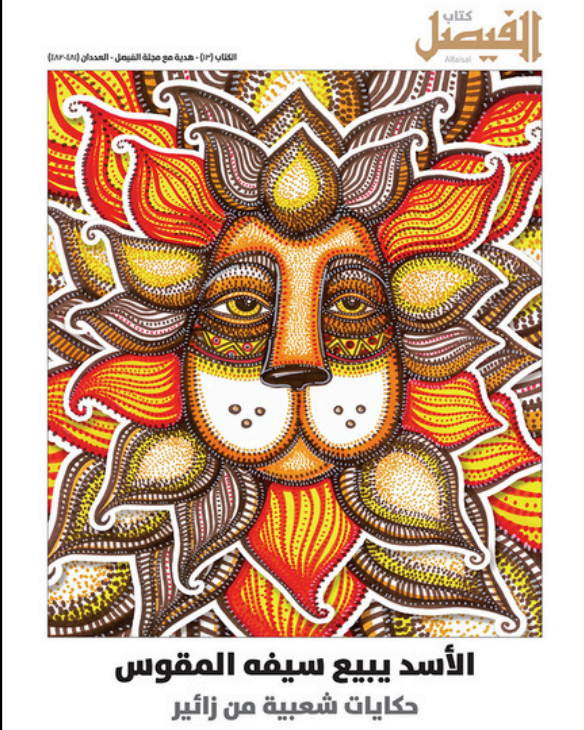
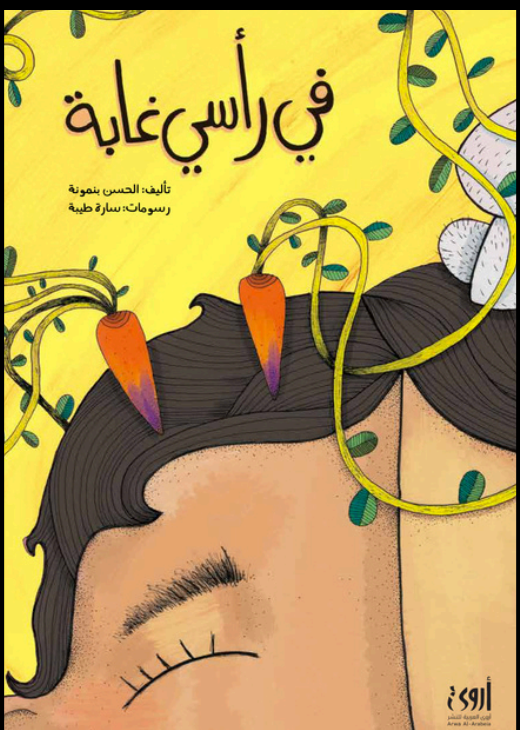
The Hans Christian Andersen Award 2026

Moroccan Section of IBBY

Author

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Biographical Information

Elhassan Benmouna

Full Name: Elhassan Benmouna

Date and Place of Birth: 1963, Morocco

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Phone: 00212.6.11.58.03.77

Address: Casablanca, Morocco

Education and Career:

- Arabic language and literature teacher since 1983
- Author of numerous works for children and adults
- Actively involved in the cultural and literary press both in Morocco and abroad

Author Presentation

Elhassan Benmouna is a Moroccan writer and educator recognized for his commitment to youth literature and the literary press. His work is distinguished by its ability to blend poetic narration with socially and culturally engaged storytelling, addressing themes of education, society, and culture.

As an author, he contributes to various magazines and literary newspapers in Morocco and abroad. He has also led reading and writing workshops for children, actively promoting a culture of reading.

Awards and Honors

- 2019: Dr. Mansour Rouissi Award for Youth Literature
- 2022: Best Illustrated Children's Album Award for Hikmat Al-Chououb
- 2007: Short Story Award for Fanan la yanam

Reasons for Nominating Elhassan Benmouna for the Andersen Award

Elhassan Benmouna stands as a pioneering figure in Arabic youth literature, and his nomination for the Andersen Award is well-founded for several compelling reasons:

- **Prolific Literary Career:** With over 200 books written and more than 100 published across various Arab publishing houses, Benmouna has established an impressive body of work. His prolific output not only reflects his dedication to literature but also his ability to consistently produce engaging, high-quality content.
- **International Recognition and Influence:** His works have transcended regional boundaries, having been translated into several languages. This global reach underscores the universal appeal of his storytelling and highlights his influence on readers far beyond the Arab world.

- **Innovative Storytelling:** Benmouna possesses a unique talent for transforming everyday moments into captivating literary experiences. His creative reinterpretation of traditional storytelling infuses his narratives with profound meaning, inviting readers to find wonder and significance in even the most ordinary details of life.
- **Educational Impact:** As a passionate educator, he has inspired young readers to appreciate literature in a deeply personal way. His poetic and imaginative writing nurtures an appreciation for the subtleties of life, encouraging critical thinking and creativity among emerging generations.
- **Cultural Contributions:** Beyond his writing, Benmouna has actively enriched the cultural landscape by contributing to literary magazines and leading creative workshops throughout the Arab world. His commitment to making literature accessible—especially for marginalized communities—demonstrates his dedication to cultural education and the empowerment of diverse audiences.

Five Important Titles Submitted to the Jury

نحن الصغار

We, the little ones With Illustrations by Baraa Al Awoor

Lebanon– Dar Al banane, 2019.

الدعسوقة التي فقدت لونها

The ladybug that lost its color With Illustrations by Reem Al-Askari

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia – Kadi and Ramadi, 2018.

فلنصنع السعادة

Let's Create Happiness With Illustrations by Esraa Alhadi

Egypte - Dar Al hayat, 2022.

منازل في الأشجار

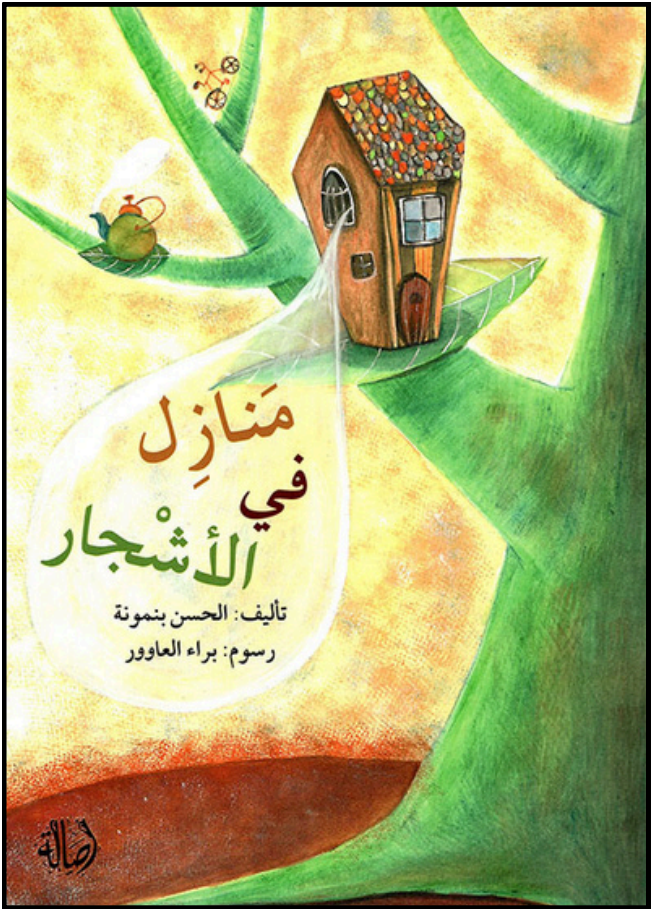
Threehouses With Illustrations by Baraa Al Awoor

Lebanon – Dar Asala, 2018.

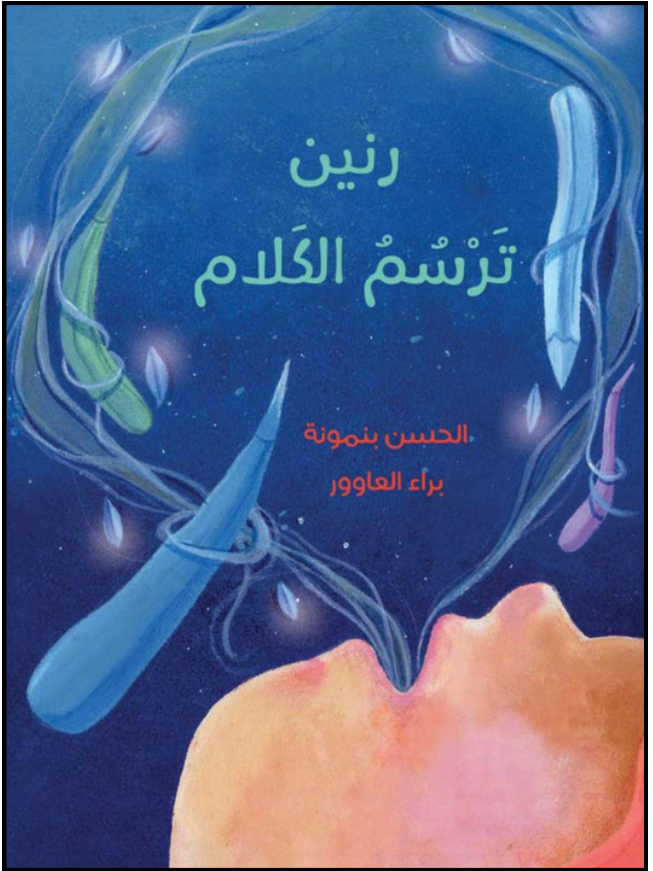
رنين ترسم الكلام

Raneen draws words With Illustrations by Baraa Alawoor

Morocco - Yanbow Al Kitab, 2020.



▲ *Threehouses*



▲ *Raneen draws words*



▼ *We, the little ones*



▼ *The ladybug that lost its color*



▼ *Let's Create Happiness*

نحن الصغار

We, the little ones

We, the little ones With Illustrations by Baraa Al Awoor

Lebanon– Dar Al banane, 2019.

ISBN : 978614455045

Our Wonderful World is a children's book that explores a world filled with imagination and childlike curiosity. Through a series of whimsical and absurd scenarios, the author invites young readers to see the world through a playful and creative lens.

Each page presents surprising questions and hypotheses: What if we could grow houses like trees? Why not have roads in the sky? What if books were edible? Through these fantastical ideas, the book encourages children to think differently, question reality, and nurture their imagination.

With a poetic style and vibrant illustrations, Our Wonderful World celebrates the wonder of childhood and the limitless possibilities of the human mind. It is an ode to creativity and invention, all while remaining rooted in the magical world of storytelling.

Reviews

"This is a mischievous book—very different and extremely delightful... It features childlike ideas, complete with the wild, boundless dreams of childhood that know no limits and defy any logic... Innocent adventures unfold in a space where reality blends with fantasy—and where fantasy always triumphs, time and again! "For when we little ones speak, you have heard wonders, indeed when we speak?" On every page there's a question (or questions)... a peculiar idea written in a style of pure simplicity and beauty that delights the heart, sparks even more thoughts and dreams in children, and reminds them of their superpower: imagination... while also reminding adults of the questions, thoughts, and dreams they once had! Bara al-Awwar—or as my son calls her, "the painter who loves blue and collage"—has created mischievous, very unique, and incredibly delightful paintings!!" By Majd Al Jyousi

[Lien reviews](#)





الدعسوقة التي فقدت لونها

The ladybug that lost its color

The ladybug that lost its color With Illustrations by Reem Al-Askari

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia – Kadi and Ramadi,

Original Edition: 2019 | English Edition: 2022.

The Ladybug That Lost Her Color is a heartwarming children's story about identity, belonging, and self-acceptance. One day, a little ladybug wakes up to a shocking discovery—she has lost her signature red color and black spots! Confused and scared, she wonders if she still belongs to her ladybug family or if she will be forced to live with cockroaches or white beetles.

As the other insects mock her for looking different, the ladybug's mother reassures her that she is still part of the family. Together, they try everything to restore her color, from washing her to placing her under the sun. Eventually, they seek help from the blueberry trees and the darkness of the night. Through determination and a clever plan, the little ladybug regains her color and proves that she is special in her own way.

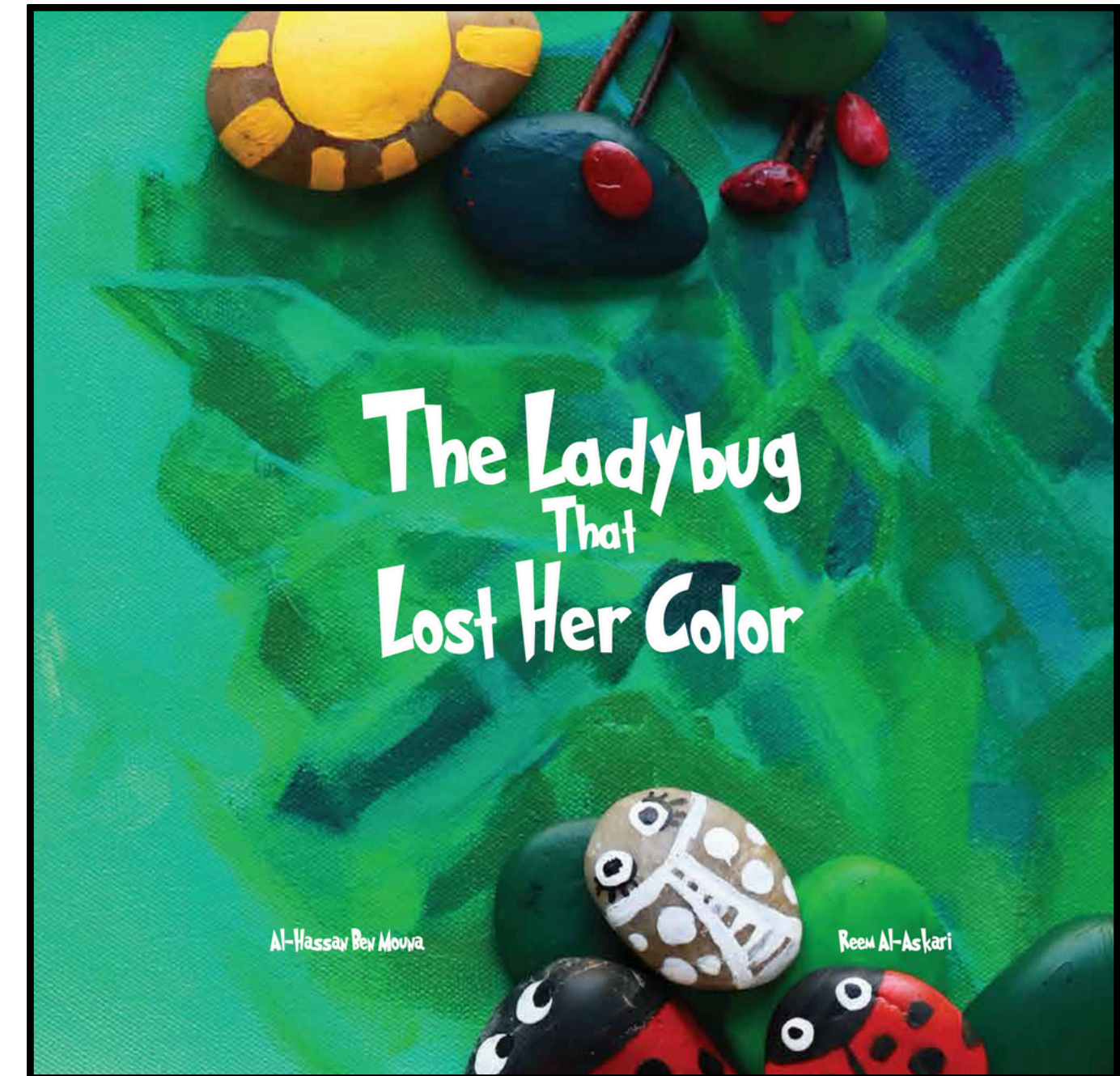
This beautifully illustrated story teaches children the value of self-acceptance, resilience, and the power of community support. It is a touching tale that encourages young readers to embrace their uniqueness and stand strong in the face of adversity.

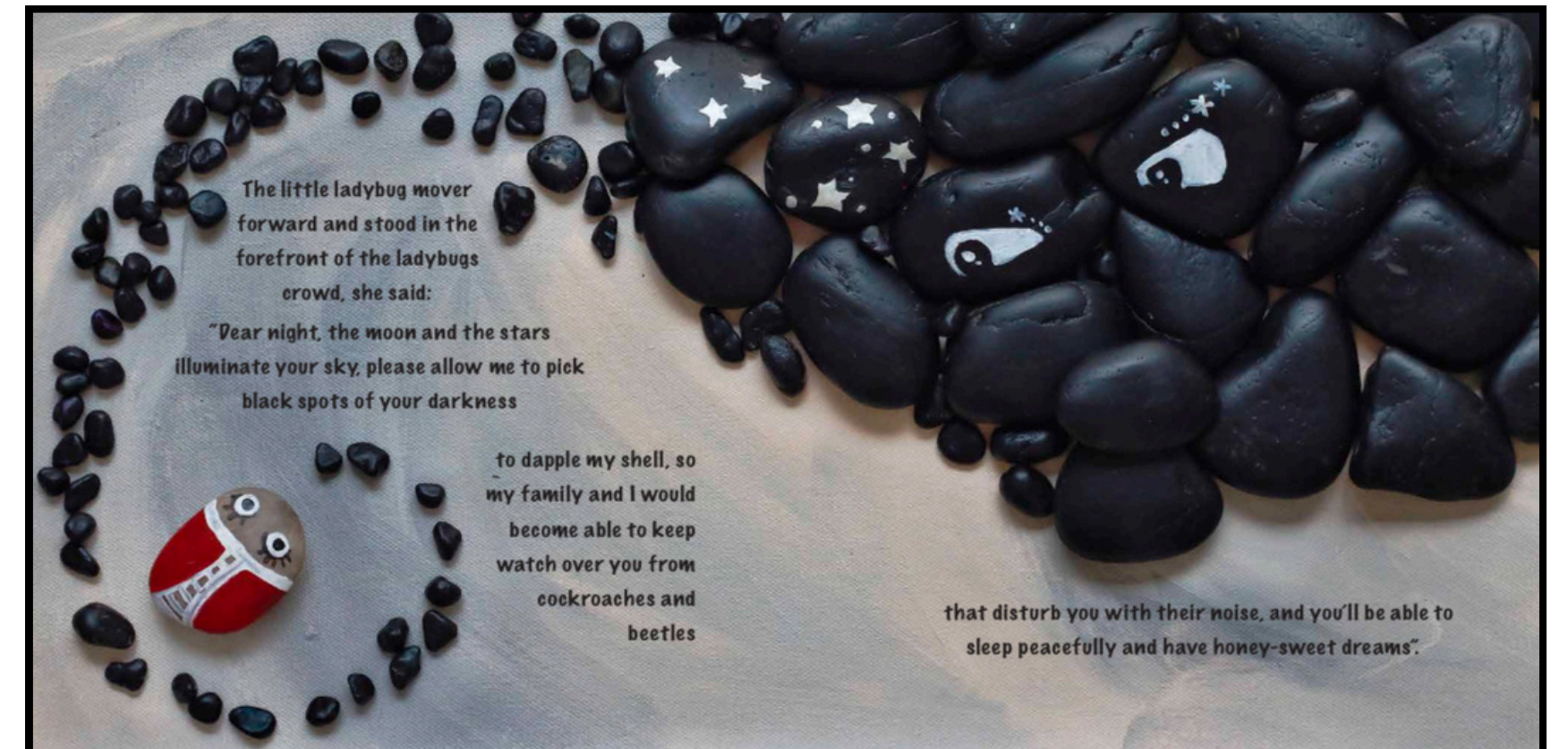
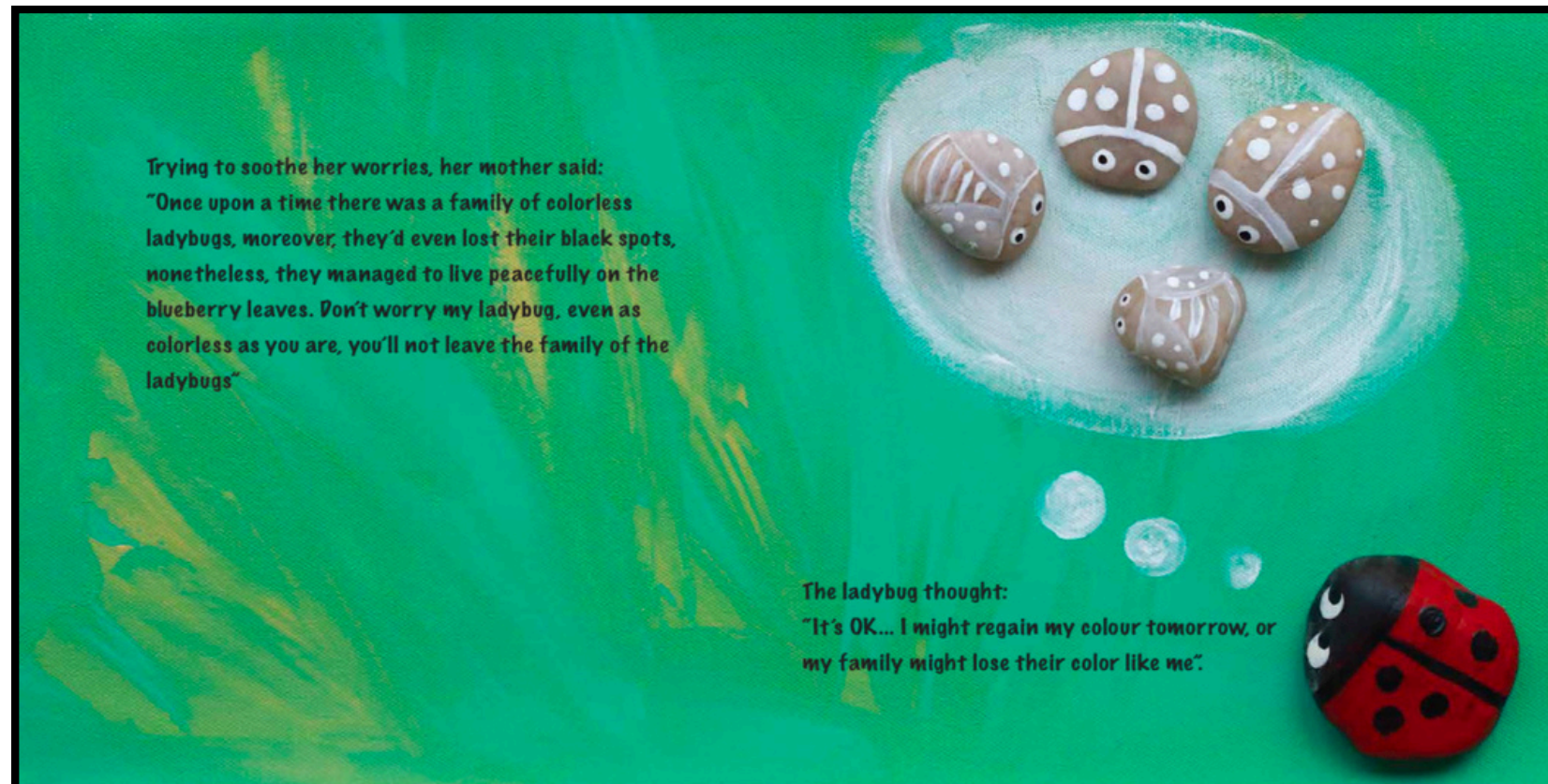
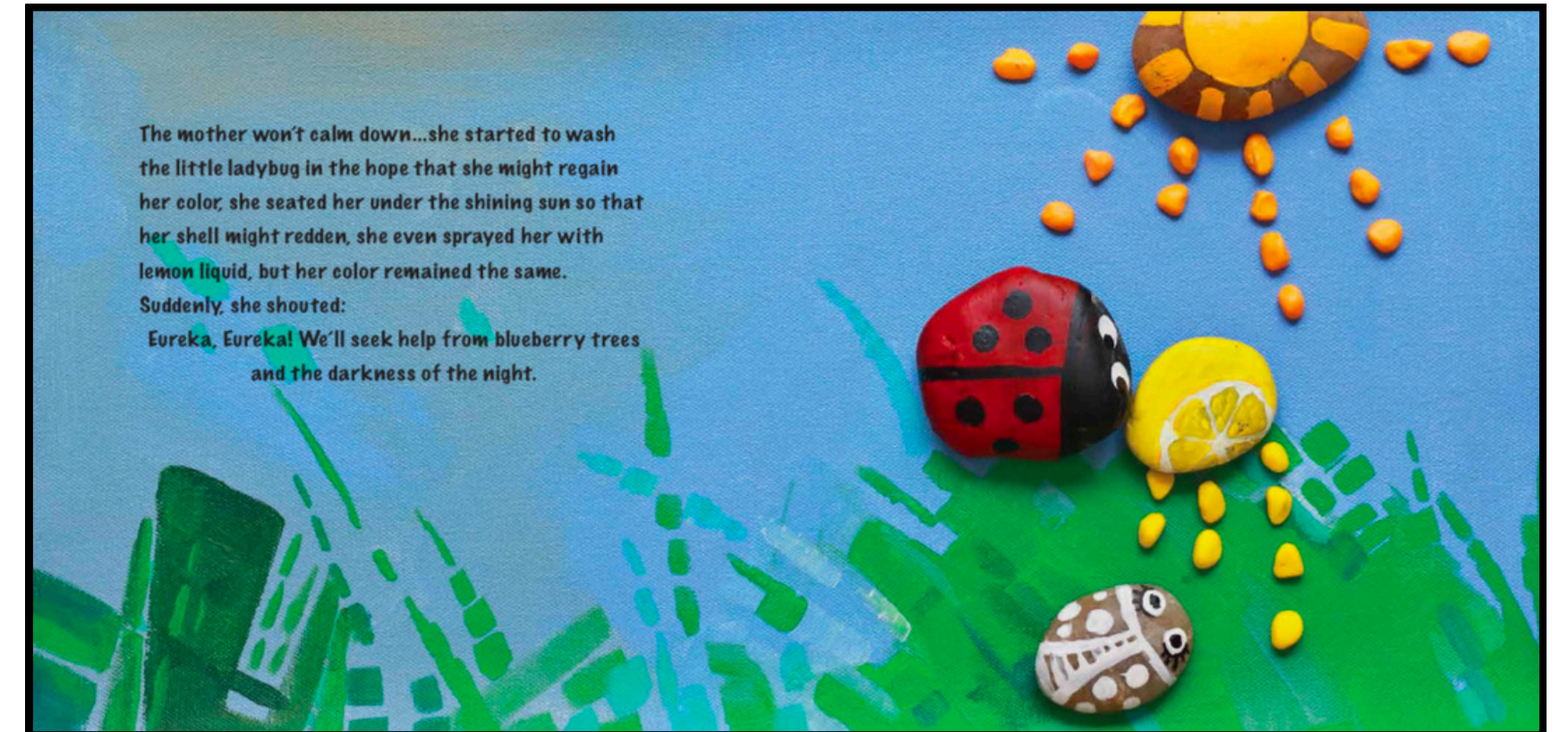
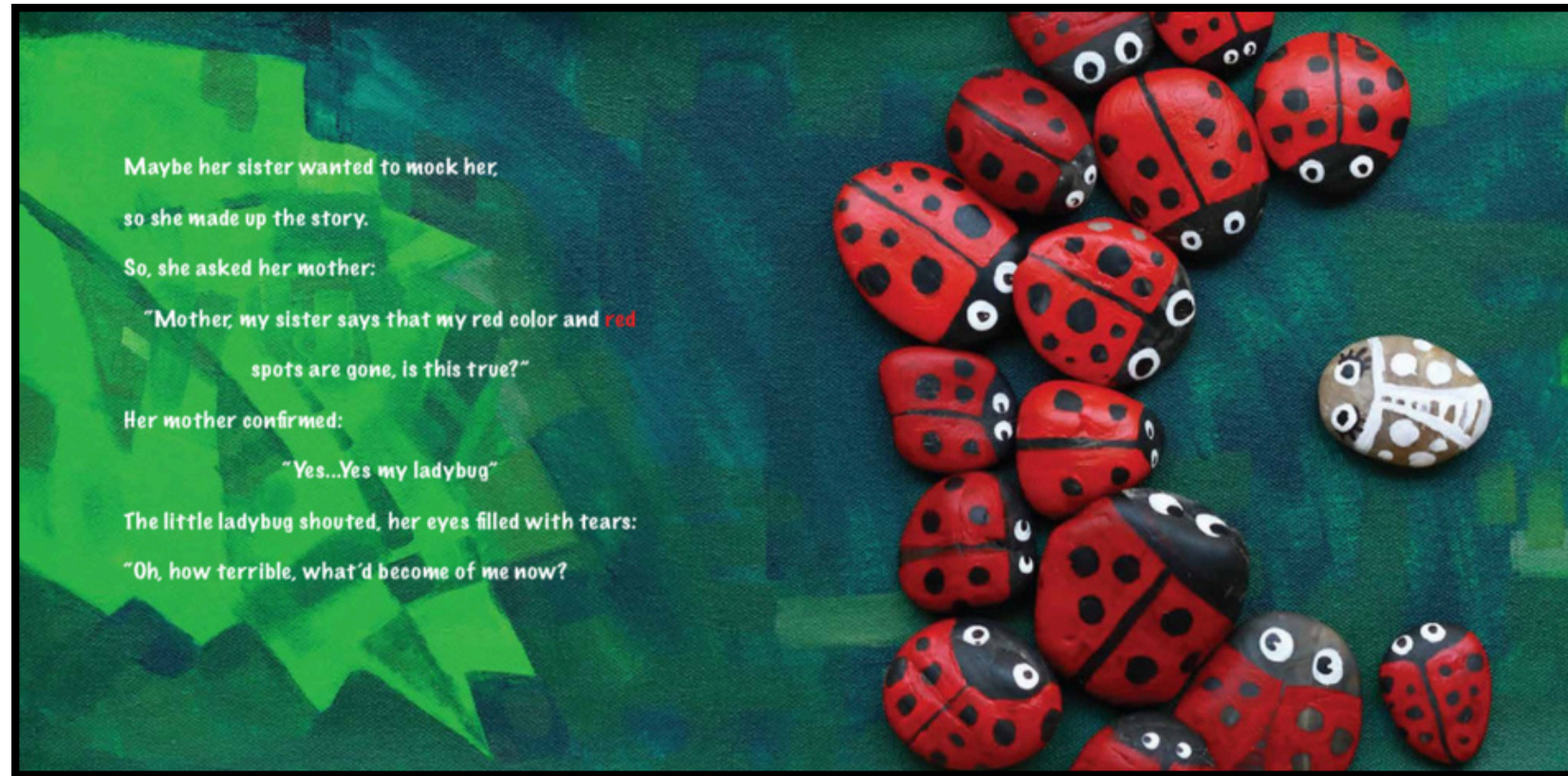
Reviews

Together with My Mom: The Ladybug That Lost Its Color (Qurqian)

It tells the story of a ladybug who, against all expectations, lost her color. One day, as she awoke on a mulberry leaf, she was astonished to hear from her sister that the color of her shell had changed! This is the tale of the ladybug that lost her color.

[Podcast](#)





فلنصنع السعادة

Let's Create Happiness

Let's Create Happiness With Illustrations by Esraa Alhadi

Egypte - Dar Al hayat, 2022.

ISBN : 9786009998072

Let's Create Happiness is a beautifully imaginative and interactive children's book that encourages young readers to find joy through creativity and positive thinking. The book invites children on an exciting journey where they visualize happiness through playful and poetic exercises.

The story prompts children to close their eyes and imagine incredible adventures—building a garden and a school on the moon, dancing in the rain, riding on the back of a centipede through the forest, or conversing with birds, fish, and tigers. Each activity is designed to stimulate the reader's imagination and inspire a sense of wonder and joy.

Through simple yet profound storytelling, the book teaches that happiness is not something to be found, but something to be created within oneself. It emphasizes kindness, adventure, and the power of dreams, making it an uplifting read for children and parents alike. With its poetic language and enchanting illustrations, Let's Create Happiness serves as a gentle reminder that a world of magic exists within our imagination, ready to transform the ordinary into something extraordinary.

Reviews

“At Hayat Publishing House for Children's Books, we believe that every child deserves to experience the joy of reading, and that a book is neither a commodity nor a luxury. From here, we aspire to share with all children this joy and the knowledge of beauty and humanity through art and books.”

It added: “We want to share with children and all those interested the delight of imagination, knowledge, and self-expression about oneself, others, and the world. We aim to offer you an immense and rare space of understanding, tolerance, diversity, and compassion in our upcoming projects.

Innocence in a world that grows increasingly brutal every day is something we do not want to lose.”

[Reviews](#)





منازل في الأشجار

Threehouses

Threehouses With Illustrations by Baraa Al Awoor

Lebanon – Dar Asala, 2018.

ISBN : 9789953951164

One day, a young boy plants a small willow tree in a garden. The tree grows rapidly, becoming immense, with roots that extend deep underground. But something strange happens: the roots emerge from the soil, twisting like giant snakes and lifting the village houses up onto the branches.

The villagers suddenly find themselves living in homes suspended between the sky and the earth, swaying with the wind but never falling. Confused and surprised, they wonder how they will manage their daily lives. How will they enter and exit their floating houses?

A clever carpenter comes to the rescue: he builds wooden ladders tailored to each home, allowing people to move safely. He also constructs ladders for the school and hospital, ensuring that life in the village can continue as usual.

Over time, this peculiar tree-top village becomes a fascinating and enchanting place, where the residents adapt to their new way of life. What once seemed like a problem transforms into a unique and magical existence.

This poetic and imaginative tale explores humanity's connection with nature and its ability to adapt to the unexpected. It encourages readers to embrace change as an opportunity for creativity and transformation.

Nominations:

Selected by the Arab World Institute in Paris as one of the hundred children's stories in the Arab world, to be exhibited at the Institute.

(Published by Dar Al-Masar, United Arab Emirates, 2024)





رنين ترسم الكلام

Raneen draws words

Raneen draws words With Illustrations by Baraa Alawoor

Morocco - Yanbow Al Kitab, 2020.

ISBN : 978995448692

Raneen is a mute little girl who cannot express her thoughts with words. Her only means of communication is through drawings and colors. Her loved ones, including her mother and her friends—the parrot, the cat, and the nightingale—try to understand what she wants to say, but her artwork remains a mystery.

The nightingale sings for her, the sorceress performs impressive tricks, and even the cat plays amusing scenes, but nothing manages to cheer her up. Her friends tirelessly try to interpret her drawings, hoping to uncover the reason behind her sadness.

Finally, the parrot deciphers her message: Raneen does not want toys or sweets; she dreams of going to school like all the other children her age.

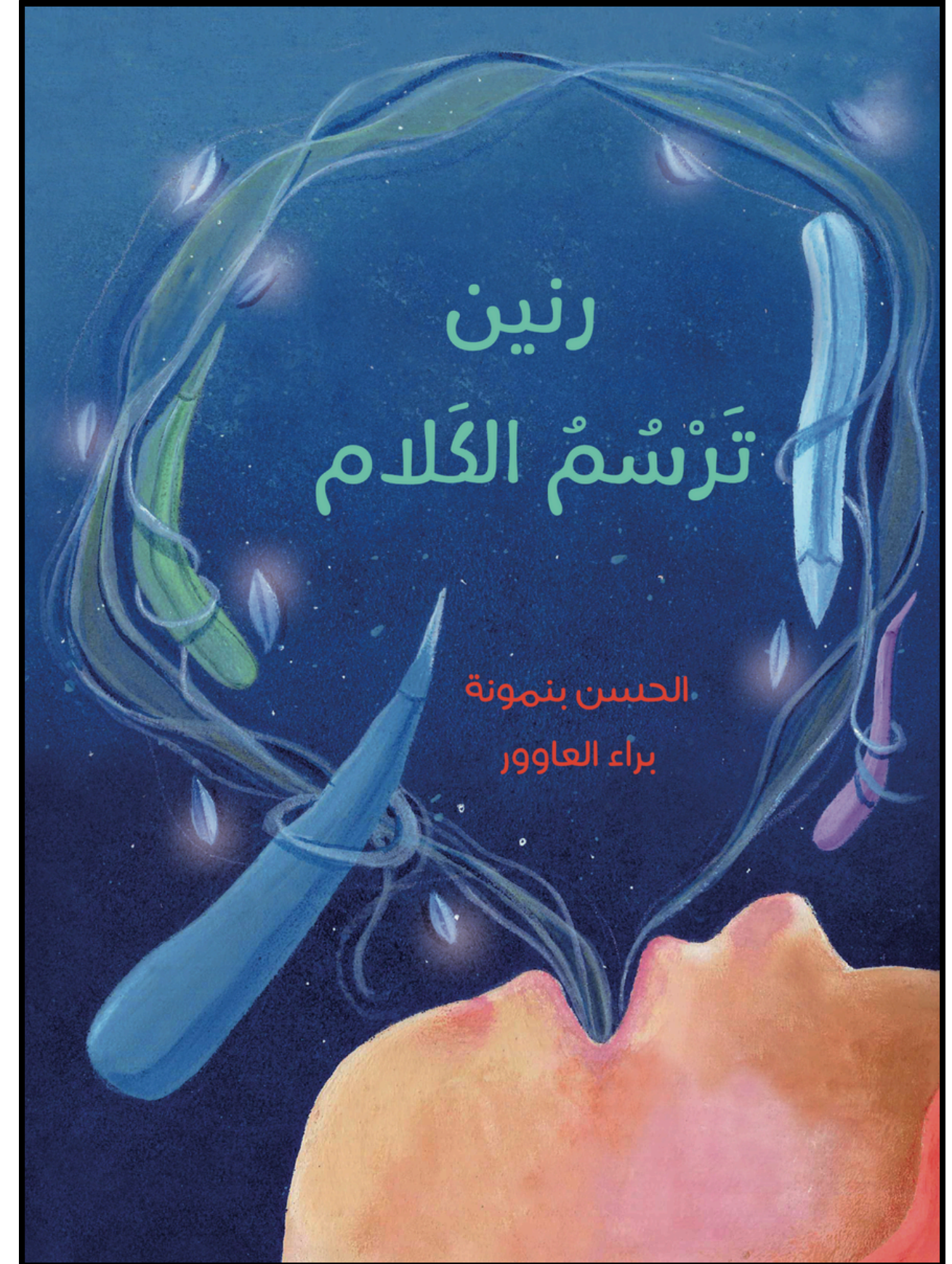
Her mother, realizing her wish, embraces her with joy and encouragement. Through her art, Raneen was able to express what words could not.

This poetic story beautifully illustrates the importance of drawing and artistic expression for children who struggle to verbalize their emotions. It also highlights the patience and compassionate listening of those who seek to understand beyond words.

Nominations:

- Selected by the Munich International Children's Library in 2019
- Selected by Takam Tikou BNF
- Selected by Hadi Badi - “ A beautiful book featuring a little girl with a disability, yet it doesn't stop her from imagining and expressing her feelings in her own unique [way](#)”

Save With Stories by Yousra El Lozy [Link](#)





Complete Bibliography

Publications:

Stories:

2024

- “Houses in the Trees” – Selected by the Arab World Institute in Paris as one of the hundred children’s stories in the Arab world, to be exhibited at the Institute. (Published by Dar Al-Masar, United Arab Emirates, 2024)

2023

- “The Chronology of Autobiography in a Book on the Anthology of Children’s Story Books in the Arab World” – Egypt.

2019

- “The Crow Plays the Ney” – by Dar Al-Hada’iq – Lebanon.

2018

- “Ranin Draws the Words” – by Dar Yanbow Al Kitab – Morocco.
- “The Mask Hunter” – by Dar Al-Hada’iq – Lebanon.

2017

- “In My Head, a Forest” – by Dar Arwa – Saudi Arabia.

2016

- “The Things We Should Sell” – by the Publications of Maqarabat Foundation – Fez.
- “The Ladybugs Learn Our Language” and “The Crocodile Sells Crying” – by Dar Shajara – Egypt.
- Translation of folk tales from Zaire published as part of a companion book to Al-Faisal Magazine (November–December 2016).

2015

- “Story Ambushes and Traps” – by the Publications of the Literary Caravan Association – Oujda.

2012

- “Stories for My Children to Fall Asleep” – by the Moroccan Ministry of Culture.

2009

- “The Human Meat Restaurant Welcomes You” – by Dar Sindbad for Publishing and Media, Cairo, Egypt.
- “Stories on Air” – a collective publication by Dar Kitab Al-Arabi.

- **Dar Al-Banan – Lebanon:**

- “The Child Who Believed His Drawings”
- “We, the Little Ones”
- “A Tale About Me”
- “In My Mother’s Belly”
- “The Music of the Rabbits”
- “How Do We Create the Sweet Melody?”
- “Who Will Save the Mouse?”
- “The Cow That Mistrusted the Tree”
- “Why Did I Ask the Questions?”

- **Dar Asala – Lebanon:**

- “The Elephant Learns How to Play”
- “The Amazing Wishes”
- “The Fly That Became a Giant”
- “How Did the Cat Get Down from the Moon?”
- “Houses in the Trees”
- “The Girl Who Overcame the Wolf”

- “Even the Elephant Loves to Play” and “The Little Kittens Have Amazing Dreams” – by the House of Arts of Education – Jordan.
- Five Stories for Children: “The Wolf Who Changed His Nature”, “The Fish That Wanted to Fish”, and “Let’s Learn to Swim from the Frog” – by Dar Al-Wurraq – Sultanate of Oman.
- Published by Dar Yanbu: “365 Tales Before and After Bedtime”.
- “The Ladybug That Lost Its Color” – by Dar Kadi & Ramadi – Saudi Arabia; translated into English.
- “The Ant Drowns in Its Ice Cream”, “When We Love a Book”, and “The Ant and the Hat” – by Dar Qandeel – United Arab Emirates.
- Dar Maya – Jordan:
 - “Three Ants Create Wonders”
 - “The Magician Puts a Villa in the Palm of His Hand”
- **Dar Sha’n – Jordan:**
 - “Koko’s Capers”
 - “The Rooster That Lost Its Beak”
 - “The Fish That Dreamed of Adventures”
 - “The Lamb Seeks the Meaning of Words”
 - “The Man Who Plants Songs”
- **Dar Ru’ya – Turkey:**
 - “The Tale of the Ant Who Lost Its Way”
 - “Our Television Has a Fault”
 - “To Whom Shall I Tell My Story?”
 - “The Chick Who Loved to Stay in the Egg”
 - “A Tale About a Kite”
 - “The Forest of Tales”
- **Dar Al-Safa – Kuwait:**
 - “Who Is the Next One?”
 - “The Cow That Ate the Wolf”
 - “Balls as Many as the Raindrops”
 - “The Nightingale Plots with the Fox”

- **Dar Al-Noor Educational – Bahrain:**

- “The Mountain Goat Sells Its Horns”
- “The Porcupine Whose Head Was Overwhelmed by Wishes”
- “The Almond Tree Awaits Spring”
- “The Animal Café”
- “The Roach Is the Strongest”
- “The Ogre Who Gave Charity with Fire”
- “Do Not Mock Small Ideas”
- “Ants Build Houses Out of Cans”
 - “The Ostrich and the Four Winds” – by Dar Awrak – United Arab Emirates.
 - “Let’s Create Happiness”, “Why Doesn’t the Little Lion Have Long Hair?”, and “A Tale About a Harp” – by Dar Hayat – Egypt.
 - “Let’s Tell a Tale That Earns Applause” – by Dar Al-Huda – Jordan.
 - “The Wise Goats” – by Dar Al-Muheet – United Arab Emirates.
 - “The Elephant and the Mirror”, “The Ant Who Makes Boats”, “What Does the Little Cat Want?”, and “The Frog” – by the Syrian Ministry of Culture.
 - “The Nightingale That Lost Its Voice” and “In the Forest, a Circus” – by Dar Al-Zabi – United Arab Emirates.
 - “Sixty Stories” – by Dar Al-Salsal – Kuwait.
 - Published by Dar Al-Masar – United Arab Emirates:
 - “The Elephant’s Dreams After Sleeping on the Bed”
 - “An Ant on the Nose of the Anteater”
 - “A Tale About Hours, Minutes, and Seconds”
 - “A Tale About a Potato”
 - “The Mulberry Tree and the Silkworm”
 - “A Frog That Contemplates”
 - “If You Want to Sew a Dress” – by Dar Tamara – Canada
- Stories for young readers from the “Three Tales” series – by the General Authority for Culture, Egypt
- “The Fisherman Catches an Apple” – by Dar Tanmiya – Egypt

Novels:

- Novel “The Hunter of Good Deeds” – by Dar Al-Salam Al-Jadida – Casablanca – 2019.
- “The Elephant Who Loves Books” and “A Head with Three Hairs and One in a Small Forest” – by Dar Mulhimun – United Arab Emirates – 2019.
- “Doesn’t the Little Cat Have a Bicycle!” – by the Moroccan Ministry of Culture – 2020.
- “The Hedgehog from Which an Idea Escaped” – by Dar Al-Muheet – United Arab Emirates.
- “Diaries of the Pen University” – by Dar Hen – Egypt.
- A novel for boys entitled “The Onion That Left a Mark” – by Dar Ru’ya – Turkey.

Children’s Stories in Magazines:

- The story series “When the Animals Spoke” – 19 episodes were published in Al-Arabi Al-Saghir Magazine.
- The illustrated story series “Take Wisdom from the Mouths of Animals” is published monthly in Jassim Al-Qatari Magazine.
- The story series “When the Little Ones Speak” is published monthly in Osama Al-Souria Magazine.
- The illustrated story series “Shabshoub’s Adventures” is published monthly in Sham Magazine, Syria.
- The illustrated children’s story series “Tales That Walk Along the Road” is published monthly in Al-Nafri Magazine, Iraq.
- My story “Houses in the Trees” was selected by the Arab World Institute in Paris to represent one of the hundred stories for children in the Arab world, to be exhibited at the Institute.

Articles and Interviews

Elhassan Benmouna has contributed to several publications, notably:

- **Cultural Magazines:**

Majallat Al-Arabi As-Saghir

Majallat Al-Mustaqbal Ath-Thaqafi

Majallat Al-Bayan

- **Notable Articles:**

“Al-adab al-maghribi wa thunaiyat al-fanni wal-maarifi”

“At-tifl fi alam al-adab al-arabi”

- **Interviews:**

Television interview on the channel Ath-Thaqafiya Al Maghribiya

Participation in programs on education and youth reading

- **Literary Activities and Contributions :**

Conducting reading and writing workshops for children at the Casablanca Book Fair

Participation in conferences on youth literature in Egypt, Lebanon, United Arab Emirates

Collaboration with educational institutions to promote reading

Interviews and Conferences:

Interview on YouTube

(https://youtu.be/ax6TkBE3P5A?si=n_F0pakcT8ubBK0W)

Conference on Youth Literature

(https://youtube.com/watch?v=scmp0ZtDM_A&feature=shared) -

Articles and Studies:

- Article on the Relationship between Art and Literature

(<https://silej.ma/ar/رواد-يناقشون-ثنائية-الفني-والمعرفي>)

- Analysis on Publishing in Morocco

(<https://bayanealyaoume.press.ma/القاص-المغربي-الحسن-بنمونة-يتحدث-لبيان>) -

Literary Events:

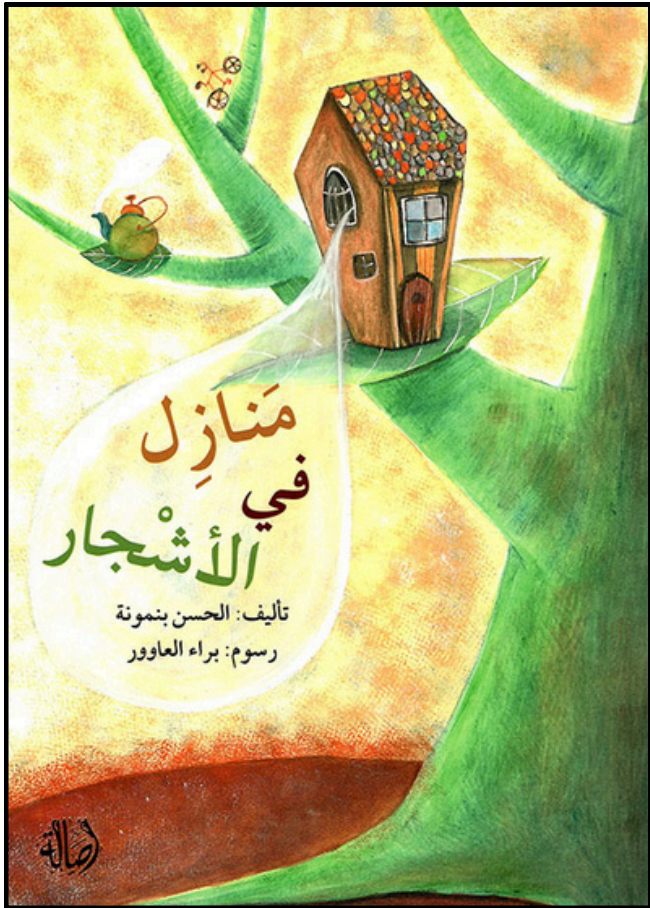
- Participation in the Book Fair

(<https://www.instagram.com/p/C0R9qwytwyx/>)

- Reading of a Children's Story

(https://www.instagram.com/p/B_Xu5FyB-Zs/)

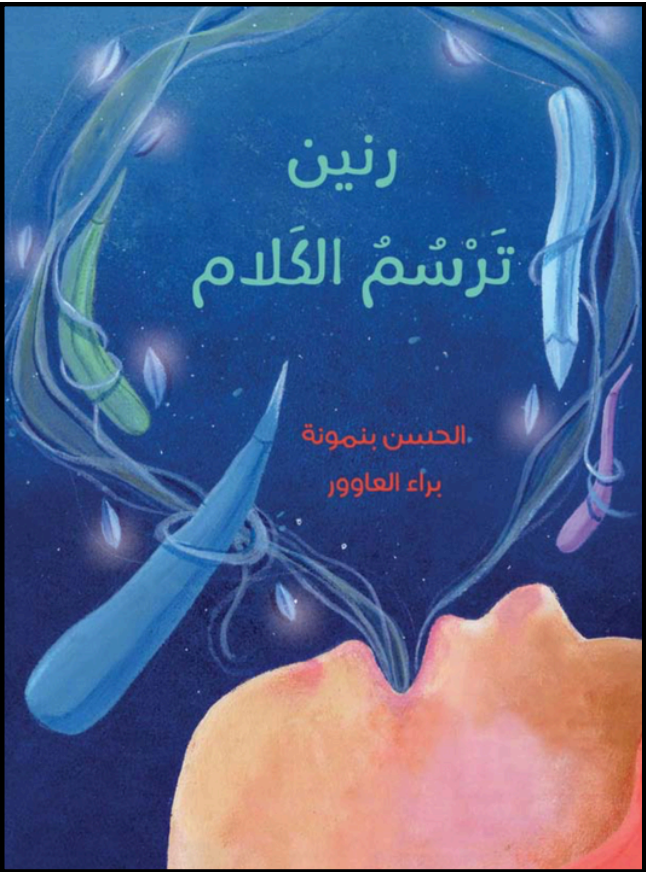
Links to Five Important Titles



▲ *Threehouses*

[Arabic version](#)

[English version](#)



▲ *Raneen draws words*

[Arabic version](#)

[English version](#)

Links to Five Important Titles

► *Let's Create Happiness*



[Arabic version](#)

[English version](#)

► *The ladybug that lost its color*



[English version](#)

► *We, the little ones*



[Arabic version](#)

[English version](#)



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