

Answer me, Leila!

Leila did not choose to live in the high placed castle, isolated away from every one, but she sits at the window looking in the distance, yet she tried to dangle her hair, so Sami would be able to come up to her. Did Sami lose his way to the Castle? Leila tries to send Sami a letter, and Sami is trying to build up a long ladder hoping that he can get to her. Yet there is something missing, the message never arrives and Sami's attempts never succeeded. And the story of Leila is just like the story of the princess with the long hair, none of them have chosen to live in the high placed castle, neither being isolated, and now Leila is trying to dangle her hair just like Rapunzel, but here we are facing a contemporary fairytale.

So what is the secret of Leila, and what is her message, and will this message arrive to Sami? And if there are a lot of communicating methods, so why is it so hard to deliver this message and they are confused?

The story of Leila starts with the author and illustrator of the book "Nadine Kaadan" introduction, to all children that 'there are a lot of ways and methods to communicate, so let's find them!' Just like Sami who shouted and called out loud but gave up, at the end and while he was wondering the idea of the ladder came across his mind. Leila also did not like isolation so she tries to send him messages. So she dangled her hair out of the tower window, to draw words in the sky with it, for Sami to hang on to them and get to her.

Both of them tried to get closer to each other, Sami did not like Leila to be isolated alone in the castle, Leila also sent her messages to him by signals, she can't hear neither speak, but sign language "the pretty signs", which Sami decided to learn in order to communicate with Leila.

The Idea here is what the text is all about, so it doesn't depend on descriptive words or terms of endearment, Words and drawings are mixed rhyme with each other and suggests each other, while floral colors overcome it. Also the decorations make roses with the formation elements, so the walls have some plant climbing it, that have rose flowers at the endings, the carpets as well. Watercolors were used with it tenderness and transparency to make Leila's hair flow hanging down, drawing words saying "I am here" accompanied with the rose flowers.

And Sami's ladder with all its turns and curves which he climbs into a pink sky, to keep us all along the book floating in a skies of colors until we reach Leila in a pink world to put a smile on her face and sit together with her out the tower.

So would we decide to leave Leila alone there in her tower, and do we as individuals decide to live in a community that isolated Leila, or we decide to be like Sami and try to communicate with Layla; so we build a ladder and find new ways to communicate in new pink skies.

Review

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A Syrian Children books author and illustrator, co-operated with many children books publishing houses.

Her book "Answer me, Leila" which was published by "sandoq al-dunia" Box of Tales publishing house in 2011, won the "Anna Lindh" prize for the best book for children with special needs.

<http://nadinekaadan.com/site/index.php?lang=2>